

Tithing vs. Cheerful Giving: A Biblical Perspective

Introduction

Tithing and cheerful giving are both biblical principles related to financial stewardship and generosity. However, they originate from different covenants and carry different emphases. This document explores both concepts using scriptural references to help believers understand and practice giving in a way that honors God.

1. Tithing: An Old Testament Practice

- **Definition:** Tithing means giving one-tenth (10%) of one's income or produce.
- **Biblical Origin:**
 - **Genesis 14:18–20** – Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything.
 - **Leviticus 27:30** – “A tithe of everything... belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.”
 - **Malachi 3:10** – “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse... Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty.
- **Purpose:**
 - Support the Levitical priesthood (Numbers 18:21–24).
 - Care for the poor, the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow (Deuteronomy 14:28–29).

2. Cheerful Giving: A New Testament Principle

- **2 Corinthians 9:6–7** – “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”
- **Galatians 6:7–10** – Emphasizes sowing to the Spirit and not growing weary in doing good.
- **Acts 2:44–45** – Early believers gave freely and shared everything in common.
- **Romans 12:8** – Encourages giving generously as a spiritual gift.

3. Comparing the Two

Tithing	Cheerful Giving
Old Covenant law	New Covenant principle
Fixed 10% amount	Proportional and voluntary
Commanded	Encouraged from the heart
Supports religious system	Supports the needs of others and ministry
Reward linked to obedience	Reward linked to heart and faith

Conclusion

Believers are called to give not just out of obligation but out of love for God and people. Tithing may be a helpful discipline, but the New Testament elevates giving to a heart-level act of worship. May our giving reflect the grace we have received.

Key Scriptures:

- Genesis 14:18–20
- Leviticus 27:30
- Malachi 3:10
- 2 Corinthians 9:6–15
- Galatians 6:7–10
- Acts 2:44–45
- Romans 12:8