

The Biblical Principle of Giving



Peter Warren

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by Peter Warren

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again”

Luke 6.38



Unless otherwise stated all direct quotations from the Bible come from the King James Version and are shown in bold type.

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BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE OF GIVING

The subject of giving is much bigger than I am going to cover in this booklet. The purpose of what I am writing to you is so that you get a greater understanding of what the Bible teaches on giving. Whenever we mention this subject everybody immediately assumes that we are talking about money, and we will be to a great extent, but giving involves much more; we can give our time, our talents, an encouraging word, love, friendship and I could go on.

GOD'S COVENANT WORDS

Before we get into looking at this subject of giving we must first lay a foundation and base for our study. We need to establish in our hearts and minds that God's Word is true. One of the fundamental doctrines of the church is that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Even though it was penned down by approximately forty different men and women it has one author, God.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”
2 Timothy 3. 16

The Bible in its entirety is inspired of God, that means that it is His word. It is His covenant with you and me and that covenant cannot be broken. If God could break His covenant then the world would fall apart, the universe would crumble and everything would cease to be. That should get us all excited, if God cannot break His word then it is trustworthy and dependable. An old preacher friend of mine used to say that we can 'hang our shirt on the promises of God'. Jesus taught His disciples on the dependability of His words in Mark 13. 31.

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away”

Even if Heaven and earth pass away and come to an end, still God's word would remain. It is steadfast, established and unchanging and stands forever.

“For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled [established, fixed firm, covenanted] in heaven”

Psalm 119.89

Therefore we can come to the conclusion that whatever God says in His word is true, and what He says He will do.

GIVING IS GOD'S NATURE

God is not an unjust God, He wouldn't ask us to do something that He would not do Himself. God is the best

example of a giver that I know - Giving is not in His nature it IS His nature. GOD IS A GIVER. Let us look at one of the most famous verses in the Bible and see His nature in operation.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” John 3. 16

God gave the best He had for you, me and all mankind. He gave His very best, He gave all that He had that was dear to Him, He gave His only begotten Son. Notice God's motive for giving, it was His love for us, His love for a world that didn't care about Him, that rejected Him, turned their back on Him. Yet out of love for them, God gave.

The primary objective that we should have as Christians is to be like God, to imitate Him, to have His nature. Out of our love for Him we too should be givers. We should not give to God because we feel compelled to during a service nor as some means of trying to pay back God for all that He has done for us. We should give because we want to give, because we love Him. The Bible says that God loves cheerful givers, those who are happy to give, those who love to give.

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9. 7

WE CANNOT OUT-GIVE GOD

Laws govern nature, they are unchanging and existed long before their discovery. Gravity has always been there, since God created it, but no one knew about it until the day that Isaac Newton discovered it. Like nature, there are laws in the spiritual realm. When we give to God we start operating in the spiritual law of giving and receiving and this law runs throughout the Bible. It is also referred to as the law of 'sowing and reaping' or 'seedtime and harvest'.

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” Luke 6. 38

This law begins operating the moment we give to God. Give and it will be given unto you. You cannot out-give God the more that you give, the more that is given to you. My father is a pastor and preacher and as you can imagine I have sat and listened to many of his sermons. One particular one I remember was based on this verse. He brought to the church that day several types of spoons, a teaspoon, tablespoon, ladle and shovel to illustrate the statement 'with the same measure that ye mete (or use) it shall be measured to you'. If we are going to use the teaspoon measure in our attitude of giving, that is sparingly, then we will receive blessings in that same measure. However if we want the shovelful of blessings then we need to give using the shovelful measure. We cannot give sparingly and reap bountifully. Bountiful givers receive the

bountiful harvest.

A few moments ago we looked at the verse from 2 Corinthians where it said that God loves a cheerful giver. Let us now look at the context of that verse. It shows this law of giving and receiving.

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.” **2 Corinthians 9. 6-11**

When you give to God, He is able to make all grace abound toward you so that you have more than enough for your needs with some left over for you to meet the needs of others.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”
Galatians 6. 7

Whatever we sow, we shall reap the same. We sow sparingly we reap sparingly, bountifully we reap bountifully. If a farmer goes to the trouble of ploughing his fields and preparing the ground to receive the seed, he will make sure he sows the correct seed. He does not sow corn if he wants a wheat crop, neither does he sow cabbages if he wants to grow potatoes. His harvest depends on his seed. If the farmer wants to harvest wheat he sows wheat, if he wants potatoes he sows potatoes. In our giving if we want to reap a good harvest we need to sow good seeds. Bad seeds will only produce a bad harvest. Our giving needs to be directed into good ground.

TITHING

To a lot of Christians this is a dirty word but it is what God expects of us. The tithe is the first 10% of your income. In Bible times the people's tithe wasn't just money but included oil, crops, animals and items that they had been blessed with.

“And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change

thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed. These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.”

Leviticus 27. 30-34

Those who don't tithe are robbing God of His portion. 'That's a bit strong Peter' you may say but it is only what God's word says,

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Malachi 3. 8-11

The tithe is given for a purpose, that there might be food in God's house, not physical food but spiritual sound teaching and doctrine. This is the only time, in giving, that God asks us to prove Him. Begin to tithe today and see if God will not open the windows of Heaven and pour you out such a blessing that you will not have enough room to receive all that He has for you.

But isn't tithing just an Old Testament law ? Certainly not, Before the law was established Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek, king of Salem. Melchizedek was a type of Christ.

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.” Genesis 14. 18-20

Jacob gave the tithe as well,

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” Genesis 28. 20-22

The New Testament mentions it too.

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” 1 Corinthians 16. 1-2

Although these verses don't mention tithing by name, it does speak of proportionate giving, 'as God hath prospered him'. On the first day of the week [Sunday] according to how you have prospered in the previous week, you should bring that to the Lord. Freewill offerings and gifts are over and above the tithe. The tithe is the first fruits of your income.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

As we have seen throughout this booklet giving is an attitude that God expects us to adopt. Yes you should bring the tithe to the church each week or each month depending on how regularly you get paid. It is also your responsibility as a Christian to support your local church in the giving of freewill offerings.

We are commissioned by Jesus to **“go into all the world and preach the gospel” (Mark 16. 15)**, we should be actively taking the gospel message to everyone by every means possible. It takes money to purchase air time on radio and TV, to print literature and produce books, to fly on a plane, or to put petrol in a car. Money is needed to pay for the electricity and heating in the church. We cannot get by without it and contrary to popular belief, the money we need for evangelism does not float down from Heaven, it comes through the faithful giving of God's people as He touches their hearts.

God had a complaint with His people in Haggai 1. 4-5

“Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins ? Now therefore, thus says the LORD of Hosts: Consider your ways !”

God wasn't against His people having nice houses, but not at the expense of His house. 'Why should you have nice panelled houses and My house has been left neglected and allowed to become a ruin ?' was the theme of His complaint. It takes money to keep God's house as nice as our own. We decorate every few years, make our homes comfortable and welcoming, why shouldn't God's house be the same ?

I started off by saying that it is not only money that we can give, although this booklet has been about money and the giving of offerings. Giving can include many things. In this closing paragraph I am going to give you just a few examples of what else you can give to God.

A painter and decorator may give his time to paint and redecorate the church, someone who has good secretarial skills or typing may give some time to type letters for the Pastor or deal with some church administration. Can you give an hour to go and visit someone who is sick; write a letter to someone in prison; encourage someone who has been having a tough time; could you pay for someone to have a weekend away at the coast or give someone a lift to church who otherwise would have difficulty in getting there. Giving isn't just about finances, become a giver, give your skills, talents and abilities to God and go and bless Him or someone else today.

There is a story that is told of young boy that attended a small church. One Sunday a missionary visited the church to tell the Sunday School class all about the country he was working in. At the end of the service an offering was taken up for the missionary to take back to the mission field to further his work. The young boy had come to church that day with no money for the offering and so much wanted to give to God to help the missionary. As he reached into his pocket, just checking that he didn't have a spare coin, his hand felt a small glass marble that he had been carrying around. He picked it out and looked at it, "this is all I have", he silently prayed and put it into the offering box. When the service was over and the church elders came to give the offering to the missionary, they remarked about the marble, wanting to remove it from the offering, "What naughty boy had put that in?". The missionary told them that he would take it, perceiving that it had been given to God.

Some time later the missionary felt before God that he was to go to a rather hostile village. As his custom was before entering a village, he went to see the chief tribesman for 'permission' to preach the gospel. He happened to have that glass marble in his pocket and gave it to the tribal chief as a gift. The chief was so fascinated by the array of colour that shone from this 'gem' that he allowed the missionary in. On hearing the gospel the village was saved. The boy's offering was used by God to reach the village. That boy reaped a great harvest from his giving. I wonder what would have happened if the church elders had removed it from the offering on that Sunday afternoon.

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth His brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” 1 John 3. 16-17

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In this final section I want to answer some of the most popular questions on tithing and giving that have been put to me over the years.

Should the tithe be on my gross or net earnings ?

The tithe should be the first 10% that comes out of your income, before income tax or national insurance contributions. Many people have other commitments that come straight from their pay packet before they ever see the money. For some it is their pension contributions, others may have opted in to a shares or savings scheme, have county court judgements etc. To tithe after these deductions would be to tithe on what's left rather than what you earn. God should get the first 10% not the government or any other body.

I am in debt, isn't it right and proper to pay what I already owe first before I give ?

Although I haven't gone into it in great detail in this booklet, the Biblical way to get out of debt is through giving. 'Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap' if you want the finances to get out of debt then you need to sow a financial seed.

Many Christians quote Philippians 4. 19 '**But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus**' while this is true and I believe it wholeheartedly, Paul was writing to a church that gave financially into his ministry. The Philippians were givers and because they gave God was going to meet ALL their NEEDS. Begin to give to God and believe Him for a financial breakthrough in the area of your debt.

What happens if I cannot afford to tithe, I have a lot of outgoings?

You cannot afford NOT to tithe. God, by a miracle, increases what you have left after you have tithed, so that it goes further. Remember the account of the five loaves and two fish (John 6. 1-13) Jesus increased a small lunch so that it fed 5000 men with possibly women and children on top of that number. Don't you think that he can take the money you have left after your tithe so that it can pay all your outgoings and so that there is some left over for you to enjoy and to bless others. By not tithing you dam up the channels of blessing from flowing out to you so that you never have enough.

Can the tithe be given to any ministry that upholds Gods Word or does it have to be the church?

Your tithe should go to your local church, it's the place where God has put you to grow. It is the responsibility of the church to 'feed' you and support you, God has placed you under the care of the pastor. That does not prevent you from giving an offering over and above your tithe to any ministry. Any ministry that seeks to get you to tithe to them rather than your church, is not following the Biblical structure. Your giving to the church will enable the church to give out to other ministries etc.

What about me, I'm on Unemployment Benefit ?

It does not matter whether you are in a well paid job, receiving your pension or on any form of benefit, you should still tithe what you get. See my previous answer to the question "*What happens if I cannot afford to tithe, I have a lot of outgoings ?*" It is not the amount that is important to God, He doesn't actually need your money, it is that you are obedient to His word

Should children tithe their pocket money ?

Personally, I think that they should. It enables them to learn God's principles from an early age. I encourage my children to tithe, not because as a pastor I want the church to have their money, but I want to see them walking in the fulness of the blessing of God. It gives me joy to see them receiving from God.

How do I work out what my tithe should be ?

This is quite simple, even if percentages or mathematics were not your strong subjects. Total up your income including any bonuses, overtime or other money received. To calculate 10% simply divide the total amount by 10. If you find that difficult, just move the decimal point one place to the left (or just disregard the last digit) eg. a tithe on £100 would be £10, £200 would be £20.

Of course working the tithe out exactly would be a bit legalistic, it is far better to round it up on the fat-side.

I have produced a small table below to give you some idea of working out 10%.

Amount	10%	Amount	10%
50p	5p	£143.89	£14.38
£1	10p	£180	£18
£7.50	75p	£250	£25
£10	£1	£375	£37.50
£50	£5	£398	£39.80
£100	£10	£404.24	£40.42
£125	£12.50	£1000	£100

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter David Warren was born in Isleworth, West London, UK in 1967 to Les and Barbara Warren.



At the age of 5 years he invited Jesus Christ into his heart and life, to be his Lord and Saviour. He grew up as a Pastor's kid and attended church regularly from an early age.

At the age of 11 years, the call of God was on his life and from then on he never wanted to do or be anything else other than a preacher, even saying this to his Careers Advisor at school.

On his 18th birthday, Peter was made one of the Ministers of the Full Gospel Fellowship in Wisbech and also became a trustee of Go Evangelise Mission (GEM) of which the church is part.

He was married to Jayne in June 1987 and they have two daughters, Joanna and Debbie.

He is the founder of 'Voice of Faith Ministries International' and has preached in many places in the UK and overseas. Many are blessed and healed each year, and have received from God the answers to their needs under his ministry, through prayer in the name of Jesus.

Peter and Jayne have recently returned to the UK from serving the Lord in Malta where they were for six years. They currently live in Leicester, UK

The Biblical Principle of Giving

This is a book all about giving. Giving is not a doctrine that the church has dreamed up to make itself rich. Giving is a principle that God established. In this book you will see what the Bible says about giving, and will help you understand that -

- Giving is God's nature*
- Giving is the means that spreads the Gospel*
- You cannot out-give God*
- Tithes and offerings are your responsibility before God*

Peter also answers some questions that many Christians have and offers some practical advice about giving.