

Grace Bible Church
Pastor Teacher
Robert R. McLaughlin

Tree of Life

Weekly Review

Giving is a vital subject to master, and there is a difference between tithing and giving.

I would like to begin by asking you all a very simple question that demands some sort of answers on your part if you are searching for truth. What I am about to ask you should clarify any questions that believers have concerning certain subjects that are mentioned in the word of GOD even though some subjects are not even mentioned at all.

Because there are many believers who believe in certain doctrines and who try to make a verse say what they want it to say to back up their ignorance of the Word. These are people who pick a subject and then they look for scriptures to back-up what they believe. In fact, it should be just the opposite, we should learn what the verses and passages say and teach us first, then we should allow the Word of GOD to dictate to us the correct interpretation of the passage.

In this way, we don't use the Bible or misquote the Bible and take it out of the context to back up what we claim to believe by taking scriptures out of their context. And before I ask you some questions, I want to be sure that you do agree with the fact that the Bible is accurate and should be translated in

accuracy to arrive at the biblical principles that are mentioned.

Question: Would you agree with the fact that the Bible says things just the way our LORD desires those things to be said?

Question: Do you believe that it doesn't matter what is said, all that matters is that we are sincere when we say it or teach it to others?

And I would submit to you unless your sincerity is accompanied by Truth, it is nothing but sincerity; **JOS 24:14, "Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the GODs which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD."**

This is literally saying to put away or do away with the GODs which your fathers served [Demons and Cults] beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. However, that is still not what I am seeking to accomplish. I want to ask everyone who is listening to listen with humility and objectivity some of the questions I am about to ask you. You can make it rhetorical or you can answer silently to yourself.

Question: Do you believe that all believers should be accountable for what they hear?

Question: Do you believe that the LORD has made available everything that a believer would need to fulfill the Word of GOD?

Question: Do you believe that a person can be saved or born again simply by asking Jesus into their Heart?

Question: Or, do you believe that a person can be saved or born again simply by asking Jesus into their life?

Question: Do you believe that if a passage is dealing with a certain subject that is very important for the believer to understand, that it should say exactly what the LORD wants to say to all of us so that even the simple can understand what is being said or taught?

Now, I gave you all that background so that you can see what I am about to say and hear what I am about to say. Here's what I personally believe; because of our LORD challenging us to become like children, HIS word should be crystal clear concerning our future.

Now, here's where I make a statement that we should understand and that is what the apostle Paul said to the believers in Corinth:

2CO 11:2-4, For I am jealous for you with a GODly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

There are many pastors and many believers who believe that the Bible reveals the principle of Tithing or giving GOD 10%

of everything that you have made since the last time you gave. Now, giving is a doctrinal principle that if believers desire to glorify our Father and His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ, they must learn the “Doctrine of Giving” and give as GOD’s word states.

In the O.T. the Jews, both believers and unbelievers, are taught that if they give GOD 10% of everything they have made or earned, that GOD will bless those who Tithe and also those who give with the proper motivation.

You say, “Well, What’s the problem then?”

The problem is that Tithing in the Old Testament was never a form of grace-giving to GOD and to His people, Tithing is not grace-giving but Tithing is paying the taxes that both believers and unbelievers owe to the LORD and the Levitical priests whom they were to support because they were representing all the other Tribes.

This whole set-up, Tithing and Grace-giving is not a command for the Jews only, but Tithing is unbelievers and believers to pay their taxes and then secondly, to give to the LORD in both the natural and spiritual realm.

Here is a brief summary: When it comes to giving the following principle concerning Tithing and Giving.

The natural = Tithing

The spiritual = Giving

Let me show you a passage that makes a distinction between Tithing and giving offerings to our LORD.

Beginning in MAL 3:6 where we read about GOD's faithfulness to the Jews and why they were not destroyed when they went astray and failed.

MAL 3:6, "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob [Jacob was known as a liar and a deceiver], are not consumed.

Even though we change, HE doesn't. Now, when our LORD calls them "sons of Jacob," HE wasn't judging them but trying to guide them so that they could be changed from being a Jacob (liar and deceiver) to becoming an Israelite OR Israel which means "a Prince with GOD or with the LORD.

It happened because Jacob had been striving to get to know the LORD so that he could get blessings from the LORD and also to become intimate with the LORD; GEN 32:24.

Gen 32:24 "Then Jacob was left alone, and a man [TLJC as a Theophany which refers to Deity taken on the form of humanity in some realm] wrestled with him until daybreak."

GEN 32:25-28, And when he [Jacob] saw that he had not prevailed against (H) him [Him refers to outward form of Deity within a form that only the LORD could manifest Himself with as the GOD-man, or as a cloud by day and fire by night], He touched the socket of His thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." So he said to

him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” And he said, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with GOD and with men and have prevailed.”

Every time we see the name Israel it doesn't always refer to a nation or a land. Israel also means that **He Will Be a Prince with GOD.**

GEN 32:29, Then Jacob asked him and said, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And he blessed him there.

Then, here is definitely an Eye and Ears passage; **GEN 32:30, So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, “I have seen GOD face to face, yet my life has been preserved.”**

This phrase “I have seen GOD face to face, yet my life has been preserved” is an amazing passage of scripture that actually can also refer to the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Doctrine of Divine Providence.

Back now in **MAL 3:7, “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?'**

And then how shall we return is given in **MAL 3:8, “Will a man rob GOD? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes and offerings.”**

Notice that there is a distinction between tithes and offerings. What does the main distinction refer to?

In the time of apostasy in Israel the citizens, both the believers and unbelievers, failed to pay their taxes and believers were not fulfilling their obligation in spiritual giving as well.

Tithes refer to a system of taxation that both believers and unbelievers were to pay, whereas the offerings can refer to the animal sacrifices that the Jews were to offer to the LORD as well as giving offerings to Jehovah in forms of materialism.

Giving is an important function of the spiritual life. You may have given little consideration to this subject, but it is much more than simply giving money. In fact, would you like to see this principle and hear this principle as it is given in the Word of GOD.

2CO 8:1-2, Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of GOD which has been given in the churches of Macedonia (Philippians), that in a great ordeal of affliction [they were not wealthy people themselves] in their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

Notice that they didn't have a lot of money or logistics, but they were still gracious givers who believed the words that our LORD said concerning giving.

2CO 8:3, For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord,

What a verse! The apostle Paul is really instructing us on how and what to give.

For those of you who are continually and constantly having financial problems or making money or even receiving money or gifts, learn to do so with the proper motivation.

Remember, do not deny your fellow believer, male or female, the privilege of giving and the blessings that result from having a gracious attitude in the realm of giving; ACT 20:35.

And notice their attitude toward giving that they had as **2CO 8:3** says, **“For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord.”**

And then in 2CO 8:4 the apostle Paul says that the believers at Philippi were begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,

Next, we have a very important principle of the Doctrine of Giving that is GIVEN to us in 2CO 8:5. This is a verse that changes everything especially if the believer has failed in the realm of finances. Here my friends is the main verse; 2CO 8:5 and this, not as we had expected, but they first **gave themselves to the LORD** and **to us** by the will of GOD.

There are a few more positive principles concerning the subject of giving that is found in 2CO 8:5.

I documented all of that information that I have given you this morning so that you can truly understand what I am about to say to you. The answers that you give will reveal what you truly think about the word of GOD.

Now, do you believe that there are certain subjects in the word of GOD that are very vital and important for the believer to obey what the Bible says concerning the subject that you are asking about.

Do you believe that there are certain doctrinal principles that are much more important than other doctrines?

Do you believe that salvation is one of those doctrines that the believer cannot afford to mistranslate the passage or the verse in question?

Do you believe in the salvation that our LORD has provided for us and why it must be taught precisely and accurately?

Therefore, Do you believe that there is only one way to salvation, faith alone with Christ alone. Over 120 times the word believe (only) is related to how an individual can become a Christian.

My point that I'm trying to make and prove is that the Bible is a book that you and I can read and understand that I believe gets right to the point if you are available to be taught precisely and without compromise.

I believe that salvation is a very important doctrine for believers to master so that there is no confusion whatsoever on what the LORD is trying to say to us in an accurate way.

Let's take another popular subject which is filled with confusion and can destroy the life of individuals who reject the subject of giving and receiving, and therefore, they are either being blessed in the realm of giving or under a curse as we will see.

Now, Do you believe that giving is a very vital subject to master and where there are no excuses one can give for not being blessed for their attitude when it comes to giving.

Giving by means of grace has always been the attitude that our LORD had in all realms of giving especially when it comes to giving to the LORD or HIS people. One of the most popular passages when it comes to giving is what GOD the Father gave to us as JOH 3:16 says, **“For GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”**

Giving is related to so many other Biblical doctrines that two chapters in Second Corinthians are necessary to adequately cover its relationship to the spiritual life; 2CO 8:1-9:15.

Giving includes your attitude, your viewpoint, the condition of your soul, the giving of yourself and of your capacity to give as well as of your possessions. Billions and billions of years ago GOD knew that, because of the angelic conflict, the function of giving would be attacked both within the local church and in the secular world.

That my friends is the dogmatic truth. Many people give because they think that GOD is a “genie” who will give them what they want because they gave a certain amount in the collection plate = wrong motivation. Also, what do all of the principles that are involved in salvation really teach and reveal? They teach the importance of being accurate and right to the point without using semantics but instead they reveal the exact way to be saved.

Now, my point is that in JOH 15 our LORD warns His disciples to be on the alert because of the false doctrines that apostate believers promote especially those who distort the real truth involved in salvation and rebound and recovery; JOH 15:2-6.

There are four vital doctrines that I want you to see that are very important for us to be accurate with the beliefs that we have. They are the four subjects that are mentioned in some way in our LORD's last message to HIS disciples.

Now, first I will give you the four subjects that I believe are important for us to be accurate in if we are going worship GOD properly in Spirit and definitely in Truth.

Here they are:

Salvation.

Rebound and Recovery.

Giving of Self; 2CO 8:5 - they gave themselves first to the LORD.

Eternal Security.

Now, listen to me very carefully, what happened to believers in the Old Testament who refused to follow our LORD's commands of Tithing (taxes) and Grace-giving (reciprocation for the spiritual truth that men of GOD give to every generation.

What happened is given to us in the next verse in our passage. Here it is **MAL 3:9, "You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!"**

Prin: To rob from the LORD means that both believers and unbelievers refuse to pay their taxes and also refuse to give double honor in the spiritual realm of giving to those individuals who have been laboring in the spiritual realm just for you, as a believer.

1TI 5:17-18, Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”

When the Bible says in **LUK 6:38**, **“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.”**

Now, that is the Bible, the Word of GOD and the mind and thinking of our LORD Jesus Christ, HE said that. HE also said in **ACT 20:35** that, **“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”**

Do you believe that?

Do you live like that?

In the time of apostasy in Israel the citizens, both the believers and unbelievers, failed to pay their taxes and believers were not fulfilling their obligation in spiritual giving as well.

And, it is an attitude like that which hinders the believer from giving and receiving.

In fact, look at Mal 3 again.

MAL 3:6-18, “For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. 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?’ Will a man rob GOD? Yet you are robbing Me!

But you say, ‘How have we robbed Thee?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring 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.

Then 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.

And all the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land, says the LORD of hosts. Your words have been arrogant against Me, says the LORD. Yet you say, ‘What have we spoken against Thee?’ You have said, ‘It is vain to serve GOD; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked in mourning before the LORD of hosts? So now we call the arrogant blessed;

not only are the doers of wickedness built up, but they also test GOD and escape.'

Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name.

And they will be Mine, says the LORD of hosts, on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves GOD and one who does not serve Him.”

Tithing (a system of taxation for both believers and unbelievers, it has nothing to do with grace-giving.

EPH 4:17-27, This I say therefore, and affirm together with the LORD, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of GOD, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of GOD has been created in

righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.