

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

Money On My Mind

October 19-22, 2023

Start Talking

What was your first paying job as a kid or right out of school? What was it like?

Main Idea

We are in Week 3 of the series, "Money On My Mind". Money is one of the most frequent topics in all of the Bible. God understands that money often competes for the allegiance of our hearts because of the false sense of security, status, and importance that it promises, but only He can truly provide. This week, we discuss the principle and practice of tithes and offerings. Tithing is misunderstood by some, thinking that the Church or even God just wants their money, while others misunderstand it to be an Old Testament principle that doesn't apply to New Testament believers. Pastor Ken taught about God's principle of "firsts"—the first male sheep or goat used as a sacrifice, the firstborn son, the first fruits of the harvest, and the first 10% (tithe) of our finances. God wants us to know Him as fully as we can, and tithing is one of His mechanisms to enrich our relationship because through it:

1. We honor and worship God
2. It reminds us of our place and what He has done
3. It puts us in position to experience God's favor and blessings
4. It is the fuel to move the ministry and meet needs

When God is first, everything else can come into order! So, let's tune in together to hear what God has to say about His principle of the tithe!

Personalize It

1. Is tithing an uneasy topic to talk about? If so, why do you think that is? Do we misunderstand God's word? Do we disagree with it? Do we feel convicted by it? Would we rather ignore it? Are we afraid to trust it?
2. What is the distinction between "giving" to God and "bringing" to God? Why is it important to understand the difference?
3. Discuss each of the four aspects of tithing listed above. Which one resonates with you and why? Do they illustrate a matter of money or a matter of the heart?
4. Does God want your tithe without your heart? Does he want your heart without your tithe?
5. Is God able to meet all your needs? Why do we find it hard to live out our answer?

Let's Do It! Commit to a step and live it out this week!

1. We tend to trust who we know. The same is true with God. Reflect this week on God's character and promises. Is He sovereign? Is He faithful? Does He love you? Is He able to meet your needs? God gives us the principle of the tithe—the first fruits, the firstborn, the first 10%—for our benefit.

Write down some Scriptures that remind you of God's character and place them where you will see them often this week. Malachi 3:7-10 is a good place to start!

2. Make a list of blessings in your life that money can't buy. Maybe it contains names of loved ones and friends. Perhaps your health, freedom to worship and pursue God, indoor plumbing, and a soft bed to sleep in at night. We can become unappreciative of all we have in our lives when we constantly look for the next thing. Take time to look at God's blessings in your life today and thank Him.
3. Are you in financial bondage? Are you able to save, get out of debt, and get ahead? Is your spending under control? Do you want to be more generous? Sit down with your spouse (if married) or alone this week and take an honest look at how you are doing financially. If you are not where you want to be, *decide now* to join a Financial Peace University class at Cypress next semester. Money can be a wonderful servant, but for many of us it has become a terrible master. It's time to break free! Financial Peace information can be found on the Cypress Church app under "Next Steps", the QR code during Cypress services, or [HERE](#).

Let's Pray

Father, we praise You for who You are! Loving, faithful, merciful, gracious and generous! You have given us so much in this life and through our relationship with Jesus. But Lord, this is a hard one. We admit that we look for ways to love You that don't involve anything uncomfortable. It seems obvious that if we take from what we have, we will have less. The world takes so much from our paychecks, and then we use the leftovers to spend on a few wants. We confess that too often we make You last place in our finances, forgetting that You are sovereign over the earth and everything in it, that when we bring You a slice of our financial pie that You are the one who can make more pies! Help us to understand Your principle for tithing, that it is a means to deeper trust and relationship with You. You don't need our money but strongly desire our hearts. Help us to take steps of obedience in trusting Your truth, promises, and love because we truly want to love You first, with nothing in the way! Be our strength when we are weak. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Scriptures

Exodus 13:1-2 (NLT)

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Dedicate to me every firstborn among the Israelites. The first offspring to be born, of both humans and animals, belongs to me."

Exodus 13:11-13 (NLT)

"This is what you must do when the LORD fulfills the promise he swore to you and to your ancestors. When he gives you the land where the Canaanites now live, you must present all firstborn sons and firstborn male animals to the LORD, for they belong to him. A firstborn donkey may be bought back from the LORD by presenting a lamb or young goat in its place. But if you do not buy it back, you must break its neck. However, you must buy back every firstborn son."

John 1:29 (NLT)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Exodus 23:19 (NLT)

"As you harvest your crops, bring the very best of the first harvest to the house of the LORD your God."

Proverbs 3:9-10 (NLT)

Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

Malachi 3:7-10 (NLT)

"Ever since the days of your ancestors, you have scorned my decrees and failed to obey them. Now return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "But you ask, 'How can we return when we have never gone away?' Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! But you ask, 'What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?' You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!"

Jeremiah 19:13 (NLT)

"Yes, all the houses in Jerusalem, including the palace of Judah's kings, will become like Topheth—all the houses where you burned incense on the rooftops to your star gods, and where liquid offerings were poured out to your idols."

Exodus 13:14-15 (NLT)

"And in the future, your children will ask you, 'What does all this mean?' Then you will tell them, 'With the power of his mighty hand, the LORD brought us out of Egypt, the place of our slavery. Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, so the LORD killed all the firstborn males throughout the land of Egypt, both people and animals. That is why I now sacrifice all the firstborn males to the LORD—except that the firstborn sons are always bought back.'"