

TITHING OR GRACE GIVING

HOW DID TITHING ORIGINATE?

To the believer, giving to God's work is a duty, a privilege and a joy. Under the dispensation of the law, Jews were obliged to pay a "tithe", meaning one tenth of their income. This could take the form of money, cattle, goats, sheep, produce or any other kind.

HOW MUCH ARE CHRISTIANS TO GIVE?

Since the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the dispensation of the law was suspended. The age of grace was ushered in and with it, freedom from the law. Therefore, Christians are no longer required to pay a tithe. This does not mean, however, that we are no longer to give to God's work. We simply may give as little or as much as we choose.

A CHEERFUL HEART IS VITAL

Giving, however, carries with it certain responsibilities. In the first place, it must be given willingly and cheerfully, for in 2 Corinthians 9:7 we read:
"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. "

GIVING WITHOUT A FUSS

Secondly, giving must be done anonymously. God will not honour those who let the world know about their 'generosity' because this type of person gives from the wrong motives - to glorify self instead of God. When giving for any other reason, the only two other than God, who should know, are the giver and the receiver, and they should not discuss the gift with others.

SACRIFICIAL GIVING IS GOOD

Thirdly, it should be given as a sacrifice. Many wealthy Christians leave their estate to the church at their deaths. While there is nothing wrong with this, the weakness lies in the fact that this person leaves what is of no further use to him anyhow. How much more does God appreciate it when we give what we could have used ourselves.

CULTS 'ENFORCE' GIVING

Even today, many denominations and cults make an issue of tithing with some of them even going so far as employing 'auditors' to ensure the congregation members meet their 'obligations'. Since this practice is in direct violation of 2 Corinthians 9:7, these cults are obviously unscriptural. If they are unscriptural in this matter, it is a reasonable assumption that they are unscriptural in others. If this is the case, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. " (Revelation 18:4)

By Harley Hitchcock.