

3-6-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: The Antidote

Purpose: Purpose: Provoke people to bring their tithe and give offerings to the Lord through the local church.

Truth for Today: Mature believers honor God with their tithe and offerings as the antidote to the love of money.

Text: Matthew 6:19-24

Topic: Heart, Money, Tithing, Love of Money

Series Title: The Big 10...the Path to Spiritual Maturity

Series Purpose: Provoke people to actively pursue spiritual maturity by applying the Big 10 causes for spiritual growth.

## The Antidote

- I. Introduction Bibles for Bangladesh. App Bibles for Missions or globe box 7200/3931
  - A. [1 Peter 2:2 (NIV) Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may **grow up in your salvation**] Today we'll finish the series, The Big 10, the Path to Spiritual Maturity. It's about the power of daily disciplines and experiences proven to produce spiritual maturity. The Big 10 is the prescription for spiritual growth. Review flyer.
  - B. Last week we talked about #8 and #10, sharing our faith and going on a short-term mission trip. Testimony Samantha Knox, Pictures Our pregnancy ministry team went to the 40 Days for Life prayer rally at the abortion clinic in Shreveport. We stood on the sidewalk and worshipped and prayed. There was also a huge Mardi Gras parade, so we were able to be a witness to hundreds of people. The best part was we ended the night at Posadas and I asked our server if there was anything we could pray for her about when we prayed for our food. She said she was pregnant and scared. I said That's what we do!!! We're a Pregnancy Ministry!!!! So right there in the restaurant our team got together, and I prayed over her and the baby growing inside of her, the plan for her life, and she just cried her eyes out. I still get amazed at how God works.
  - C. Today we'll wrap up the Big 10 series and talk about #9, Financially supporting the local church through tithes and offerings. The Bible tells us there's a connection between our spiritual life and the money and possessions entrusted to us.
  - D. Title: The Antidote
  - E. Truth for Today: Mature believers honor God with their tithe and offerings as the antidote to the love of money.
- II. Why include money as a part of spiritual maturity? It's not because I want your \$
  - A. What should the greatest ambition of our life be? [Mk 12:28–30 (NLT)...“Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” 29 Jesus replied...30...**love the Lord** your God with **all your heart**, all your soul, all your mind, and all

your strength.’] This means God wants to be 1<sup>st</sup> in our life. He wants to be a part of everything we do and every decision we make.

B. The problem: money and possessions can drive a wedge between us and God. [Mt. 6:19–24 (NLT) “Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves...steal. 20 **Store your treasures in heaven...** 21 **Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be...** “No one can serve **two masters**. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be **devoted** to one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.**]

1. Money and possessions aren’t evil. They’re necessary and God’s blessing but the pursuit of money and possessions will try to overtake God’s place in our heart.

C. Money can turn our heart away from God; giving is the antidote. [1 Timothy 6:9–18 (NLT) But people who **long to be rich** fall into **temptation** and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into **ruin and destruction**. 10 For **the love of money** is the root of all kinds of evil. And **some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows...** 18 Tell them to **use their money to do good**. They should be rich in **good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.**]

1. Our challenge is to love God and use and enjoy money. Honoring God with our tithe and offering is how we put God above money and possessions. Giving God our 1<sup>st</sup> and best will break the love of money.

### III. What does the Bible say about tithing?

A. Video testimonies

B. What is tithing? Tithing is returning or giving a tenth, 10% of what we earn to God.<sup>1</sup> [Leviticus 27:30 (NCV) “ ‘**One-tenth of all crops belongs to the Lord...That one-tenth is holy to the Lord.**’] The tithe is the 1<sup>st</sup> 10%; this establishes God as our Provider and we’re the steward of what He entrusts to us.

C. Who were the 1<sup>st</sup> tithers in the Bible and why did they tithe? Abram, [Genesis 14:17–20 (NCV) After defeating...the kings...Abram went home... 18 Melchizedek...was a **priest for God Most High** 19 and blessed Abram, saying, “Abram, may you be blessed by God Most High, the **God who made heaven and earth**. 20 And we praise **God Most High, who has helped you to defeat your enemies.**” Then **Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything he had brought back from the battle.**]

1. Abram, the 1<sup>st</sup> tither, recognized God, ‘who made heaven and earth’ was His source and helped him, ‘defeat his enemies.’ Abram responded by giving God’s priest 10% of the spoils of battle. He tithed, not because a law commanded it or there was a need. It was to honor God for what He’d given him. Honor and gratitude are to be the foundation of all our giving.
  2. Jacob’s dream, Context, [Genesis 28:10–22 (NLT)...“I am the Lord, the God of your **grandfather Abraham** ... 15...I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land...20 Then Jacob made this **vow**: “If God will indeed be with me and protect me on this journey, and if he will provide me with food and clothing, 21 and if I return safely to my father’s home, then the Lord will certainly be my God. 22...and **I will present to God a tenth of everything he gives me.**”]
    - a. Jacob’s response to a spiritual encounter with God was a material/ financial gift to God. Jacob, like Grandfather Abram, was motivated by gratitude for what God had done for him. Giving a tithe was how he’d honor God.
  3. Later, the Moses made tithing a law for the Jews. [Deut. 14:22 (NIV) Be sure to **set aside a tenth (ESV tithe)** of all that your fields produce each year.] The tithe was used to (1) meet the needs of the temple, (2) support the Priests and Levites, and (3) care for the poor, (4) to bless the giver (5) in the NT, we also give so the church can accomplish its mission of world evangelism. [1 Cor. 16:1–2 (NIV) Now about **the collection for the Lord’s people**: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should **set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income**, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.]
- D. Does God promise to bless the tither? Does 10-1=9 or 11? [Mal. 3:6–12 (ESV)...you have turned aside from my **statutes** and have not kept them. **Return to me**, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ 8 **Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me.** But you say, ‘**How have we robbed you?**’ **In your tithes and contributions, (NIV offerings).** 9 You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me...10 **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**...11 **I will rebuke the devourer** for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil...]
1. Tithing is linked to God’s blessing. [Proverbs 3:9–10 (NIV) **Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits** of all your crops; 10 then **your barns will be filled to overflowing**, and your vats will brim over with new wine.]

2. Tithing in the OT was at the storehouse, the place where worship happened. Today, the local church is the logical place where we bring our tithe. Some believe we are free to choose where we tithe. I wonder why a person wouldn't want to support the spiritual family where they and their kids are taught the Bible, cared for, counseled, accountable, and mobilized for mission.

E. Did Jesus say anything about tithing? [Mt. 23:23 (NLT) "What sorrow awaits you... Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to **tithe** even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. **You should tithe**, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.]

1. In the OT, tithing became a requirement; in the NT the emphasis is on financial generosity, motivated by gratitude for what the Lord has done for us. [2 Cor. 8:1–5 (NLT) Now I want you to know...what God...has done through the churches in Macedonia. 2 They...are **very poor**. But they are also filled with **abundant joy**, which has overflowed in **rich generosity**. 3 For I can testify that **they gave not only what they could afford, but far more**. And they did it of their own **free will**. 4 **They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem**.

2. In AD 180, the church father, Irenaeus contrasted the requirement of Jewish tithing with the greater generosity and joy of NT believers who give all because of their greater hope.<sup>5</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

A. Summary: People in the Bible tithed and give offerings to the Lord for many reasons: Honor, gratitude, obligation, a promise of blessing, participation in the Lord's mission of world evangelism and helping people in need and also as the antidote to the love of money. The main reason I tithe and give offerings is not because I have to, or want God to bless me, but because I'm grateful for all God has done for me and I want to invest in His work. I've learned that when I give God my 1<sup>st</sup> and best, the love of money is broken, and He blesses me in ways I couldn't imagine.

#### V. Response

A. Prayer

B. Souls

VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

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