

Week 10

Tithing

One thing I have learned hugely in my walk with the Lord is how important tithing is. My husband and I started going to church and just giving whatever we had in our purse that Sunday. Might be \$10 one week, or some weeks we might think that we want to go out to eat so we didn't use that money and instead spent it on ourselves. We had financial issue after issue after issue. Things broke, it didn't matter if we got ahead because the next week, something would happen and we would be out of money. We lived in just okay homes, vehicles were old, and my husband was always working on them just to keep them on the road.

Then one day while talking with a pastor friend and me not completely understanding why life was always hard when it came to money, he asked me if we tithed. I said, sometimes or when we could, and you know we have a lot of children and they cost a lot of money. I was rationalizing why we didn't tithe instead of trusting God. Years went on, things broke, we never got ahead no matter what we did. It seems when we would go to church and listen to "why" we should, it usually pricked our conscious and we would go away saying, "Yah, they are always talking to give, give, give. Of course they want us to give, they have a nice home and nice car, they want to keep it that way! We don't have those things, so we need to keep it." Our hearts were not in the right place. Still years went on, we were still broke, then after another pastor started sharing biblical truths about tithing and why it was important to do so, we listened.

The Bible says in Malachi 3:8..Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, "how have we robbed you?" In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse for you are robbing me the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. I will rebuke the devourer for you so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and the vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts.

After reading that, the Holy Spirit made it stick. I will tell you that we finally started tithing our ten percent of our income and that is when things started working positively for us. During this time, the Lord moved us to another state. This area is expensive, things cost a lot more than what we were used to paying. If you looked at our taxes for the last few years, the income would be about the same. But for the first time in our entire lives we have saved money. We are able to afford to live in this place of much higher cost of living, why? Because we choose to follow the Lord, and we tithe. The Bible says that when you bring in your tithes to the store house, God will open the windows of heaven and pour down a blessing until there is no more need. He will rebuke the devourer so that he will not destroy our things. We started obeying and instead of being cursed, we were what God said: blessed.

Daily Bible reading: John 10,11,12

Day two

Tithing

When you tithe, don't do it and think that it is a magic trick and suddenly you will have hundreds of dollars in your pocket, it doesn't work that way. When you change your mindset and work your life towards a life of faith that is when things start changing. When you tithe out of obedience, trusting the Lord with your finances, you are taking a step of faith. A step of faith that he will make things start to work for you. In our home, to take that big chunk of money out of our paychecks was huge. We have a lot of children and a lot of expenses, but we decided to do it and that is when things worked in our favor. We were trusting that when we give God back his money, he will make the rest of it work, and He has.

Are there times when we were tempted to not tithe? Absolutely. I can tell you that we tithed regularly and then suddenly stopped due to marital issues. Guess what? All of that savings that we had accumulated in a very short time, suddenly disappeared. We were cursed and whatever we did, it was cursed. We had to repent, get back on board and continue doing so. We haven't stopped doing it and guess what? That money reappeared back into our savings quite quickly. God kept his end of the bargain up and we were being blessed by it. Now it is second nature, not even an issue anymore. We are able to have money for things that we have never had ever in our entire lives. We don't go without. We don't look to anyone else but the Lord for our financial resources and he does prosper just as the Bible says.

You need to give God back what is His money. It isn't yours, it is His. He allows you to make the money and wants you to trust Him by tithing. Another step of faith. When you don't "see" what is going to happen but instead "trust"that is faith. The Bible says in Hebrews 11:1 the definition of faith...Now faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen. We read the Bible and hope that what God says is true even though we can't see it happening.

You need the protection and the blessing that comes from the Lord and we do that by tithing. You want to see things stop breaking in your home? You want your cars to work? You want bills paid? Then start tithing your income. Don't make it become an issue of what you tithe. Do you give ten percent of your net income? Or ten percent of your gross income? Search your heart and ask the Lord. If you have to ask, you probably already know the answer to it. Don't get legalistic over it, just start giving back to the Lord what is His. I would much rather have ALL of my income protected and blessed than a part of it because I wasn't trusting God to protect it.

It is vitally important for you to understand the difference between the different types of giving, yes there are more:) When you get a good, full understanding and an application of the different types that is when you will help get your whole financial life under control.

Daily Bible reading: John 13,14,15

Day three

Tithing

Each type of giving should be done with the right motivation and correct understanding of the reward. your hearts attitude is what matters here.

When you understand that God has blessed you with 100% of everything that you have and now He is asking you to give 10% back to Him, so that he can continue blessing you through the 90% you have left. The motivation is simple obedience and the reward is the blessing.

God promises you opened windows (floodgates) of heaven to pour such an abundant blessing on you, that you don't have room enough to receive it. With that blessing comes God's promise to keep the devourer from all that you have. Which means that the devil can't lay hands on your refrigerator, your kids, your home, or any other thing anymore.

For your tithe to work, it is important that it is given to the storehouse. Where is your storehouse? The place where you get your spiritual food from. Don't take part of your tithe and give it to something else. It DOES matter what you do with it. Trust me, another principal it took for us to learn. You can't take part of your tithe and give it to pay alms and then only give part of your tithe to your church. This will negate what God promises. Every step of walking with the Lord is important. You want your things protected and blessed, then tithe 10 percent to your church. If you don't go to church, you should:) But if you don't and maybe you listen to one online or watch one on tv, then send that tithe to them. The great thing is that I am not a pastor begging for money. I am a servant of the Lord who has done these principals and is understanding how they work. I've already done broke and I didn't like it. When I finally started listening to God completely, things worked, why is that? Because of obedience to His word.

So remember, tithing goes to your storehouse. The place where you get your spiritual seed from.

If you are young, this is a great principal to start acting upon now. It is much easier to get into the habit of doing this before you step into the world and start having "bills" and responsibilities. It isn't impossible for someone who has never tithed before, it is just a bit harder to step out in faith. We did it, so I know it isn't impossible:) Start tithing....and see how the floodgates of heaven are opened up upon your life.

Daily Bible reading: John 16, 17,18

Day four

The seed

What you sow is important. Tithing protects you, seed reproduces and blesses you. Your future lies within your seed. When you sow seed in good ground it will spring forth and multiply as the Bible says, 30,60, and 100 fold. The motivation for sowing seed is reward or a harvest.

For your seed to work, it is vitally important for you to sow it into the good ground. This can be a church, ministry, or any other group of people coming together, teaching the truth of God's word. Where do you sow your seed? You ask God and the Holy Spirit will reveal to you where the good ground is. If you ask Him, you shall receive. Don't just sow seed and be motivated by someone begging for money, ask the Lord where you need to sow seed. He will direct you to whatever group He wants you to give. Read more in Mark 4:8.

It is important to remember, this is NOT part of your tithe. This is separate, this is where you take that seed and sow it into something to watch it grow.

I know there were times when the Lord showed me to give to certain ministries and I did. I then watched how I received a return on my investment. Sometimes I just sit back and laugh to myself, thinking it is so easy, why did I not do this before? It may sound different, because you haven't done it before, but it is just like everything else in life, when you take that step of faith and trust God, He works for you.

You have to get over your love of money. You have to not love it, you have to trust God with it. God will not make you poor. God is not a poor God. Heaven is filled with the abundance of everything—jewels, gold etc. When we pray in the example of the Our Father....we pray that your kingdom comes your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Heaven isn't a poor place it is a place filled with abundance and blessing. This can be your life, if you want it.

If you don't have money, you can't do a whole lot to help people. We live in an economic world, we need money to make things work. You need money to buy food to help others. You need money to buy cars and necessities for people. You need money to build churches and make things work. We need it. If we didn't then God would allow us to function well without it. That isn't the case. You need your money to work for you as God wants it to. This starts with these financial principals...all found in the Bible. Not in some man made book. All four of these financial lessons are found in the Bible.

Daily Bible reading: John 19,20,21

Congratulations you have made it through all of the gospels! Next we begin in the book of Acts, the first early church.

Day five

First fruits

In the book of Proverbs 3:9 it says"Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will be bursting with wine." Your first fruits should be given at least every year and they are always the increase of your income, compared to your income in the previous year. I like to take this at tax time when you can compare the two different years' worth of income and take off the amount.

This is a way to show God that you are not in love with money, but simply grateful for Him supplying it all to you. The motivation has to be generosity and the reward is the abundant life. When God can see your heart and know that He can trust you with money, you can be God's go-to person. When He knows it isn't an issue with you, that you won't hoard it and that you will do with it what He says, that is when the abundant life begins for you.

Where shall you take your first fruits? The Bible says to take them to the house of God. You can take them and give to your church or you can give them to the ministers. That is something for you to ask the Lord and He will be sure to direct you on who to give them to.

All of this money giving might be overwhelming to you, take it slow. Trust the Word of the Lord and know that God is not a liar. What he says WILL come to pass and Will happen. It is just our job to obey and do. What sort of life do you want? Do you want one that you are always trying to scrape by and never really get ahead? Or do you want an abundant life and all the blessings that flow from above? If God can trust you with money, He will begin to pour out to you in ways that you can never imagine. You want financial independence? It doesn't start with a financial portfolio, it begins with following what the Lord says in His word and acting upon it. God will take care of the rest. Next week will we continue talking about finances.

Daily Bible reading: Acts 1,2,3