



Begin 2022 with a renewed focus!

1. Even though we've entered a new year, our expectation and hope is in the LORD our God, and our focus is on Him as we navigate our lives through a turbulent world.
 - A. Psalm 62:5 *For God alone my soul waits in silence and quietly submits to Him, for my hope is from Him.*
 - B. Psalm 20:7 *Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will trust in the Name of the Lord our God.*

2. What are you expecting God to do in the coming months? By aligning our life's priorities around Him and His Principles, we have true success. As the first Sunday of the year it is fitting we take a brief look at the principle of the First which includes the Tithe, that first 10% of our earnings.

KEY THOUGHT

The Tithe, which was in practice before the giving of the Law, is not just an issue of possessions but an issue of the heart as well. Who's really first?

1. **The tithe was in existence BEFORE the Law.** Abraham and Jacob tithed (Genesis 14:18-20; 2:20-22) and Jesus endorsed it as a standing, Biblical principle which was in effect before the Mosaic Law (Matthew 23:23).
 - A. The tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden belonged to God.
 - Genesis 2:16-17 *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that*

you eat of it you shall surely die.”

B. God accepted Abel’s offering but rejected Cain’s offering.

- **Important** — Cain gave *an offering of convenience* while his brother, Abel, gave the very first and best of his herds. Both knew God’s heart concerning the first.

Genesis 4:3-5 (AMP) *And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the **firstborn of his flock** and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.*

C. **Abraham and Jacob tithed.** (Genesis 14:18-20; 28:18-22)

D. **Jericho was dedicated to the LORD as the Firstfruit of the Promised Land.**

- Joshua 6:19 *But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.*

2. **At the heart of the Tithe is the understanding that God is the OWNER of all things**, I am the manager over what He has given me. (Luke 6:46-49; Psalm 24:1) He is Number One and He deserves the very best. When I give the “firstfruit,” or first ten percent of my income, I am declaring that He deserves the very best and that He is the Source of everything. (Proverbs 3:9; Malachi 1:6)

3. **Strong TRUTH about the Tithe in Malachi 3:8-10**

A. **The tithe is that portion which already belongs to God** (Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:7-8). When we tithe we are giving back to Him that which is already His.

B. **Holding back the Tithe is actually robbing God.** (John 10:1,10; 12:6) The consequences of this behavior was illustrated in the account of Achan as he kept back a portion of the spoils from Jericho in Joshua 7.

C. **BUT, when obeyed, God uses the Tithe as an instrument to pour out His abundance to us.** He tells us to prove His Word and then experience blessing to such a degree that “there will not be room

enough to receive it.”

D. **The Lord promises to protect our assets and belongingness.** God promises divine protection as part of His covenant regarding our tithe. If we are faithful to give God the tithe, God will be faithful to protect all your other assets!

E. **This blessing is not only found in Malachi 3 but throughout Scripture, especially in Deuteronomy 28:1-14...***The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom.*

4. **God clearly brings blessing into our lives when we obey His principle of the Tithe/when we honor the Lord.**

A. Proverbs 3:9-10 *Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.*

NEXT WEEK: The Power of Sowing