

Should Christians Tithe, or Does the Church Just Want My Money?

Text: Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 23:23; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Introduction

One of the most common objections to church today is, "All the church wants is my money."

Many people have been hurt by ministries that abused finances. Some have seen television preachers misuse offerings. Others wonder whether tithing was only for the Old Testament.

These questions deserve honest biblical answers.

The issue is not whether God needs our money. God owns everything already.

Psalm 24:1 (NIV):

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."

The real question is: **What does our giving reveal about our relationship with God?**

Today we'll discover that biblical giving is not about funding God's kingdom because He is broke. It is about developing faithful disciples whose hearts belong fully to Him.

I. Tithing Is Not About God's Need—It's About Our Trust

Malachi 3:8-10

God accused Israel of robbing Him through withholding tithes and offerings.

Notice God did not need their money. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills.

The tithe was never designed to enrich God. It was designed to teach God's people dependence upon Him.

Every tithe declared: "God, You are my source."

The first ten percent represented faith that God would bless the remaining ninety percent.

Money is one of the greatest competitors for our hearts.

Jesus spoke more about money than almost any other subject because He knew its power.

Matthew 6:21

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Your bank statement often reveals your priorities better than your calendar.

Giving is a spiritual discipline that breaks the grip of materialism.

II. Jesus Did Not Abolish Generous Giving

Matthew 23:23

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees:

"You give a tenth of your spices... But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness."

Notice something important. Jesus did not condemn tithing.

He said:

"You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former."

The problem was not that they tithed. The problem was that they tithed without holiness.

Some believers argue: "We're under grace, not law."

That is true.

Grace never lowers God's standards; grace raises them.

Under the Law people gave ten percent.

Under grace, believers surrendered everything.

The early church sold possessions, shared resources, and gave sacrificially.

The New Testament emphasis moves from obligation to devotion.

The question becomes:

Not "How little can I give?"

But: "How much has God entrusted me to steward?"

III. God Is After Hearts, Not Wallets

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus watched people place offerings into the temple treasury. Many rich people gave large amounts.

Then a poor widow gave two small coins.

Jesus said she gave more than all the others.

Why?

Because God measures sacrifice differently than man. People count dollars. God examines devotion.

The widow's offering teaches that giving is not primarily about amount.

It is about surrender. A wealthy person can give thousands and never trust God.

A poor believer can give a small amount and demonstrate tremendous faith. God sees what nobody else can see.

He sees motive.

He sees sacrifice.

He sees obedience.

IV. The Church Is Not Supposed to Worship Money

1 Timothy 6:10

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."

This warning applies to church members and church leaders alike.

Whenever ministry becomes obsessed with money, something is wrong.

The church exists to make disciples, not dollars.

There are churches that misuse finances.

There are leaders who manipulate people.

There are ministries that pressure and guilt people.

These practices should be rejected.

However, the abuse of giving does not eliminate the biblical principle of giving.

We do not abandon prayer because some people pray hypocritically.

We do not abandon preaching because some preach falsely.

Likewise, we do not abandon generosity because some misuse it.

Holiness teaching has always emphasized stewardship, simplicity, and sacrificial living.

The goal is not accumulating wealth but advancing God's kingdom.

Money becomes dangerous when it controls us.

Giving helps keep possessions in their proper place.

V. New Testament Giving Is Cheerful, Generous, and Worshipful

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 *"God loves a cheerful giver."*

Paul teaches several principles:

- 1. Giving should be intentional.** (We should pray and plan our giving)
- 2. Giving should be generous.** (We cannot outgive God)
- 3. Giving should be cheerful.** (Giving is worship, not punishment)
- 4. Giving should be faith-filled.** (God promises to provide for His people)

The New Testament does not focus on percentages nearly as much as it focuses on surrender.

For many believers, the tithe becomes a starting point rather than a finish line.

The issue is not whether God can survive without our money.

The issue is whether we trust Him enough to put Him first.

VI. Does the Church Just Want My Money?

The honest biblical answer is:

A healthy church should want something greater than your money.

It should want your heart.

God does not need your money.

He wants your devotion. He wants your trust. He wants your obedience. He wants your worship.

If all a church talks about is money, that is unhealthy.

But if a church never teaches stewardship, it is neglecting a major area of discipleship.

Jesus addressed money frequently because money frequently competes with God for lordship in our lives.

The question is not:

"Does God want my money?"

The question is:

"Does God have my heart?"

When God has your heart, your finances will follow.

When God is first in your life, giving becomes an act of worship instead of an obligation.

Tithing and generous giving are not about funding a needy God.

They are about forming faithful disciples.

The church should never manipulate people into giving.

But believers should never allow fear, greed, or skepticism to keep them from honoring God with their resources.

Proverbs 3:9-10

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing."

Honor God first. Trust Him completely. Watch what He does with what remains.