

THE MINISTRY OF GIVING

“The New Testament Dimension in Tithes and Offerings”

I. Study Resources

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION – Matthew 23:23

Textual Passage – The Amplified Bible

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, pretenders (hypocrites)! For you give a tenth of your mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected *and* omitted the weightier (more important) matters of the Law – right *and* justice and mercy and fidelity. These you ought [particularly] to have done, without neglecting the others.

Helpful Translations

“Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, you utter frauds!”

The New Testament in Modern English, J. B. Phillips

“for you make men give a tenth of all sorts of sweet-smelling plants”

The New Testament in Basic English

“For you tithe down to the last mint leaf in your garden”

Living Letters: Living Gospels, Kenneth N. Taylor

“and have left undone . . .”

The American Standard Version

“ . . . neglected . . .”

The Revised Standard Version

“ . . . overlooked the weightier demands . . .”

The New English Bible

“but ignore the important things”

Living Letters: Living Gospels, Kenneth N. Taylor

“these it was binding to do, and those not to dismiss”

The Emphasized New Testament: A New Translation
J. B. Rotherham

“It is these ye should have practiced, without neglecting the others”

The New English Bible

“These last you ought to have put in practice, without neglecting the first”

The Twentieth Century New Testament

EXEGETICAL INSIGHTS

“Woe”

Ouai. A primary exclamation of grief.

“Scribes”

Grammateus. Scribes were copyists of the Scriptures. Because of their minute acquaintance with the Law they became recognized authorities. They were sometimes called “lawyers.” Scribes and Pharisees were the religious leaders of the nation.

Halley's Bible Handbook, p. 445
Henry H. Halley

“Pharisees”

Pharisaios. Pharisees were the most numerous and influential of the religious sects of Jesus' day. They were strict legalists. They stood for the rigid observance of the letter and forms of the Law, and also for the Traditions. There were some good men among them. But in the main they were known for their covetousness, self-righteousness and hypocrisy.

Henry H. Halley, p. 445

“Hypocrites”

Hupokrites. Individuals acting under a feigned part.

“Mint”

Heduosmon. The most common species of mint is *Mentha sativa*, L., which is universally cultivated and used as a flavoring in salads and in cookery. *Hdusmal* (Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42) was probably generic for other kinds of mint, as well as the above.

Under's Bible Dictionary, p. 1139
Merrill F. Unger

“Anise”

Anethon. The marginal rendering *dill* is undoubtedly the true one. It is the aromatic, carminative seed of

Anethum graveolens, L., an umbellifera, cultivated widely in the East, and used both in cookery and domestic medicine.

Merrill F. Unger, p. 1133

"Cummin"

Kuminon. It is still known by its ancient name *kammun*) throughout the Arabic world. It is an aromatic and carminative, used in cooking and in domestic medicine. It is still threshed with a rod (Isaiah 28: 25, 27). It has been superseded in modern times by caraway seeds, more nutritious and tasty.

Merrill F. Unger, p. 1136

"Judgment"

Krisis. The idea of judgment occurs frequently in the New Testament, about 150 times in its noun and verb forms It is rooted in the holiness of God, who alone judges justly. This serves as a lever to edge people nearer to God in salvation. It is also a challenge for Christians to live godly lives.

New Testament Words in Today's Language, p. 242
Wayne A. Detzler

"Mercy"

Eleos. The word means "compassion," "pity," and "mercy." . . . One New Testament scholar defined "mercy" as "the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else" (Colin Brown, editor, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*).

Wayne A. Detzler, p. 280

"Faith"

Pistis. The word means primarily, firm persuasion, a conviction based upon hearing (akin to *peitho*, to persuade), is used in the N. T. always of faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS AND HISTORICAL SETTING

Jesus talked much about money. Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables were concerned with how to handle money and possessions. In the Gospels, an amazing one out of ten verses (288 in all) deals directly with the subject of money. The Bible offers 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith,

but more than 2,000 verses on money and possessions.

Leadership – Volume 2, No. 2, Howard L. Dayton, Jr.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

There is no question that the Old Testament Law required tithing (Lev. 27:30; Deut. 14:20-22). Abraham had practiced tithing long before the Law was given (Gen. 14:20), and Jacob followed his grandfather's example (Gen. 28:20-27). The principles of Christian giving under grace are given in II Cor. 8-9. We are not content simply to give a tithe (10%), but we also want to bring offerings to the Lord out of hearts filled with love.

Be Loyal, p.168, Warren W. Wiersbe

II. Application Resources

POSSIBLE TITLES

"Law Vs. Grace And My Paycheck"

"New Testament Dimension In Tithes And Offerings"

"Should The Bible Control My Money?"

"It's What Is Left Over, That's My Responsibility"

"Can I Be Too Religious?"

POSSIBLE OUTLINES

- I. Grace Outdoes the Law, but Never Negates It.
- II. Grace Looks for Opportunities to Express Itself
- III. Grace Never Counts the Cost in Giving

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

The day the church treasurer resigned, the church asked the local grain elevator manager to take the position. He agreed under two conditions:

- ❖ That no treasurer's report would be given for the first year.
- ❖ That no questions be asked about finances during the year.

The people were surprised, but finally agreed since most of them did business with him and he was a trusted man.

At the end of the year he gave this report:

- ❖ The church indebtedness of \$228,000 had been paid.
- ❖ The minister's salary had been increased by the amount of 8 percent.
- ❖ The Cooperative Program had been paid 200 percent.
- ❖ There were no outstanding bills.
- ❖ And there was a cash balance of \$11,252!

Immediately the shocked congregation asked, "How did you do it? Where did the money come from?"

He answered quietly: "Most of you bring your grain to my elevator. Throughout the year I simply withheld 10 percent on your behalf and gave it to the church in your name.

You didn't even miss it!" Do you see what we could do for the Lord if we were all willing to give at least the tithe to God, who really owns it?

And so the new treasurer had made his point.

Lectern Resource, January/February/March 1995, p. 9

† † †

"Annually, Americans spend more on dog food than on church contributions." We might want to review some priorities!

The Best of 'In Other Words . . .' p. 112

† † †

On one occasion Martin Luther railed against his congregation for being stingy in their giving. From the pulpit he said, "you ungrateful beasts! You are not worthy of the treasures of the Gospel. If you don't improve, I will stop preaching rather than cast pearls before swine."

Raymond McHenry, p. 257

† † †

In *I Talk Back to the Devil*, A. W. Tozer reminds us: Money often comes between men and God. Someone has said that you can take two small ten-cent pieces, just two dimes, and shut out the view of a

panoramic landscape. Go to the mountains and just hold two coins closely in front of your eyes—the mountains are still there, but you cannot see them at all because there is a dime shutting off the vision in each eye.

It doesn't take large quantities of money to come between us and God; just a little, placed in the wrong position, will effectively obscure our view.

Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching, p. 155
Craig Brian Larson

III. Worship Resources

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Each has received a gift!

Response: Let us employ it for one another as good stewards of God's varied grace.

Leader: By the mercies of God, let us present our bodies to be living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God.

Response: We give ourselves, body, mind and spirit to God that by his grace we may fulfill the calling to which he has called us.

Leader: Praise the Lord!

Response: The Lord's name be praised!

The Clergy Journal, May/June 1985, p. 70

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Leader: "You fill us and you feed us, O God!"

Response: Creator God, you made so many things; in your wisdom you made them all, filling the earth and the oceans with countless creatures great and small.

Leader: "You fill us and you feed us, O God!"

Response: Each depends on your providing, with generous hand you satisfy; you gather up their breath in death,

your Spirit gives new life again.

Leader: "You fill us and you feed us, O God!"

Response: Glory be to you forever!
may you be pleased with what you have
made;
the earth trembles and mountains move
when you look upon them
I will sing of your glory as long as I
live;
may my song be pleasing,
for my gladness comes from you.

Leader: "You fill us and you feed us, O God!"

Lectern Resource, April/May/June 1998, p. 27

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Malachi 3:7-12

CONGREGATIONAL SONGS AND HYMNS

"Eternal God, unchanging" 6/245

"And is it so? A gift from me" 475/133

"O God, what offering shall I give" 516/499 or 501

"O Lord, thy heavenly grace impart" 517/24 or 26

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Thank You"

Gaither Copyright Management, Ray Boltz

"Count Your Blessings"

Sing PRAISE Volume 6

The Salvation Army U.S.A. Southern Territory