

Should New Testament Believers Give Weekly Tithes & Offerings?

Pastor Hammond

A Biblical tithe is one that’s given by church members regularly (1 Cor. 16:2), joyfully (2 Cor. 9:7), sacrificially (Luke 21:1-4) and proportionally. The Biblical word “tithe” literally means tenth. In the Bible, tithing may be observed (1) *before* the Old Testament law was given, (2) *under* the law and (3) *after* the law.

Before the law was given Abraham demonstrated tithing by giving a tenth to Melchizedek, a king who was perhaps the clearest Old Testament type of Christ (Gen. 14:20). And Jacob vowed to tithe, crying to the LORD, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee (Gen 28:22).

Later, while God’s people were living under the law, the prophet Malachi proclaimed that because the people failed to give *both tithes and offerings*, they were guilty of “robbing” God (Malachi 3:8). (Offerings involve giving above a tenth).

The New Testament does not reiterate a formal obligation to tithe. However, we may observe that *Christ commended tithing* in the New Testament. Indeed, in the course of chastising the Pharisees he Lord commended their tithing! (Luke 11:42). In the Lord’s commendation of tithing we may observe that tithing is consistent with God’s model for this present age. Clearly the LORD intends for us to support His work through our tithes and offerings (*offerings* involve giving beyond a basic 10% tithe).

Church members face both practical and spiritual consequences for not giving proportionally. From a practical perspective we must understand that our church requires financial support in order to carry out the purposes that God has given it. Equally important is the spiritual consequence of not giving Biblically. We must understand that our failure to give Biblically is disobedience to our LORD.

Tithing involves giving at least 10% of our gross income as a basic guideline for giving. You may be wondering how you can begin (or continue) tithing in such a difficult economy. The answer may be found in the LORD’s promise to meet our needs:

(Matthew 6:31-33) “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Tithing is a matter of faith. Lord, increase our faith!