

The Blessing of the Tithe

Malachi 3:7-12

Introduction

On Mother's Day the men in the class had a very informal discussion about finances and giving. During that conversation we agreed that it would be very helpful to have some studies to refresh our awareness of God's ways in the area of money. Today will be the first of that series, and we'll go to the central passage in the Bible that presents the principle of the tithe and the blessings associated with obedience.

Background Passage:

Malachi 3:7-12 – ⁷"From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes, and have not kept *them*. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you say, 'How shall we return?' ⁸Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes and offerings. ⁹You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! ¹⁰Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. ¹¹Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it may not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast *its grapes*," says the LORD of hosts. ¹²"And all the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land," says the LORD of hosts.

What is the symptom God through Malachi identifies as proof that God's people had turned aside from His statutes? _____

But is it applicable under the New Covenant?

Tithing was pre-law. Ex.: Abraham in Gen. 14:20, Jacob in Gen. 28:22.

Same principle echoed in Luke 6:38 – ³⁸"Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

And in 2 Cor. 9:6-11 – ⁶Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. ⁷Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And 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; ⁹as it is written, "HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR, HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ABIDES FOREVER." ¹⁰Now He 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; ¹¹you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.

And in the Gospels, Jesus had the opportunity to set it aside, but He didn't. Luke 11:42 - ⁴²"But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."

The Curse of Robbing God – v9

What according to verse 9 is the result of robbing God? _____

What could that look like? _____

Where Does the Tithe Go? – v10

"The storehouse." "My house." In the day, it would have been the temple or synagogue.

What about today?

Your local church. No other place comes anywhere close to the original intent.

What Are the Promises for Those Who Obey? – v10-12

God actually dares us to "test" Him in this area. "Tithe! I dare you!"

Overflowing blessings from heaven!

What might that look like? _____

Are you experiencing that? _____

How or why not? _____

Rebuking the devourer!

What does that mean? _____

What illustrations does He give? _____

What might that look like for us? _____

Are you experiencing that? _____

Haggai 1:6 – "You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes."

Others will recognize your blessings!

What might that look like? _____

How could this honor God? _____

Are you experiencing that? _____

How or why not? _____

Closing points

Is God's promise always (or even often) going to be in a financial form? ____

How else can we see God's blessings? _____

Conclusion:

Many have lots of ideas about how the tithe should look and work today. But in most cases, you can see that their position on the matter really just reflects their vested interest in the outcome. Those who are giving come up with all sorts of spiritual sounding reasons why the tithe is no longer God's standard for us, and those who are on the receiving end often want far more than 10%.

I believe that if you give 10% of your increase back to the local church, God's promise of blessing will be on you. Once you get to that point, you can seek God's leadership about whether He wants you to give more.