

Name_____

Address_____

Is Tithing Demanded of the Christian?

A Correspondence Course

Prepared

by

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Preface

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How Shall the Christian Give?

Let us look first at what the apostles told the church in the New Testament time concerning giving.

1. How did Paul tell the Christians at Corinth to give? _____

*So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and **whoever sows generously will also reap generously**. Each man should **give what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2 Cor 9:5-8 (NIV)*

2. How did the Christians in Antioch decide how much to give? _____

*The disciples, **each according to his ability**, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul. Acts 11:29-30 (NIV)*

3. How much did the Holy Spirit tell Paul to say that Christians should given on the first day of the week? _____

*On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money **in keeping with his income**, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 1 Cor 16:2 (NIV)*

4. How did the Philippian brethren give? _____

*Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that **they gave as much as they were able**, and even **beyond their ability**. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but **they gave themselves first to the Lord** and then to us in keeping with God's will. 2 Cor 8:2-5 (NIV)*

5. Why could the Philippian brethren give so much? _____

*And they did not do as we expected, but **they gave themselves first to the Lord** and then to us in keeping with God's will. 2 Cor 8:5 (NIV)*

6. What local church was foremost in supporting the preaching of the gospel? _____

*Moreover, as **you Philippians** know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, **you sent me aid again and again** when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. Phil 4:15-18 (NIV)*

7. What was the money called that was given for the support of preaching the gospel?

*They are a fragrant **offering**, an acceptable **sacrifice**, pleasing to God. Phil 4:18 (NIV)*

As we reflect on the way the Philippian brethren gave and then we examine our own giving we need to be certain that we give as we have been prospered, both liberally and bountifully. You will notice that no where in the New Testament are we commanded to tithe. Rather we told to give generously, according to our ability.

8. If we follow the pattern of giving established in the New Testament, we will have been obedient to Jesus, since Pauls said the things he wrote were *the Lord's commandment*. (1 Cor 14:37NAS).

How much were the brethren in Corinth told to give? _____

*Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and **whoever sows generously will also reap generously**. Each man should **give what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Cor 9:6-7 (NIV)*

9. How much were the brethren in Antioch told to give? _____

The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul. Acts 11:29-30 (NIV)

10. How much were the brethren in Philippi told to give? _____

Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. . 2 Cor 8:2-3 (NIV)

11. In Questions 8, 9 and 10, who decided how much they were to give?

12. If we follow the New Testament pattern, how much will we give? (See questions 8, 9, 10)

13. If we follow the pattern of the brethren in the New Testament in regard to giving, when will we give?

On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 1 Cor 16:2 (NIV)

There can be no question that when instruction on giving is taken from the New Testament that we find **no commandment to tithe!** We do not find that churches took collections every time they came together either. The simply gave “in keeping with their income” on Sunday (the first day of the week). Where then does the teaching come from that we must tithe as many religious groups teach?

Are we under the Old Testament Law Today?

One of the biggest problems among believers in Christ today is whether we must keep the laws of the Old Testament. When you look at the denominations of men, they are requiring such things as tithing, instrumental music, and the Sabbath. Where do they go to get the authority for these things? They go to the Old Testament, citing such passages as Gen 28:20-22 , Lev 27:30 and Mal 3:8 for tithing; Ps 33:3 and II Chron 29:25 for instrumental music; Ex 20:9 and Ex 15:23-26 for the Sabbath.

Others will go to the Gospels and cite passages such as Lk 11:42; Mt 23:1-3, 23; Mt 5:17-18, to show that Jesus did not speak against tithing and taught that the people to whom He spoke were to tithe.

The Question is, “Are we under the Old Testament Law Today?” Another question is, “What law did Jesus follow while He was on the earth?” and “What did He command his disciples to do concerning the Law of Moses?”

We need to take a look at the Scriptures to answer these important questions. One of the first things that we can learn by comparing different versions of the Scriptures is that the words “testament” and “covenant” mean the same thing and are used to describe the agreement God has made with man. Notice the way the words are translated in the King James Version (KJV) and the New American Standard Version (NAS)

14. What is a covenant? _____

*For where a **testament** is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. Heb 9:16 (KJV)*

*For where a **covenant** is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. Heb 9:16 (NAS)*

15. The Hebrew writer speaks of the first covenant which is the Law of Moses and tells us that it is _____

*By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one **obsolete**; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. (NIV) (Heb 8:13).*

16. He goes on to say that a testament cannot be in effect until the one who made it _____

*For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the **death** of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. (NAS) Heb 9:16-17*

As a result of these statements we find that the New Testament, the one that Jesus Christ made, did not go into effect until his death on the cross followed by his offering of His blood to the Father.

Does the New Testament really begin with the birth of Jesus? The most obvious answer is to be found in the very word "testament." A last will and testament is a document which goes into effect after a person dies.

*Heb 9:16 For where a covenant is, **there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.** 17 For a covenant is **valid only when men are dead**, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. (NASB)*

17. Did Jesus' covenant (testament) go into effect before or after his death on the cross? _____

*Heb 9:16 For where a testament is, **there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.** 17 For a testament is **of force after men are dead**: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. (KJV)*

18. If Jesus had to die on the cross before His testament went into effect, did the New Testament begin with the birth or the death of Christ? _____

19. If Jesus had to die on the cross before His testament went into effect, did Jesus live under the Old Testament or the New Testament? _____

20. Do the gospels tell us how Jesus' disciples lived under the Old Testament or the New Testament? _____

*Then **Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples**: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in **Moses' seat**. So you must **obey them** and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. Matt 23:1-3 (NIV)*

The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, belong to the New Testament in the sense that they detail the earthly life of Jesus. Keep in mind that Jesus came to earth to do what was necessary to

bring in the New Testament. However, the four Gospels do not belong to the New Testament in the sense that the New could not enter into force until after the things they record took place. Also realize that Jesus spoke many times of how it would be "in the kingdom of heaven".

21. As he was about to ascend into heaven to be seated on His throne, what did Jesus tell His disciples to teach, the Law of Moses or the Law of Christ? _____

teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:20 (NAS)

Jesus had to ascend into heaven and there to offer his blood to God as a sacrifice before the covenant went into effect. This is similar to the probate period seen in common law. It is then necessary to read the will which has been put into effect by the death of the one who made it. For Jesus to become our High Priest (as well as our Savior), he had to return to heaven.

*Heb 9:23 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For **Christ did not enter** a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now **to appear in the presence of God** for us;*

22. When did Jesus become our high priest, before or after His ascension into heaven? _____

*Heb 8:1 Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such **a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty** in the heavens, ... 4 Now **if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all**, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law;*

The reading of Jesus' last will and testament began on the day of Pentecost after his resurrection with Peter doing the preaching.

*Acts 2:1 And when the **day of Pentecost** had come, they were all together in one place. ... 14 But **Peter**, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and **declared to them**: "Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. 15 "For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; 16 **but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel**: ... 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that **God has made Him both Lord and Christ--** this Jesus whom you crucified." (NAS)*

23. When was Jesus' new testament (covenant) preached to the people? _____

The four Gospels cover a time of transition "between" the two testaments. There are things in the four books which had to do solely with the Old Testament (Jesus was circumcised as taught in Lev Gen 17:12; Lev 12:3). There are things in the four gospels which have to do solely with the New Testament ("unless one is be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God", Jn 3:5). And there are things in the four which had to do solely with the time of transition itself (the baptism of John ,Mt 3:6). It took years for God's will to be completely revealed to his followers. We find that they still held to points of the law until it was revealed to them that the Law of Moses had been taken out of the way. This was not clearly understood by the church until it was revealed to the apostle Paul as he wrote to the Galatians, the

Ephesians and the Colossians. Later, it was the subject of an unknown writer of much of the letter to the Hebrews.

It was nearly nine years after the day of Pentecost when the gospel was finally preached to the Gentiles (Acts 10, 11), although it had been preached to a Gentile who converted to Judaism much earlier (Acts 6). Even later (Acts 15) a serious discussion arose about whether circumcision was necessary for salvation. Let's examine some of these points in the Scriptures.

24. Did Jesus live and die under the law of Moses? _____

*Gal 4:4 But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, **born under the Law**, 5 in order that He might **redeem those who were under the Law**, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

25. Did the disciples understand that the law had passed upon Jesus' death? _____
(Whose law did they follow immediately after Jesus' death?)

*Lk 23:56 And they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. **And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.***

26. Did the church in Jerusalem understand that the Gentiles were not to be circumcised in order to be saved on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) or at the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11) or was this argument still going years later? _____

*Acts 15:1 And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "**Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.**" 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. ... 5 But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses." 6 And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. ... 11 "**But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.**" (NAS)*

We see that many years had to pass with the word of God being continuously revealed until it was completed. Not until the completion of the epistles was the complete will of God available. We can be thankful that we have such easy access to the complete and perfect word of God that we may be obedient to it.

*Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was **once for all delivered to the saints.***

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Lesson 2 How Did the Jews Give?

We have learned in our first lesson about how the New Testament church gave. We have already learned in our first lesson that we are not under the Old Testament (The Law of Moses), but under the law of Jesus Christ. We now want to look at what the tithe is and where it originated. We want to look at how the children of Israel were commanded to give under that law which was inferior (Heb 8:7) and was about to pass away (Heb 8:13) and in fact did pass away as Jesus brought his covenant into effect (Heb 9:16).

27. What is a tithe? _____

*And concerning the **tithe** of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the **tenth** shall be holy unto the LORD. (Lev 27:32 KJV)*

28. To whom was the first tithe in the Scriptures paid? _____

*And **Melchizedek** king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And **he gave him a tenth of all.** Gen 14:18-20(NAS)*

*For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, **to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils** was first of all, by the translation of his name king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. Heb 7:1-2 (NAS)*

29. Based on the history given in Stephen's defense in Acts 7, did Abraham live before or after the Law of Moses was given? _____

*And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father **Abraham** when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Depart from your country and your relatives, and come into the land that I will show you.' **Acts 7:2-3***

*"This is the **Moses** who said to the sons of Israel, 'God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren.' "This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you. **Acts 7:37-38** (NAS)*

30. Did the payment of the tithe by Abraham to Melchizedek occur in the Old Testament or the New Testament? _____

31. What did Jacob ask for (and get) in return for his tithe?

*Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will **keep me on this journey** that I take, and will **give me food to eat and garments to wear**, and I return to my father's house in **safety**, then the LORD will be my God. "And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house; and of all that Thou dost give me I will surely give a tenth to Thee." (Gen 28:20-22 NAS)*

32. Why were the Israelites to give a tithe?

*"I **give to the Levites** all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting. (Num 18:21NIV)*

33. Did the Levites also have to give a tenth to God?

*"Speak to the Levites and say to them: 'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, **you must present a tenth** of that tithe as the LORD's offering. Your offering will be reckoned to you as grain from the threshing floor or juice from the winepress. In this way you also will present an offering to the LORD from all the tithes you receive from the Israelites. From these tithes you must give the LORD's portion to Aaron the priest. You must present as the LORD's portion the best and holiest part of everything given to you.' (Num 18:26-29 NIV)*

34. Was the tithe all that the Israelites had to give?

*"And there you shall bring your **burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the contribution of your hand, your votive offerings, your freewill offerings, and the first-born** of your herd and of your flock. (Deut 12:6 NAS)*

35. What was the purpose of the tithe?

*When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, **you shall give it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied**. Then say to the LORD your God: "I have removed from my house the sacred portion and have given it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow, according to all you commanded. I have not turned aside from your commands nor have I forgotten any of them. (Deut 26:12-13 NIV)*

36. Did men ever fail to pay their tithes?

*"Will a man rob God? Yet **you are robbing Me!** But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' **In tithes and offerings**. (Mal 3:8 NAS)*

37. Were those who were robbing God of his tithes in the Old Testament or New Testament?

The Tithe in the New Testament.

In New Testament, the words tithe and tithing appear 8 times. We need to investigate these uses to see whether they were in connection with the Law of Moses or the Law of Christ.

38. Under what law was Jesus speaking to when he told the multitudes and disciples to observe the tithe?

*"Woe to you, **scribes and Pharisees**, hypocrites! For you **tithe** mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the **law**: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. (Matt 23:23 NAS)*

39. Under what law was Jesus speaking to when he condemned the Pharisees?

(Hint: under what law did Zechariah prophesy if his prophecies are the last book in the OT?)

*"But woe to you **Pharisees**! For you pay **tithe** of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. ... from **the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah**, who perished between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation." (Luke 11:42, 51 NAS)*

40. Under what law did the Pharisees pay tithes?

(Hint: under what law did men go to the temple to pray?)

"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. "The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' (Luke 18:11-12 NAS)

41. We find in Heb 7:5-6, 8-9 that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Was Abraham before or after Moses and Jesus? _____

(Hint: look back to questions 27 and 28)

Many men teach that man must "pay a tithe" today, but we have learned that the tithe was part of the Old Testament Law. It has not been restated in the New Testament, so we are no longer bound by the "tithe" law. Christians are to "give as they have been prospered" as we have been commanded in I Cor 16:1-2. In some cases, it might be less than a tithe (10%), but in most, it would probably be more. What we must always remember is that we should keep God first.

The Law of Moses

*"Teacher, which is the **great commandment in the Law**?"*

*And He said to him, " **You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.**" "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matt 22:36-40 NAS)*

The Law of Christ

*Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before **God**; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is **His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another**, just as He commanded us. And the one **who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him**. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. (I Jn 3:21-24 NAS)*

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A Short Review

42. When did the covenant of Jesus go into effect?

Heb 9:15-16 Col 2:14

43. Were the Jews to observe tithing, the Sabbath and Instrumental music?

Mal 3:8 Ex 20:9 II Chron 29:25

44. Are we to observe tithing today? _____

I Cor 16:1-2 II Cor 9:6-7

45. Are we to observe the Sabbath today? _____

Acts 20:7 I Cor 16:2 Heb 10:25 (If you would like to study this in detail, there is a correspondance course on this subject.)

46. Should we use instrumental music in our worship today? _____

Eph 5:19 Col 3:16 Heb 13:15 (If you would like to study this in detail, there is a correspondance course on this subject.)

Thus, Paul could say of the Law of Moses, the first covenant, in Col 2:11-17 that Jesus' death *canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

We dare not go back to the Law of Moses for at the transfiguration, God said that we are to obey Jesus.

*And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; **one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.** For he wist not what to say; for **they were sore afraid.** And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, **This is my beloved Son: hear him.** (Mark 9:5-7 KJV)*

47. Who was present at the transfiguration?

48. To whom are we to listen? _____

