

# “Let Our Lives Be Full of Giving” : )

## Introduction

- Second and Final week of our Thanksgiving series
- Last week= Thanks
- Today we are focusing on giving

## Tension:

- Human nature: a mindset of scarcity...never enough...we always want more; never satisfied

## Child Wants More from Tooth Fairy

6 year old boy named Dean lost his first tooth. He took that precious little treasure and put it under his pillow, expecting something in return. When he woke up the next morning, the Tooth Fairy had brought him a quarter. A few weeks later, another tooth fell out, and the same thing happened. When a third tooth dropped out, Dean had had enough. He wrote a little note and put it under his pillow. It read:

Dear Tooth Fairy: I have been a good boy. I wonder if you could give me \$1 for my tooth, because I could use more money.

- People often feel like they will Never have enough...and that perspective of scarcity leads to a lack of generosity, and even a suspicion, especially when it comes to giving, and there is even a perverted belief that the ‘Church’ just wants your money.
- Because of that a lot of churches don’t teach and preach on giving, but that is like not teaching on prayer
  - I have fallen in that trap myself
    - A good friend reminded us recently this is the most meaningful proposition to give to = God’s Kingdom
    - Jesus even talked about money more than he did prayer or any other subject
      - Why?
      - He knows that you can’t serve two masters
      - He knows that money can have you instead of you having money
- People often say ‘Money is the root of all evil’ but the Word actually says that it is the ‘love of money’ that causes the problems.

- Human condition
  - Poverty/Scarcity mindset= if I give I won't have enough
  - Divine Condition is one of abundance and riches

**Worship Note:** Our God is the God of abundance not scarcity.

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

- Firstfruits
  - Time, Talents
  - Today= Money
- Tithe
  - One of the scriptures that is often associated with tithing
    - Malachi 3: 8-12 NIV
      - “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse —your whole nation—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe, ” says the Lord Almighty. “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the Lord Almighty.
    - Test me in this
      - The only thing that I’m aware of in Scripture that God invites us to test him
      - Jesus when tempted in the desert, says ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test’, yet here God invites us to test him in this one area
    - Rob God?
      - How are you robbing me
      - Tithes and offerings
      - Jack Taylor “So you tithe, big deal so your not robbing God’
  - Leviticus 27:30: “All tithes of the land, whether in grain from the fields or in fruit from the trees belong to the Lord, as sacred to Him”

- History of Tithe
  - Abraham established, Ratified by the law (Moses), and Jesus taught it
  - Abraham
    - Genesis 14 tithed to Melchizedek, Psalm 110 and Hebrews tells us the Jesus is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek
    - Abraham introduces this concept of giving the tithe for the work of the Kingdom
    - The Bible tells us that Abraham is the father of our faith so in tithing he gives us the example
  - Moses
    - Of course the law given to Moses by God gave instructions to give firstfruits and tithes dedicated to the Lord
  - Jesus
    - Jesus says that he came to fulfill the law not destroy it
    - Now we know that all the OT law didn't make it through the cross, Some ended at the cross= animal sacrifice, transformed at the cross declared all foods clean- etc., Other things made it through the cross= So what about the tithe?
    - **Matthew 23:23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former."**
    - 'Don't neglect the tithe'
    - Abraham as father of the faith
      - In John 8 Jesus says that the descendants of Abraham do the deeds of him and live the life he did, born again=descendants of Abraham
      - Deeds of Abraham= Trust, Honor and abandonment to the will of God
      - Tithe is Obedience and Trust
      - Obedience= doing what is required by God
      - Trust= that he will provide
- 10%
  - **Andy Stanley: "When we hear that word "tithe", that's what it is – giving '10%' of our financial fruits back to God. In Fields of Gold, Adam Stanley says that for some reason, 10% is the "amount God has decided is**

appropriate. Maybe God knows some elaborate formula and 10% is the precise amount that will keep our hearts from drifting as our wealth fluctuates. I'm not sure why. But when God spoke on the subject, He required 10%...and 10% is still a good reference point for our giving today."

- Sounds like a lot
- Not insignificant
- Pumpkin example
- 10% is not really a sacrifice...
- Tithing is a spiritual discipline...like a lot of disciplines, it's something we have to work at and become disciplined doing, and overcome our human condition
- No matter what age we are or how much we make, a 'scarcity' mindset can get in the way of a Kingdom mindset of abundance and generosity

## **I Can't Afford to Tithe**

*A 14-year-old boy named Joel got his very first job as a paperboy. He got his first, official paycheck. Boy, was he thrilled. He came home and showed his parents his paycheck. Then he marched into the room where his Mom was and said, "You know, I've thought it over and I'm not sure I can afford to tithe."*

*He had more money in his hand than he'd ever had before, and what happened? All of a sudden he say, "I really need this money for something else." Out of the mouth of a 14-year-old boy, true to his human nature, comes this whole question, "Where do I put God?" Is he first? Is he second? Is he fifth? Is he twenty-third in my life? Where is God?*

*On the other end of the spectrum was a man who came to Peter Marshall, former chaplain of the United States Senate, with a concern about tithing. He said: "I have a problem. I have been tithing for some time. It wasn't too bad when I was making \$20,000 a year. I could afford to give the \$2,000. But you see, now I am making \$500,000, and there is just no way I can afford to give away \$50,000 a year."*

*Dr. Marshall reflected on this wealthy man's dilemma but gave no advice. He simply said: "Yes, sir. I see that you do have a problem. I think we ought to pray about it. Is that alright?"*

*The man agreed, so Dr. Marshall bowed his head and prayed with boldness and authority. "Dear Lord, this man has a problem, and I pray that you will help him. Lord, reduce his salary back to the place where he can afford to tithe."*

- Bill Johnson quoting Dick Joyce: "The tithe is God's rent payment for living on his earth and breathing His air."

**Worship Note:** Tithe is God's rent for living on His land and breathing His air

- Divine condition
  - Generosity and Giving

God's generosity

- Everything is His
- He is extravagantly generous
- Everything we have is at his hands, we are yet but stewards
- Gives us the world, gave us life, everything we have and everything we are is because of Him
- He even gave Himself for us, Christ on the cross for our sins- for the world
- God gives and gives and gives . . . . .he doesn't ask us do anything he hasn't already done
- He generously gives and he calls us to give generously

Again Why don't people give?

- Scarcity Mindset
- Some In Debt so much can begin to think about tithing
- Too many try to find joy in material things and not the things of God

Why not tithing not ok?

- Obedience
- God wants everything including our money

- **Clifton Black:** “God does not want some portion of our lives as disciples; God wants all of us and for us to give God the reigns in every are of our lives and to trust him with what’s important, without remainder and without reservation”
- If you have given your heart to the Lord, it is required
- Not an option; tithe is the minimum, the requirement

**Worship Note:** Tithe is a requirement, an offering is extra.

- Need conviction of the Holy Spirit, not guilt of the enemy

How to get to tithing:

- Determine where you are (what %)
- And STEP UP! Every year, or just take the plunge...test Him
- 1st of the year= 3 month challenge, at the end if not convinced the church will cut you a check for it!
- As pastors, as the church we don't want your money
- Salvation is free, Ministry is not! Takes money to run the church

**Closing**

- **Bring your tithe to the storehouse**