

Central Study Hour – Sabbath School Lesson Notes

“Stewardship”: Lesson 8, “The Impact of Tithing”

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Introduction: *Who does tithing impact? Does it determine who gets to hear the gospel? Can it affect a worker’s calling? Does availability of tithe funds determine the # of gospel workers? Does tithing impact the one returning tithe? Yes. Promised blessings! What? How?*

Read Memory Text. In the O.T. support for the sanctuary minister came as tithe of grain and animals and through sacrificial offerings. The support came from the people they served. In the N.T. Paul says that in like manner support for the full-time gospel worker should come from the people they serve; not via grain and animals but as money.

Share highlights from all three paragraphs of the narrative.

SUNDAY: “Together We Fund the Mission”

What is the point of the title? Considering the gospel commission, “God wants us involved in the most important work on earth: bringing people to Jesus. Funding this mission from the resources entrusted to us by God is the steward’s responsibility.”

Read Mal. 3:10 (1st part). *What is God’s approved financial plan for accomplishing the gospel commission? It’s the tithing system, right? What does “all the tithe” or “whole tithe” mean? It means a full 1/10. It isn’t really tithing unless it’s a full 1/10 because “tithe” means “tenth.” What does the phrase “that there may be food in my house” mean? This indicates that the tithe is needed to support the families of gospel workers (they need a home, car, beds, clothing, food, and education) so that gospel workers are free of heavy financial burdens and can work full-time to reach everyone. “Tithe is part of a system that funds God’s church. It is the greatest source of funding and the most equitable method for carrying out His mission.” What does equitable mean? A fair amount for each person, no matter their income.*

Share highlights from the last paragraph.

Read the box at the bottom of the page. To answer the question, the “many streams” illustration from the Teacher’s Comments on page 107 is very good. Share also from “Just for Teachers” on page 110.

MONDAY: “The Blessings of God”

Read Mal. 3:10 (whole verse). Read title and opening paragraph. *What are the other blessings? How about healthy children? A job? Christian friends? Spiritual gifts and talents? There are many possible blessings! How about spiritual blessings, such as, salvation, happiness, peace of mind, and knowing that God is always doing what is best for us? “We have been blessed in order to bless others. Indeed, through us God is able to extend His blessing elsewhere.”*

Read 1 Peter 3:8-9. *What is Peter saying to us about the relationship between being blessed and being a blessing to others? Aren’t we blessed to bless others?*

Read Acts 20:35. *How does this apply to tithing? Tithing is meant to be a blessing. The more we*

have, the greater amount of tithe that we get to return!

Read the final paragraph. One purpose of tithe is to experience the goodness of God; His blessings. But, if you look at it wrongly, you won't see the blessings. Share "Apply" from the Teacher's Comments on page 109. Follow that by asking, *don't you want spiritual growth that's virtually unlimited?* You see, the blessings of God in tithing are God showing us that He's there for us. When we believe, **the sky's the limit!**

TUESDAY: "Purpose of the Tithe"

The first purpose of tithe is the personal spiritual growth of the tither. For Tuesday's lesson we get to the second purpose of tithe; the one that we usually think about.

Highlight the two verses in the opening paragraph. The 1st verse means that it's "fair for the ox to eat grain while working." In the same way....devoted laborers who preach the gospel should be rewarded with wages." After all they have a right to eat just as the ox does. They need a place to live just like anybody else, right?

Share ideas from "Just for Teachers" from page 108 from the Teacher's Comments.

Read the first question from the middle of Tuesday's page. (Note: The Greek word translated as "commanded" in 1 Cor. 9:14 is probably better translated as "established," or "appointed.") It means gospel workers should be supported by the people they serve; by the believers.

Read 1 Cor. 11:7-11. *What do these verses teach about the need to support those who spread the gospel?* The church is obligated to support those who preach the gospel. But Paul didn't expect support from the Corinthian church because of some problems they had with him.

Read the paragraph starting with "When Paul said, 'I robbed....'"

What or who exactly is the tithe supposed to support? Read the final paragraph.

If time, **Read Leviticus 27:30.** *In what ways is the principle seen here applicable to us today?* Tithe isn't to be returned only on wages or pay but on all our assets.

WEDNESDAY: "The Storehouse"

Where is the storehouse? While still wandering in the wilderness, God told Israel that when they arrived into the promised land He would choose a place for them to bring their burnt offerings, tithes, and freewill offerings (Deut. 12:1-6). God would determine where the storehouse was to be and not any man. He chose the place of His sanctuary. "During the time of Solomon, the tithe was returned to the Jerusalem temple." In the OT it was never difficult to know where the storehouse was. After the Babylonian exile at the time of the restoration of Judah and the second temple, Malachi wrote "**Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse**" (Mal. 3:10). Obviously, the storehouse was at the temple where the religious services took place.

What other names are used in Scripture to identify the storehouse?

1 Chron. 26:20 – Treasury of the house of God.

2 Chron. 31:11-13 – Chambers in the house of God (also names treasurers and asst. treasurers).

Neh. 10:38 – The chambers of the house of our God....to the chambers into the treasure house.

Share highlights from the next to last paragraph, and read the quotation from *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 338 in the last paragraph.

Discuss the circumstances and question from the box at the bottom of the page. If people decided that the storehouse was wherever they wanted it to be, God's work would begin to fragment a great deal and fall apart.

THURSDAY: "Tithe and Salvation by Faith"

Read Romans 3:23-24. *What crucial truth, central to our faith, is taught in these two verses?* Since we have all sinned and are damaged by sin, none of us can deserve salvation. Therefore, justification comes freely by God's grace through Jesus.

Read Romans 4:3. *What does this verse teach about grace as opposed to merit? "Salvation comes because the merits of Christ's own perfect sacrifice are credited to our account." What do the above two verses clarify about tithing? "There is no credit obtained from God by returning it. After all, if the tithe is God's to begin with, what merit could there possibly be in giving it back to Him. Tithing is not an act that saves us any more than any of the other good deeds that we have been created to do as Christians [Quote Eph. 2:10]. Nevertheless, the returning of tithe does reveal an attitude that is either humble and submissive or opinionated and defiant regarding that which God has asked us to do. If we love God, we will obey Him."* (Save the bottom box for the conclusion.)

From Friday's page.

"It is so easy to forget that every breath, every heartbeat, every moment of our existence comes only from the Lord." Share Acts 17:24, 28 from the narrative.
Share highlights or Read 6T 386 (the second paragraph).

Read *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 566 from Discussion Question #1. *What do we rob ourselves of when we do not tithe?* We miss out on Jesus being the LORD of our lives. We miss the faith building blessings. We fail to learn how to really trust God.

Conclusion: Ask the question from the bottom box on Thursday's page. It's not the amount that shows the giving heart. It's the sacrifice! Faith is exercised when there is sacrifice because there has to be trust that God will sustain you.