

‘Tithing... What is it?’

The word Tithe means “**a tenth**” and it is a Biblical instruction from scripture to give 10% of your income to God, but there is more to it than that. Tithing is a **response to the grace that God extends to us**. It reflects a grateful heart that wants to respond to God’s grace by giving back a portion of what He has given to us, what is really already His.

Proverbs 3:9 says *“Honor the Lord with your wealth, and with the best part of everything you produce.”*

Tithing is a **spiritual discipline** that benefits, not God, but us... helping us to grow spiritually, helping us learn to trust Him. By tithing we say to God that we trust that He has our best interest at heart...that He will take care of our needs now, and in the future.

“Giving is a joyful surrender to a greater person and a greater agenda. Giving affirms Christ’s lordship. It dethrones me and exalts Him.” Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*

Deuteronomy 14:23 *“Bring this tithe to the designated place of worship—the place the LORD your God chooses for His name to be honored—and eat it there in His presence. This applies to your tithes of grain, new wine, olive oil, and the firstborn males of your flocks and herds. Doing this will teach you always to fear the LORD your God.”* Here “fear” does not mean to be afraid, but to be in awe, in reverence, in keeping with His commandments, walking in His ways, doing His will, and avoiding sin... This teaches us to put Him first.

“Our giving is a reflective response to the grace of God in our lives. It doesn’t come out of our altruism or philanthropy – it comes out of the transforming work of Christ in us. This grace is the action, our giving is the reaction. We give because He first gave us.” Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*

In Malachi 3:10 the Lord says, *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”* If you are not currently tithing, we would challenge you to take that **step of faith** and respond to Him. In this one thing He says to ‘test’ Him and be blessed to be a part of all He does through the multiplication of your giving.

Giving can be categorized into 5 different categories: First Time, Occasional, Intentional, Covenant, and Abundant.

- First Time Giver: Starting a giving relationship with a church and learning to trust God with finances.
- Occasional Giver: Periodical giving, typically designated to particular ministries or needs as they are presented.
- Intentional Giver: Beginning stages of partnership. This giving is regular, directed to the church as a whole (not just to designated needs) and requires new levels of faith and sacrifice.
- Covenant Giver: Fulfilling Biblical instruction to tithe a percentage of income to the church (starting at 10%). It requires regular sacrifice and commitment.
- Abundant Giver: Giving that comes from a deep expression of faith going beyond seen resources.

If tithing is new to you we encourage you to start somewhere, start with a First Time gift. See how **God will bless you** for making that first step. You don’t have to jump right to 10%, but start somewhere and begin growing in this spiritual discipline.

Give to Him first, it is called First Fruits. We are to give back to him a tenth of the blessing that he has given us, first, putting Him first in our lives, stating that we trust Him to take care of **our present and our future**. So give to Him first, before spending that blessing in other areas. If you have a hard time remembering to bring your tithe to church with you, setup a scheduled gift online so it is taken care of automatically and you will know that it is being taken care of first. Check out the online giving option on the Give page of our website, or see the link for "Other Ways to Give".

And ... if you ever feel pressured to give, don't. God wants you to give out of a **cheerful heart**, not a heavy heart. Remember, tithing is a **response to the grace that God extends to us**. It **reflects a grateful heart**, not one under pressure.