

LAYMAN'S SCHOOL OF TRAINING
HOLE 1 - CHRISTIAN GROWTH SEMINAR
LECTURE 7 - GOD IS INTERESTED IN YOUR FINANCIAL SUCCESS - PART 2

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5. WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE ME TO GIVE OVER AND ABOVE THE TITHE?

*Mal 3:8 (NAS) "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes **and offerings.**"*

*1 Cor 16:2 (NAS) "On the **first day (Sunday) of EVERY week** let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come."*

The Bible teaches that we are to give **offerings over and above the tithe**. Christians were exhorted to put aside and save according to how they prospered and give on the first day of **every week** - i.e. every Sunday.

*Acts 20:35b (NAS) "...remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, '**It is more blessed to give than to receive.**'"*

The more you can believe to sow the more you will reap.

*Luke 6:38 (KJV) "Give, and it **shall be given unto you**; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall **men give into your bosom (or robe - Lamsa)**. (NAS) For **by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.**"*

In the **world** we were taught to **grab** all you can get and **hold onto it**.

Don't share with anyone or else you'll go short.

Now we're no longer in the world but operating in the **principles of the Kingdom of God**. We must get our thinking straightened out with God's word.

If we give in faith and joy we'll have an abundant supply. God will bless us in return for our faithful giving and lead us to a **better job**, or give us favor for a **promotion**. He will also give us **wisdom in our buying** and our things will **last longer** and **not wear out**.

*Deut 29:5 (NAS) "And I have led you **forty years** in the wilderness; your **clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot.**"*

The **tithe does not belong to us** but to God. When we've **paid our tithes** we've actually just **squared up with God**. It's on our giving over and above our tithes that God says, "**by your standard of measure it will be measured back to you.**" (Luke 6:38)

Christians need to **grow and be progressive in their giving** as God continues to bless them.

We must also not neglect **giving to the poor**.

Matt 26:11a (NAS) "For the poor you have with you always..."

*Prov 19:17 (NAS) "He who is gracious to a poor man **lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his good deed.**"*

Prov 21:13 (NAS) "He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be answered."

*Prov 28:27 (NAS) "He who **gives to the poor will never want, but he who shuts his eyes will have many curses.**"*

We all need to budget every month to give something to those who are less fortunate than we are. At Christian Family Church we have a **pantry ministry** in which you can give some non perishable food items every month and some good second hand clothing.

6. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BIBLE GIVING?

Here are some scriptures that prove that no man can ever out-give God.

1 Tim 6:17 (NAS) *"Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on **God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.**"*

Our **giving is an act of worship** to God. It is a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. It causes our **Heavenly bank account** to start showing **wonderful profits** and God promises to meet all our needs according to heaven's overflowing abundance.

Phil 4:15-19 (NAS) *"And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of **giving and receiving** but you alone;*

16 *for even in Thessalonica you sent a **gift more than once** (ie. consistency) for my needs.*

17 *Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the **profit which increases to your (heavenly) account.***

18 *But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, (i) a **fragrant aroma**, (ii) an **acceptable sacrifice**, (iii) **well-pleasing to God.***

19 *And my **God shall supply all your needs according to His riches** in glory in Christ Jesus."*

17b (TCNT) *"...but I am anxious to see the abundant return that will be placed to **your account.**"*

17b (Moffatt) *"...what I am anxious for is **the interest that accumulates** in this way to **your divine credit.**"*

Prov 19:17 (Taylor) *"...when you help the poor you are lending to the Lord - and **He pays wonderful interest on your loan!**"*

2 Cor 8:9 (NAS) *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though **He was rich**, yet for **your sake He became poor**, that **you through His poverty might become rich** (a full supply - Greek)."*

Just as Jesus redeemed us from our sins and sickness by His death, and gave us righteousness and health in its place; so He also became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich.

2 Cor 9:6-8,10-11 (NAS) *"Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows **bountifully** shall also **reap bountifully.***

7 *Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; **for God loves a cheerful giver.***

8 *And **God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;***

10 *Now He (God) who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will **supply and multiply your seed FOR SOWING** and increase the harvest of your righteousness;*

11 *you will be **enriched in everything** for all **liberality** (free giving), which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.*

God wants us to **grow in our giving** till we come to the place where we have sown so much, that we will **constantly be reaping** much more than we've sown, so that we will always have more to sow in the future.

Deut 28:1-14 Read at home. God promises that if we will be obedient to what He has instructed us to do in His word, then all of His **blessings** will come upon us and **overtake us.**

7. WHAT IF I CAN'T AFFORD TO TITHE?

These verses help us to get a **biblical perspective on wealth** and material things.

1 Tim 6:6-11 (NAS) *"But **godliness** actually is a means of **great gain**, when accompanied by **CONTENTMENT.***

7 *For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.*

8 *And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be **content.***

9 *But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare of many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.*

10 *For the **love of money** is the **root of all sorts of evil**, and some by longing for it have wandered away*

from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.

11 *But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness."*

By loving money more than God some Christians have put themselves and their families through many a painful experience.

Money is not evil. It is the **love of money** which is the ROOT of ALL sorts of evil. In counseling Christians going through problems, you will find that the source of 90% of all problems is because of a love of money.

10 *(Rotherham) "For a root of all the vices is the love of money..."*

Because of **discontentment** (vs 8) some Christians have bought things they can barely afford and placed themselves in an **excessive debt** situation, where they cannot afford to tithe.

Some Christians might need to **deliver themselves** from this situation so that they can obey God.

The **poor widow woman** in the time of Elijah could not afford to give to God, but she did and **God supernaturally provided** for her and her family for a number of years till the **drought was broken**.

1 Kings 17:1,8-16 *(NAS) "Now Elijah the Tishbite... said to Ahab, 'As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.'*

8 *Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying,*

9 *'Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.'*

10 *So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, 'Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink.'*

11 *And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, 'Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.'*

12 *But she said, 'As the Lord you God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.'*

13 *Then Elijah said to her, 'Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but **make me a little bread cake from it first**, and bring it out to me, and **afterward you may make one for yourself** and for your son.'*

14 *For thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth.'*

15 *So she went and **did according to the word of Elijah**, and she and he and her household **ate for many days**.*

16 *The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke through Elijah."*

A person who says he can't afford to give us like a **farmer** who says he only has a **few seeds left to eat**, therefore he can't afford to sow. No matter how desperate a situation we're in, we must never neglect to sow if we're to reap a harvest of God's financial blessing. Even if sowing means sacrifice, God's promise of the harvest is sure.

Matt 6:33 *(Montgomery) "But **continue to seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; (Phillips) and all these things will come to you as a matter of course."***

A person who does not pay his tithe of say R100 is saying that he has **more faith in what that R100 can do for him than Almighty God**.

8. WHAT SHOULD MY ATTITUDE BE IN GIVING?

2 Cor 9:7 *(NAS) "Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; **not grudgingly** or under compulsion (or not with pain or pressure or reservation); for **God loves a cheerful giver**."*

7c *(Amplified) "...for God loves (that is, He takes pleasure in, prizes above other things, and is unwilling to abandon or to do without) a cheerful (joyous, prompt-to-do-it) giver - whose heart is in his giving."*

Giving with a **right heart attitude and motive** is so important, because if we don't we can lose out on receiving the full blessing on our giving.

Isaiah 1:19 (Amplified) *"If you are **willing and obedient**, you shall eat the good of the land."*

Just as we don't enjoy receiving anything from anyone unless they give it willingly from their heart, so neither does God.

Some Christians have given obediently, but with a grudge and consequently are not being blessed by God to enjoy the good of the land.

Jesus sat down opposite the **treasury** and observed HOW the people gave - ie. **their attitude**.

Mark 12:41-44 (NAS) *"And He sat down opposite the **treasury**, and began **observing HOW** the multitude were **putting money into the treasury**; and many rich people were putting in large sums.*

42 *And a **poor widow** came and put in **two small copper coins**, which amount to a cent,*

43 *And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, 'Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury;*

44 *for they all put in out of their **surplus**, but she, out of her poverty, **put in all she owned**, all she had to live on."*

Jesus commended the poor widow woman who gave SACRIFICIALLY. Jesus was not impressed with those who gave to God out of their SURPLUS, but with this widow woman who had to sacrifice some of life's comforts to give to God.

It's **not how much** you give, but **who much you have left** after you gave that is the **true test of sacrificial giving**.

9. HOW DO I BELIEVE FOR A RETURN ON MY GIVING?

As a **farmer sows expecting** a large return on his labors, so we too should believe God for an increase on our giving.

No farmer sows seed saying, "**Well that's gone into the soil never to be seen again - what a waste!**" Rather he firmly believes he will get a good return on his sowing.

We must never have the attitude that what we gave to the Lord is money we will never get the benefit from. We must firmly **believe in God's willingness and ability to bless us abundantly in return**.

NB. My **MOTIVE for giving** is not to get, but rather **one of love** for God and a desire to obey His word. However, the laws of the kingdom state that you will reap what you sow, therefore we can expect our loving Heavenly Father to bless us in return for our giving.

Don't just give to God **PASSIVELY**, but rather **give in faith**: for faith pleases God. **Faith is believing** God's promise in your heart and boldly **confessing** that belief with your mouth, and continually **praising** God with respect to His promise. It is this kind of **active faith** that will cause God's blessings to come your way speedily.

10. HOW DO YOU TEST THE SPIRITUAL TEMPERATURE OF A CHRISTIAN?

Do we test spirituality by church attendance or how much time a Christian spends praying and reading his bible?

Jesus gave us a very different test for spirituality.

Matt 6:21 (Phillips) *"For wherever you treasure (or wealth - Weymouth) is, you may **be certain** that your **heart** (or spirit) will be there too!"*

The bible says that a man will always invest his money in a place where his heart is. Some men have a **favorite sport or hobby** and because they love it so much they will somehow find the money they need and spare no cost.

Therefore, the Bible says that if **a person does not invest God's portion** of his money into the Kingdom of Heaven, **his heart is not there** - no matter how many **spiritual masks he puts on**.

If your money is invested in a church then your heart will be in that church and it will naturally follow that you will want to spend time with God and extend His Kingdom by getting involved in that church's programs.

NB. Every payday every Christian's faithfulness, commitment and devotion to Christ is tested. When a Christian **stops tithing** he is taking the **first step towards becoming cold in heart** and drifting away from God.

HOMework FOR LECTURE 7

1. Spend 10 minutes a day meditating on your notes until these truths register on your spirit man.
2. Memorize **Luke 6:38** which will count for 5% towards your test result.
3. **NB.** Keep these notes handy in your bible and on **every payday for the rest of your life** read through them again carefully, so that you can make any **attitude adjustments** necessary and give to God in faith, with pure motives and a thankful heart.
*Heb 4:12 (NAS) "For the **word of God** is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and **able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the hearts.**"*
NB. Every Christian has been tempted by the devil through circumstantial pressure at some stage of his life to stop tithing. We need to **know the word** of God in order to **be able to resist** these temptations in Jesus name.
By reading over these notes again at the end of every month, you will build up your faith and be able to believe God for the maximum return on your tithes and offerings.
4. If you have not yet started tithing and giving offerings, determine to start this Sunday to walk in obedience and give according to biblical principles.
5. When you do your monthly shopping plan to purchase a few **non perishable items**, and place them in the **pantry box** in the **foyer of the church** as a ministry to feed the poor.
6. Give any good second hand clothing to your Area Pastor as a ministry to clothe the poor.
7. Memorize **Matt 6:33** for your own spiritual benefit. This is the last scripture in point 7.