

The Journey Church

Positional Statement: Tithing & Giving

What is a tithe?

The word "tithe" simply translates to a "tenth." The first biblical reference to tithing is in Genesis 14:18-20 when Abraham gave a tenth of what he took in battle to Melchizedek, the Priest and king of the city of Salem.

God later made tithing a part of the law when God specified that the tithe given to God by the Israelites was to be used to support the Levites because the Levites were chosen to serve as the Priests of Israel and were not given an inheritance among the Israelites.¹

How much are Christians required to give?

The Journey believes that the entire Bible is the inerrant word of God. We believe that the modern church is to follow the teachings of the New Testament and that we are no longer bound by the requirements of Mosaic Law as prescribed in the Old Testament.

The teachings of the New Testament do not specify an exact amount or percentage of assets or income to give to the Church. Rather, giving should have three basic characteristics:

1. Sacrificial
2. Cheerful
3. Consistent

Sacrificial giving:

No matter what amount we give, it should be a sacrifice. Webster's Dictionary defines sacrifice as the surrender of something prized or desirable for the sake of something considered as having a higher or more pressing claim. When we give, it should be in an amount that is desirable to us and will cause us to forego something else in our lives that we normally would not forego. Pause should be taken before making an offering to determine what amount will constitute a sacrifice. For some, ten percent would not constitute a sacrifice. For others, ten percent will be a challenging goal to work toward.

Followers of Christ should not rest on the Old Testament teachings of a tithe (or tenth) as an ultimate goal to be achieved. Rather, the tithe should be treated as a floor or a foundation point and followers should challenge themselves to make their giving sacrificial.

Tithing has always been a biblical principle. Tithing is not exclusively a creation of Mosaic Law. Abraham tithed to Melchizedek before the law was given.² Tithing was later mandated

¹ Numbers 8:8-32

² Genesis 14:18-20

by the Mosaic Law. Jesus came to fulfill the law; therefore we are no longer bound by that mandate. However, tithing is still an acceptable biblical principle.

Cheerful giving:

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."³ There are many blessings to be received as a result of our giving. This is illustrated in the book of Malachi: "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need."⁴ This is the **only** area of our lives in which we are invited to test God.

Before making an offering, each person should take the time to examine their own heart and take an inventory of the blessings God has given. It is impossible to give back proportionally to what God has given us. Out of obedience, we should give back a small portion of what God has blessed us with.

Consistent giving:

"On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once."⁵ Our blessings from God are not sporadic, they are consistent. Our giving, which is a direct reflection of our blessings, should be consistent as well. The church relies on tithes and offerings to advance the message of Jesus. Without regular consistent giving, the church can not operate with any sort of effectiveness or intentional planning.

What happens to my offering?

Offering is counted by a rotating team of several people. The church's finance team must be in agreement before money is spent. The church keeps detailed records of all finances. A six month budget is prepared by the finance team and is made available as public record. All funds are spent in a prayerful manner and are intended to advance God's Kingdom.

Can I specify how my tithe is used or where it goes?

God has ordained leaders of the church to budget and allocate funds in accordance with His will. A person's regular tithe and offering should be given to the church with faith. Earmarking funds undermines the responsibility God has given the leaders of the church.

³ 2 Corinthians 9:7

⁴ Malachi 3:10

⁵ 1 Corinthians 16:2

Members are always welcome to give in addition to their tithe (tenth) to a specific area or cause (i.e. children's area, building campaigns, missionaries, etc.).