

# THE TRUTH

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## Lesson 19 - The Truth About Tithes and Offering

A New York man was a low-life crook, the kind who would mug little old ladies for the cash in their purses. But on Sunday, July 21, 1996, this crook messed with the wrong little old lady. According to the Chicago Tribune, the mugger bumped into an elderly woman in Greenwich Village and snatched her wallet. The NYPD later picked him up, and as they drove him to the station, police lieutenant Robert McKenna told the suspect, "You just robbed the mother of the biggest mob chief in New York."

The elderly woman was Yolanda Gigante, and her son is Vincent Gigante, described by authorities as head of the Genovese mob, the nation's most powerful Mafia family. The police lieutenant later said, "When the perp heard that, he just slumped down into the back seat of the radio car. He had a stunned, resigned look on his face, as to say, 'How could I be so stupid?'"

### 1. What four things does the Lord claim as his own?

- He owns the \_\_\_\_\_. [Psalm 24:1]

**NOTE:** The king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, looked over his capital city and said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built... by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" He forgot that God is God and He is the owner and ruler of all. For seven years Nebuchadnezzar wandered about, out of his mind and eating grass like an ox, until his reasoning returned and he understood that his power and wealth were only lent to him by God.

- He owns the vast \_\_\_\_\_. [Psalm 50:10-11]
- He owns all the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. [Haggai 2:8]
- He owns \_\_\_\_\_. [Psalm 100:3]

Man himself is God's possession, as is illustrated by the story of the Vermont judge during the Civil War. The judge informed the attorney for a slaveholder who was trying to extradite a runaway slave, that 'his evidence of ownership' was not adequate. "Well, what does your honor require?" asked the lawyer. "Nothing less than a bill of sale from the Creator Himself," the judge replied.

### 2. On what four grounds can God claim ownership of all?

- He \_\_\_\_\_ all things. [Exodus 20:11; Genesis 1:1; Psalm 95:5]

God made the earth out of nothing [Hebrews 11:3] and hung it upon nothing. [Job 26:7] Said the psalmist: "(God) laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever." [Psalm 104:5]

- He \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ all things. [**Hebrews 1:3; Acts 17:28**]

Our lives are sustained by Him. Every heartbeat is a response to the touch of God. We eat, drink, work, play, think, love and worship; we may not, cannot, understand it, but in our hearts we know that in Him we live, move, and have our very being.

- He \_\_\_\_\_ all after it was lost. [**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**]

Dear friend, God made you; He bought you with the blood of Jesus Christ. Shall any man withhold himself from this gracious God and Saviour? Every loaf of bread and every blessing come marked with the cross of Calvary. Had God's plan not been carried out, there would be neither man nor bread.

- He gives \_\_\_\_\_ to get \_\_\_\_\_. [**Deuteronomy 8:18**]

Some are better managers than others. Some are sharp dealers. But all our talents are gifts of God. He gives us all some talent to earn a living for our families and ourselves. We may use these talents, misuse them, or half-use them.

### PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD

#### 3. In the light of all of this, how is man relatable to God? [**Luke 12:42; Matthew 25:14**] Ans.

Through \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** He is the steward of God's goods and "a steward is a person entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own. He administers what belongs to another." "As between me and my fellow men, what I hold belongs to me and I have a right to defend title to it; but as between me and God, it belongs to Him." Every man is entrusted by the Master with wealth, a little or a lot... We will be judged, not by the amount we have, but by what we do with it and how we handle it.

#### 4. What is required of stewards?

- \_\_\_\_\_ [**1 Corinthians 4:2**]

Faithfulness - that is a grand word. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." [**Luke 16:10**] Unfaithfulness works the same way. To the faithful steward the owner of all will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." [**Matthew 25:21**]

- \_\_\_\_\_ [**Matthew 25:19**]

The Spirit of God reproves men of sin and judgment. [**John 16:8**] Surely every man who has not dismissed the thought knows that he must render an account to God for life, health, wealth, time, and all things.

## OUR FINANCES

**5. What is the name of the money that the Lord claims as His own? [Leviticus 27:30; Psalms 96:8; Deuteronomy 16:16-17] Ans.** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** What is the tithe? The tithe is one tenth. If a man earns \$1, his tithe is 10 cents. If he earns \$100, it is \$10. If he earns \$1,000, his tithe is \$100. That is when it may get hard. The more God blesses, the harder it seems to return the tithe God requires. What a man gives above his tithe is his offering or gift. The offerings of two men drawing the same amount of salary might vary depending upon their generosity or their ability to give. [2 Corinthians 9:7]

**6. Where should the tithe be brought? [Malachi 3:10] Ans.** The \_\_\_\_\_  
or His \_\_\_\_\_

As long as His church exists, we are not free to withhold our support. Tithe tests our honesty with God; offerings test our generosity.

### THE HISTORY OF TITHE

- Tithing in the Old Testament [Genesis 28:20-22; 14:18-20]

**NOTE:** The first mention of tithe in the Bible is in the days of Abraham, who paid tithe to Melchizedek. Up until that time the family was the unit of organization in God's work and there was no centralized worship. As soon as a priest appeared outside the family unit, then the tithe appeared. It is simply God's plan of supporting His organization. Israel paid tithe to the Levites.

- Tithing in the New Testament [Matthew 23:23]

**NOTE:** Jesus reproached the Pharisees for paying tithe on the small garden vegetables and then neglecting to be just and honest in larger matters. Yet He told them that their tithing on the little herbs of the garden was right. If a man is honest in tithe and dishonest otherwise, his tithing honesty will not cover the other dishonesty. The reverse is also true.

### ITS TRUE PURPOSE

**7. For what purpose did God intend the tithes? [Numbers 18:21; 1 Corinthians 9:13-14]**

In the time of Moses, and thereafter, the tithe supported the Levites who looked after the Temple services. Jesus approved the tithe in His day, even though He rebuked the Jews for other shortcomings. Not until God forsakes the church are we free to withdraw our support. Paul advises that the same plan be followed for the support of the gospel ministry.

The tithe was devoted to the support of His ministry; to those who were giving their time to converting souls and helping those in the church. Paul insisted that those who \_\_\_\_\_ the gospel should \_\_\_\_\_, just as the Levites lived of their temple work. Paul often

declined help, but later regretted that he had not required the people to do more. If the Jews paid, then what shall Christians, with the whole world to reach with the gospel do?

**8. Just because men misuse the tithe and offering is right for me to withhold it? Ans.**

\_\_\_\_\_

The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. For a long time, the Lord has been robbed because there are those who do not realize that the tithe is God's reserved portion. Some have been dissatisfied, and have said, "I will no longer pay my tithe; for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work." But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint, plainly and openly, in the right spirit, to the proper ones. Send in your petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order; but do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right. **[Testimonies for the Church vol. 9, 249]**

### BLESSINGS OR CURSES

**9. What is pronounced upon those who knowingly refuse to pay their tithes and offering? [Malachi 3:8, 9] Ans. A** \_\_\_\_\_

The selfish man reaps his own sowing. The unprofitable servant who merely receives, but does not impart, will be cast out. **[Matthew 25:30]** The tenth belongs to God; it is His holy tithe. As long as His church exists we are not free to withhold our support. Tithe tests our honesty with God; offerings test our generosity.

**10. What is pronounced upon those who lovingly return to the Lord what is His? [Malachi 3:10-11] Ans. A** \_\_\_\_\_

There are three kinds of givers; the flint, the sponge, and the honeycomb. To get anything from a flint, you hammer it; then you get only chips and sparks. To get water from a sponge, it must be squeezed. The more you squeeze, the more you get. The honeycomb, however, overflows with its own sweetness. Those who delight to give are the cheerful givers.

On an English cathedral an inscription reads: "What I spent, I had. What I saved, I lost and what I gave, I have." That man is no fool who parts with what he cannot keep, to get what he cannot lose."

Dear friends, return a faithful tithe for the support of the gospel. It is God's way to enrich your life and further the work of His kingdom. He doesn't need your money, but you need His presence and blessing in this great partnership of life.