

GIVING OUT, GIVING IN, GIVING UP

–MESSY (BUT BEAUTIFUL) CHRISTIANITY, WEEK 57–

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 (NIV)

I. FINANCIAL _____ FOR THOSE _____ IS OUR _____

Now about the collection for the Lord's people:

II. FINANCIAL _____ SHOULD BE _____ AND _____

Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.

² On the first day of every week,
each one of you should set aside a sum of money
in keeping with your income,
saving it up,
so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

III. FINANCIAL _____ MUST BE _____

³ Then, when I arrive,
I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve
and send them with your gift to Jerusalem.

⁴ If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

THE BOTTOM LINE

_____ to _____ in _____!

10 Reasons Why Tithing Is Not the Best Model for Giving

1. Tithing as a command was given to Israel, not the church, and we are not under the Mosaic Law as such (Gal 3:23-25); tithing is thus parallel to other non-binding issues like food laws, Sabbath observance, and circumcision.
2. Tithing before Mosaic Law was voluntary and irregular (Gen 14:20; 28:22).
3. Tithing was intimately connected to the Levites and the sacrificial system in the Temple (Num 18:21), and this is all now fulfilled in Christ.
4. Israel most likely had, in fact, three different tithes that were obligatory: the Levite Tithe (Lev 27:30-33; Num 18:21); the Festival Tithe (Deut 14:22-27); and the Poor Tithe, every third year (Deut 14:28-29). This means that Israelites were always to tithe more than 10%, and in fact, around 23.3% total. This in addition to other required offerings.
5. In the Mosaic Law only agricultural goods are said to be subject to tithes (see the references in #4). This would seem to restrict the tithe to landowners and farmers, with those in other businesses apparently paying no tithes (!?). If this were the case, the tithes would function as a kind of “rent” paid to God for land, rather than a kind of “income tax.”

6. Tithes in Israel were to be “in goods,” and if a person instead gave money, they had to give 20% more than the value of the goods (Lev 27:31).
7. The Festival Tithe was to be eaten and enjoyed by the family itself, or sold and the money used to buy food and alcohol for one's family to enjoy together in the temple (Deut 14:22-27).
8. Nowhere in the New Testament are commands to tithe given to us, even in places where we might expect them (like 2 Cor 9:7).
9. A tithe like 10% is perhaps not very “fair,” since it will tend to hit the poorest demographics harder. It may be easier for the more wealthy to live on 90% of their income than for the less wealthy.
10. A focus on tithing can be dangerous because it might give us the impression God can be “bought off” or satisfied with a mere 10% of what we own.

10 Principles of New Testament Giving

(#1-7 are from Köstenberger and Croteau, “Reconstructing a Biblical Model for Giving,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, 16.2: [2006] 21-22; #8-10 are from me)

Principle	Description	Location
1. Systematic	Give on a regular basis, that is, weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, etc.	1 Cor 16:1
2. Proportional	Give as you have been prospered; according to your ability	1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 8:2-3
3. Sacrificial, Generous	Give generously, even sacrificially, but not to the point of personal affliction	2 Cor 8:2-3; Phil 4:17-18
4. Intentional	Give deliberately in order to meet a genuine need, not out of guilt merely to soothe a pressing request	2 Cor 8:4; Phil 4:16
5. Motivation	Our motivation for giving should be love for others, a desire for reciprocity, and an eye to the reward from God	(see below)
5a. Love	As Jesus died for the sins of others, believers should give out of love	2 Cor 8:9
5b. Equality	Believers are to give so that all needs are met	1 Cor 9:14-15; 2 Cor 8:12-14; cf. Gal 6:6
5c. Blessing	Give in order to receive more from God so that you can continue to bless others	2 Cor 9:6
6. Cheerful	God loves a cheerful giver	2 Cor 9:7
7. Voluntary	Giving ought to be done out of one's free volition	2 Cor 8:2-3, 8; 9:7; Phil 4:18
8. For Ministry	We are to support Christian ministries, ministers, and missionaries, etc	1 Tim 5:17-18 Phil 4:10-20
9. For Needs	We are to support the poor	Eph 4:28 James 2:14-17
10. Humbly	We are to give secretly, without fanfare	Matt 6:1-4