



Theology Of Tithes & Offering

Why Should I Give?

Giving and money are important topics to Jesus and anyone who wants to follow Him. Jesus talked about money in roughly 15% of His preaching and 16 of the 38 parables were concerned with how to handle money and/or possessions. Our relationship with money is directly connected to our relationship with God. We recognize that the topics of giving and money can bring feelings of skepticism and confusion to some. But let's also be honest, we just don't like to be told what to do with our money.

- It's important because Jesus teaches that the money in our wallets directs the loyalties of our hearts. Our attitude about money always reflects, influences, and impacts our attitude about God. (Matthew 6:20–21)
- It's important because giving is fundamentally an act of faith. When we give we are trusting Jesus' teaching that it is better to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35) It is an act of faith that protects our hearts from putting our hope in wealth and promotes life that is truly life. (1 Timothy 6:17-19)
- It's important because everyone is tithing to someone or something. Our first and best goes somewhere, and God expects us to give our first and best to him. It is an act of loving and loyal reciprocity because Jesus went first in loving us, sacrificing us, giving to us, and saving us. (Genesis 4:3–5, Proverbs 3:9–10)
- It's important because there are some blessings that only come to those whose financial giving comes from a heart of generosity. (2 Corinthians 9:8-10)
- It's important because it recognizes that we are stewards, not owners, of our money. God owns everything and needs nothing. We own nothing and need everything from him. (1 Chronicles 29:12-14)
- It's important because God will hold us all accountable for how we manage the financial resources that he has blessed us with. (Malachi 3:8–10)
- It's important because the local church is in many ways a family, and like a family, we all are called to play our part to support the needs of the family. (Galatians 6:6)
- It's important because healthy growing churches require resources to reach and teach people to follow Jesus. (2 Corinthians 9:12-13)

How Should We Give?

When it comes to giving, how we give is far more important to God than how much we give. How we give often reveals our motivations as well as our personal loyalties and priorities. At the heart of every gift is an intent to worship, honor, and enjoy God.

- Giving that honors God comes from the first and best of our financial resources. This means that giving from what is left over from our budget or giving only when it is convenient does not honor God. Instead, we should **bring back** to God the first and best of what He has generously blessed us with. (Nehemiah 10:35; Genesis 4:1-5; Proverbs 3:9-10)
- Giving that honors God comes from a willing and joyful spirit. The guilty and begrudging gifts of God's people do not honor Him. This willingness is an act of worship rather than being done in a transactional, self-interested, or give-to-get mentality. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giving that honors God starts with generosity in mind. Giving is the starting line, generosity is the finish line. Generosity is a journey, and we all need to start somewhere. (Luke 21:1-4)
- Giving that honors God grows as we grow. The goal of generosity is to grow in our capacity for and enjoyment of giving. As you grow in your giving you grow in your joy. (Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 8:10-12)
- Giving that honors God is a spiritual decision, so we should seek God's prompting and leading. How does He want us to give? Where does He want us to give? Are there any needs He wants us to meet? Are there any causes He wants us to support? Is there a ministry He wants us to invest in? Giving is a spiritual discipline and should be incorporated into our prayer life. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giving that honors God recognizes that we are not giving God *our money*. We are bringing God's *money* back to Him. Every dollar we possess is a gift from God. We are stewards of our financial resources and not owners of our financial resources. Our disposition should reflect the heart of a humble steward rather than a self-deceived owner. (Deuteronomy 8:18; Luke 12)
- Giving that honors God is done intentionally. When we give we should plan to give rather than passively wait to see what resources we may or may not have. Intentionality reveals priority. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

What Types Of Giving Should I Participate In?

There are two categories of giving in the Bible. One of the challenges we face in being the giver God has called us to become is when we fail to discern the different ways we can and should give. Each way has its own unique purposes and motivations. When we understand and embrace the different categories of giving, we maximize our impact in the world and our ability to worship God through giving.

First, we give out of obedience.

- **Tithe:** The Biblical word for this is a tithe and represents 10% of our income. This type of giving is the starting line and not the finish line. It is not the ceiling but the foundation of our financial stewardship. This giving is about supporting the local church and expanding the global mission of Jesus. Tithing is a command of Jesus and is an issue of obedience. (Genesis 28:20-22; Malachi 3:8-9; Matthew 23:23)

**Note: for more information on the Biblical Theology of Tithing see below.*

Then, we give out of generosity.

- **Offerings:** This type of giving is based on personal conviction and the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is designed to meet needs locally and globally as well as fund important kingdom causes. Offerings are optional commitments made between the individual and the Lord that exceed the tithe. (Acts 24:17; 2 Corinthians 8:19)
ex. Dollar Club, supporting a Missionary, Christmas Eve Offering, and/or a Vision Campaign
- **Sacrificial Giving:** Sacrificial giving often hurts. It is an expression of faithful trust in the provision of God where we obey God's leading in our life. Like all meaningful things in life, real-world-changing generosity comes with a price tag. Sacrificial giving is an above-and-beyond commitment that is the product of an individual obeying, listening for and acting on the prompting of the Lord. (Mark 12:42-44; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)
ex. Downsizing our home to fund ministry, cutting cable for a vision campaign, not shopping for a season, or trading fun money expenses for a cause
- **Legacy Giving:** This is an act of generosity that intentionally leverages the financial abundance of today to fund ministry, meet needs, and extend blessings to future generations. (Proverbs 13:22; 1 Chronicles 29:14-19)
ex. Estate planning, dividends from investments, passive income, and/or an inheritance

Giving is a more expansive topic than many first realize. In order for us to worshipfully bring God our first and best, it requires that we think and plan intentionally. While giving is something every Christian is expected to do, our hope at Grace is that you would find great joy and satisfaction in becoming the generous giver God has created you to be.

Unpacking The Biblical Mandate for Tithing

Tithing – giving the first tenth of our income to the local church – is a biblical pattern rooted in both Old and New Testaments. To distinguish the difference: tithes go to the church, while offerings go to the kingdom at large. In the Old Testament, long before The Law, Abraham gave a tenth to Melchizedek (Gen 14:20), and Jacob vowed to give God a tenth of all he had (Gen 28:22). Under the

Law, Israel was commanded to tithe as an act of worship and trust: “*A tithe of everything...is holy to the Lord*” (Lev 27:30). God even invited His people to “*bring the whole tithe into the storehouse*” and test Him, promising blessing for their faithfulness (Mal 3:10). Tithing has always been more than a tax—it is a tangible declaration that God owns everything and that His people trust Him to provide.

In the New Testament, Jesus affirmed the tithe, telling the Pharisees they should practice it while also pursuing justice and mercy (Matt 23:23). Paul built on this principle by urging believers to give regularly, proportionally, and cheerfully: “*On the first day of every week...set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income*” (1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:7). While the New Testament emphasizes generosity from the heart rather than a rigid rule, the tithe still stands as a wise, God-given baseline of Christian obedience (Matt 23:23). Tithing is not something that should ever be a *have to*, and instead should always be a *get to*. Tithing trains us to put God first in our finances and every other area of our life (Matt 6:21), to fund the work of the gospel, and to care for the needy with joy and gratitude.

Critics may argue that tithing was only for Israel or that the New Testament never commands 10%. It’s important to note that tithing predates the Law, showing it as a timeless principle, not merely a Mosaic requirement. And though the apostles don’t repeat the number they do allude to that number (1 Cor 9:13–14). Jesus never abolished it—He assumed His followers would continue. (Matt 23:23) In fact, grace raises the bar: if God’s people gave 10% under the Law, how much more should we, who have received the fullness of Christ, give in love? Tithing, then, is not legalism but faithfulness—a biblical starting point for generosity that honors God, blesses His Church, and grows our hearts in gratitude and trust (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32).

Best Practices

When it comes to giving, here are a few practical considerations:

- Online giving is more cost-effective and efficient for Grace. The cost of managing cash and checks is higher than that of online giving.
- Automation always trumps determination and intention. Automated giving removes the temptation to stop giving and combats the busyness of life.
- Grace has many resources to help meet financial needs. If you have needs you cannot meet with your own financial resources, reach out to us. If you find yourself in a place where your desire to give surpasses your ability to give, reach out to us. We offer coaching and resources to help you attain financial health.