

Why We Give

II Corinthians 9:6-7 – *The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

It is not surprising that anytime finances come up, both the pastor and the people feel awkward. After all, we have all heard the line “that church just wants my money.” This is all very unfortunate because God actually has quite a bit to say about money in His Word. In fact, it is quite interesting to note that Jesus actually had more to say about finances than both heaven and hell combined. Why is this? Why is money such a big deal to God?

Let’s start by pointing out...God does not want or need money. The scripture makes it quite clear that as the sovereign creator and sustainer of everything, Jesus does not need my money to accomplish his purposes. Rather, Jesus teaches us to give because He wants us to understand that we don’t need money nearly as much as we think we do.

In the Old Testament, the Bible details for us, very specifically, a system called tithing that God designed to teach the Israelites that they belonged to Him as a special people. Under this system the Israelites were commanded to give 10% of their crops and livestock to help support the Levites who were God’s ordained priests. On top of that there were two other tithes that would be collected for the tabernacle and the poor which would actually push up the total to around 20% of everything they owned. Israel was unique from the nations around them in that they were a Theocracy, with God as their King, and the tithe was a lot like a form of taxes.

In the New Testament, Jesus fulfills the law through His sacrificial death on the cross and ushers in a new covenant of grace. Nowhere in the New Testament will you find the teaching of the tithing principle but rather gracious, freewill offerings. This, however, does not mean that God no longer cares about people giving. In fact, the complete opposite is true. Rather than a law dictating how much you are required to give; the Bible now emphasizes that we should give like our Father in heaven: generously and sacrificially. It is through giving that we acknowledge everything we have is from God, and belongs to God, including even our own lives. We give, not under compulsion, but rather willingly as an act of worship. This means grace giving will look different for all of us as we use wisdom principles to determine how to best utilize the resources that God has supplied to us for His kingdom purposes.