

CONVERSATIONS: Why Do I Have to Tithe?

1. Tithing indicates where your heart is.

Let's be honest. How do you *really* feel about tithing?

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abraham by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered you enemies into your hand!' And Abraham gave him a tenth of everything.

Genesis 14:18-20

This was the only time that the High Priest Melchizedek, King of Salem, ever shows up in the Bible. Just for this brief moment in time, he shows up, blesses Abraham (who just won a war), and Abraham gives this king a tenth of everything. The question I first asked myself when I read this was, why would Abraham give a tenth of all that he earned to someone he just met?

What usually motivates you to give?

Let's think about it. What do we know about Abraham? He had strong faith in God. He conversed frequently with God. He was a righteous man. He was even called a friend of God (James 2: 23).

So in all of this, we could say that his offering to Melchizedek wasn't just a random spur of the moment gesture. In fact, it was a very calculated gesture because Abraham knew who God was...and in effect, knew who Melchizedek was too.

Theologians say that Melchizedek is actually a manifestation of Jesus in the Old Testament because he was the king of Salem, which is Arabic for the word 'peace', and the High Priest of God. The only other person who possesses these descriptions is Jesus himself.

This is a testimony of Abraham's close relationship in God. He knew exactly who stood before him. He knew exactly where all his successes and blessings came from. He knew that the only person he could truly depend on and the only person he needed was God. This was why he gave a tenth of everything he owned to Melchizedek.

How does knowing that everything belongs to God affect the way you view and apply the tithe?

2. Tithing is actually *good* for you.

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9: 7

When was the last time you gave cheerfully and generously? Recount your experience here.

Tithing is a product of knowing where your blessings have come from. There's no real formula to tithing. Whether you give 10 or 70 percent of your earnings to God, God doesn't look at the money you give (He is God and He owns everything!), but at the heart of the giver. This is why we are not to give with reluctance or haste, but with cheerful hearts.

It's the same thing with the pizza illustration. God gave you the whole pizza, but He just wants a little part of it back to test if He is still the one you run to and thank every time. And you know what happens after you tithe? Let's look at the verse that comes after:

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9: 8

God blesses those who know, follow, and trust in Him. He knows the needs and wants of those who tithe, and He will never let them lack any good thing (Psalm 34: 10).

So the next time you hesitate to tithe, remember that God sees your heart and will not abandon those who trusts in Him!

What can you commit to doing in order to remind yourself of the value of the tithe?

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for Your Word on finance. Thank You for reminding me that You are the source of everything. I pray that You honour my commitment today as I entrust my finances, my wealth, my possessions solely to You. And since these aren't mine, I pray that you make me a good and faithful steward of all you have given me.

I pray that You will be honoured through my finances and in giving. As I continue to honour this particular command, I pray for protection over the remaining leftover.

Above all, Lord, make me trust not in the blessings, but in the Blessor. May I remember that everything after salvation is bonus. Today I commit all these things to You.

In Jesus Name. Amen