

# EVERYTHING

## DAY ONE: THE TITHE TEST

**READ** Malachi 3:8-10. "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." SAVE, SPEND, and GIVE - my **BIG 3** principles. Most people forget about the giving part because they think I only scream "Save, save, save!" Giving liberates the soul of the giver. You never walk away feeling badly. Whether through a tithe, charitable contribution, or gift to a friend in need, give away at least some of your money. Not only does it generate good feelings, but it generates contentment. Remember, no one has ever become poor by giving. Is it acceptable to pause tithing in tough financial times? The Bible does not mention anything about "pausing" tithing. Neither does it say that we will go to Hell if we do not tithe. The tithe, which is a scriptural mandate, was not instituted for God's benefit because He already has all the money He needs. He does not need our money.

So why does He ask us to give 10% to Him? Tithing was created for our benefit. It is to teach us how to keep God first in our lives and how to be unselfish people. Unselfish people make better husbands, wives, friends, relatives, employees, and employers. God is trying to teach us how to prosper over time. Many people have observed that after they stopped tithing, their finances seemed to get worse. In the Book of Malachi, God promises that if you do not rob Him of your tithing, He will rebuke your devourers and protect you.

If you cannot live off 90% of your income, then you cannot live off 100%. It does not require a miracle for you to get through the month. I think that if you sit down and look at your budget, you will see that you can make it while giving at least 10%. Read the Bible and take from it what you will, and if you tithe, do it out of love for God, not guilt. I do not beat people up for not tithing because Jesus certainly did not, but let me encourage you to keep tithing.   
excerpt from daveramsey.com

## DAY TWO: JUST A LAW THING

**READ** Matthew 5:17-20. "Do we still tithe or is that an Old Testament Law thing?" That's a common question asked about tithing (giving 10% of income to the local church).

**1)** Tithing is a principle taught before the Law was given through the life of Abraham and was affirmed by Jesus himself.

**READ** Genesis 14:18-20, Leviticus 27:30-33 and Matthew 23:23.

**2)** The New Testament teaches us to live by the Spirit which will produce in us greater life-change, obedience and generosity than living by the Law. It would follow that our starting point should be at least as high as under the Law and that our obedience and generosity should not be less than a life under the Law.

**3)** We ignore the Old Testament and Mosaic Law to our detriment. The foundation for all Christian moral and ethical teaching is built on the foundation of the Old Testament. These practices and principles inform how we live in every aspect of our life. I tremble to think what we'd have to throw out if we say we don't need the Law - The Ten Commandments, fundamental teaching on sexuality, ethical standards about business, Sabbath and rest, and other issues in which the wisdom of God is taught through the practice and principle laid down in the Old Testament Law.

## DAY THREE: GENEROUS LIVING

**READ** Malachi 3:9-10. Have you ever felt proud of yourself for simply doing what's right or expected of you? As a child, student, a spouse or employee - at one time or another we all can answer "Yes." It feels good to do what's right, but it doesn't always get us the praise we expect or desire. According to Malachi 3:10, God promises to bless us for doing what He's required. To withhold what's right is a curse (Malachi 3:9). Though a blessing is promised, God doesn't call our return of the tithe generous, He calls it obedience! In God's economy, the first 10% is obedience - what's expected of us. Generosity starts at 11%.

Where are you on your spiritual journey in stewarding what God has entrusted in/with you? What's your next step? Is there a group you need to join? A book you need to read? A plan you need to make? A conversation you need to have? An attitude to address? What would help you move toward practicing this kind of obedience in the area of finances and begin living a generous, open-handed life?

## DAY FOUR: GIVING UP OWNERSHIP

**READ** Psalm 24:1 and Leviticus 25:23.

I grew up racing sailboats with my dad. In college, I raced competitively for the University of Texas. From childhood, my dream was to own a J-24 boat and race it competitively. After a few years in business, I'd saved enough money to buy one but decided against it because I was thinking of transitioning into ministry and didn't think it wise to be encumbered with a boat. Still, after I'd made my move into ministry, I ended up near the coast and found myself racing as a crew member on a J-24.

One day after months of racing with the owner, he said, "John, I like you and trust you. I want you to be able to use this boat like it's yours," No kidding! I didn't ask, hint, or anything - it just blew me away! He gave me an extra key and said, "Feel free to take friends out, let them enjoy it. Keep racing with me, and if I'm not racing, you can race it. All I ask is that you take really good care of it - treat it as if it were your own." So there I was having put off buying a boat so I wouldn't be encumbered, which felt like a sacrifice at the time, yet I got this opportunity to have all the benefits without the financial burden. I saw it as a gift from God. So I took him up on it... I used it! I'd take friends out for sunset sails in the Pacific. We raced and enjoyed the heck out of it. Now, what would you say to me if I started talking about it as "my" boat and even started getting stingy with it --- as if I were the owner? What if I fell into the delusion that I owned it because I used it so much? What if the owner came to tell me that he needed to sell it to do something else with the money (which he did), and I said, "No... you can't, it's mine!" You'd say, What an ungrateful, arrogant, son of a >>> sailor! Right? How deceived could I be?   
excerpt from Soul Revolution by John Burke

## DAY FIVE: JOY OF OBEDIENCE

**READ** Revelation 5:12. Are you ready to give God all that is due Him?

Are you ready to give up ownership?

**STEP ONE:** Give up ownership

**STEP TWO:** Commit to obedience in tithing

**STEP THREE:** Learn God's principles for good money management

**STEP FOUR:** Make a plan

**STEP FIVE:** Work the plan based on contentment, obedience, generosity

**STEP SIX:** Look long-term

**READ** Deuteronomy 8:11-14, 17-19.