



Stewardship Motives of the Heart Lesson 8 1Q 2018

The Impact of Tithing presented by Tim Jennings Announcements at end

I can't remember a lesson that I did not want to teach, but this lesson I did not enjoy—in fact, it grieved me. It brought me much sadness, and moved me nearly to tears as I read what was contained in this lesson. I would prefer to skip this lesson, but I won't and I pray we can explore it in love and find truth, even if the lesson is as upsetting to some of you as it was to me.

Before we get into the lesson I want to state my position on tithing so that no one will misunderstand our discussion below:

My position on tithing:

- I have paid tithe since childhood
- I believe the tithe is God's money not my money and is to be returned to God
- When I return the tithe I am not giving offering, I am being honest with God, which in turn blesses me by strengthening in my character the trait of honest decision-making
- I believe the tithe is to be used exclusively for the spreading of the gospel

SABBATH

The second paragraph states, "Today, the tithe is for the support of the gospel. When rightly understood it serves as a spiritual measurement of our relationship with God."

The first sentence I absolutely agree with—The Tithe is for the support of the gospel. But I don't get the second sentence. I am not sure I understanding what they mean—a spiritual measure of our relationship with God?

Do we increase the amount of tithe we give as our relationship with God grows?

I have been giving the same percentage of my income in tithe my entire life, but my relationship with God has changed, grown, deepened, developed, expanded over the years, is the 10% an accurate measure when it never changes?

Did Jesus use tithe as a measure of our relationship with Him?

What did Jesus use?

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Jn 13:34,35



What did the Apostle John write?

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1John 4:7-8

Does Jesus ever, anywhere, use tithe as a measure of our relationship with Him?

In fact, Jesus said the following:

“Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and **the love of God**. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. Lk 11:42

Here is a group of people paying tithe, should we then conclude then, that they must have a very good spiritual relationship with God because they pay tithe? So, is tithe an accurate measure of our relationship with God?

I want to point out that Jesus, in the passage above, did not eliminate or do away with tithe paying, nor did He suggest it should not be done. What He did do however, is demonstrate the act of tithe paying has no direct bearing on one's relationship with God and cannot be used as a measure of that relationship.

What is the problem of using tithe paying as a measure of our spiritual relationship with God? I could set up the idea that our relationship with God is financial—or a quid pro quo, if we don't pay we don't get to have a relationship, or don't get blessings, or God doesn't give us His special attention. Many subtle distortions can enter when we suggest tithe paying is a measure of our relationship with God.

In fact, the lesson by attempting to link tithe paying as a measure of our relationship with God risks inciting fear into our relationship with God. If a person has not paid a tithe, then, according to the lesson, their relationship with God is poor. Thus, the more tithe we pay the better our relationship. This leads to fear base, and coercive type religion which destroys individuality.

A person can have a relationship with God who has never paid tithe—why? Because they never heard of such a thing, but when they do have a relationship with God, and do know about the tithe, then they eagerly give to God what is God's. Finally, persons can pay tithe faithfully without having a relationship with God.

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “Jesus commands us...” There is much in this paragraph that is to be commended, we are to be involved in spreading the gospel, which is taking a message to people with a



terminal condition that will result in their not dying, i.e. being saved for all eternity. This is the most important mission for any of us. And we are in a war against evil powers that seek to keep people in ignorance and darkness and even get people to partake of false treatments that rather than healing cause further damage.

Is the tithe to be used to fund any group, any program, any church, any mission, or only those that are taking the genuine healing Remedy from God to the world—the real gospel?

The sentence “We must pray for unity to be faithful in funding the mission...” Is this a subtle suggestion that we must pray that all of us give our tithe to the same organization, or merely that people return tithe to entities that are spreading the true gospel?

There are several sentences I am going to read from the lesson, which I think brings together the central message the lesson is directing us toward:

- SABBATH: “rightly understood [the tithe] serves as a spiritual measurement of our relationship with God.”
- SUNDAY second paragraph: “Tithe is part of the a system that funds God’s church. It is the greatest source of funding and the most equitable method for carrying out His mission.”
- SUNDAY fourth paragraph: “WE cannot afford to be disorganized, careless, or haphazard about funding the mission.”
- TUESDAY from first and second paragraph, “The laborer is worthy of his wages... Supporting such laborers with tithe, then, is foundational and fundamental to God’s work.”
- WEDNESDAY first paragraph, “God has a storehouse... The storehouse represented the location where religious services took place and from where the Levites were supported.”
- WEDNESDAY second paragraph, “In every dispensation, God has had a central storehouse to manage the tithe. Seventh-day Adventists make up a worldwide religion/church in which the storehouse principle is accepted and practiced.
- WEDNESDAY bottom green section, “Think what would happen if people were to send their tithe to wherever they wanted. If they did that what would happen to God’s work?”

What is the message the authors are trying to say in this lesson?

- You relationship with God is measured by your tithe paying
- Tithe is used to fund the spreading of the gospel
- People are not to think for themselves and consider for themselves where God would have the tithe sent
- The tithe is to be sent only to the Seventh-day Adventist church

Is this the message the authors are sending or am I misstating it? If so, please do correct me on this, but this is how the lesson comes across to me.

Do we believe as Christians that throughout human history various church organizations stopped promoting a clear gospel message and those who continued to promote the true gospel eventually



created new organizations (known as the Reformation)? Do we believe that the Reformation has been progressive, in other words, truth slowly advancing?

If you could go back in time to Christians over the last 1000 years, would you recommend to those Christians that they take the time to evaluate whether the “gospel” being presented by their organization is the true gospel? And if they find their organization is not presenting the true gospel, what would recommend those Christians do with their tithe?

Should we do anything less today? Should we today actually stop and evaluate what is the gospel message that is to be going to the world, and then inquire, is the organization that is receiving my tithe spreading that gospel message? And if it is not, is it right to direct the tithe to an organization which you believe is spreading the true gospel?

The lesson would suggest we do not have the right nor responsibility to do this. That we are required to pay our tithe to an institution regardless of whether that institution is spreading the true gospel or not.

What would have happened in history if Christians had taken the time to stop, evaluate and then only send tithe to organizations that were spreading the true message about God and His character of love? Perhaps might some of institutions that have spread a false gospel have failed?

Could it be that good-hearted Christians, by blindly sending their tithe to institutions of their childhood loyalty, are funding programs that obstruct the gospel?

Could it be that blind thoughtless returning of the tithe without considering if the true gospel is being preached or not is actually delaying the final work and delaying the second coming of Christ?

If we do give tithe to individuals, or other programs than an institutional church, but that we are convinced are spreading the true gospel are we sinning, or are we doing exactly as God wants us to do?

One of the founders of the SDA church wrote this:

“There are ministers' wives... who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands. These women give their whole time, and are told that they receive nothing for their labors because their husbands receive wages. I tell them to go forward and all such decisions will be revised. The Word says, "The labourer is worthy of his hire." Luke 10:7. When any such decision as this is made, I will, in the name of the Lord, protest. **I will feel it my duty to create a fund from my tithe money to pay these women who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls.**{DG 106.1}



It has been presented to me for years [by whom?] that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive sufficient [income to] properly to support their families... {2MR 99.3}

I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this, and as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, [wait, it wasn't being given to the organized church, yet was not withheld from the Lord's treasury, why?] it is not a matter that should be commented upon, for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best. {2MR 99.5}

Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed, I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so... {2MR 100.1}

Did you notice that this person believed that her tithe was to go directly to people who were not funded by the institution, but who were promoting the true gospel message, she was 1) acting at God's direction and 2) the money was going into God's treasury, i.e. storehouse. The lesson authors would argue this is not the case because only the official institution is God's storehouse.

What do you think?

Do we all agree that the tithe should fund the gospel?

In Rev 14 it is entitled the "eternal gospel" the good news that is eternally true; true in eternity past as well as eternity future. This good news existed before humankind, before sin, and before the sacrifice of Christ. This is the good news about God Himself.

What do you believe is the final message of mercy, the final gospel message to lighten the world for Christ's return?

This is what the SDA church was founded to take to the world:

"It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. **His character is to be made known.** Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy and truth... ***The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is the revelation of His character of love.***" Christ's Object Lessons, p.415

Do we believe this is the gospel?

Has God always been merciful, always been love? Then if this has always been true how is it called



the good news, as if it wasn't known?

Because Satan has lied about God and misrepresented God as something other than love, but how?

Historic Adventism taught the following:

The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering,—**a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah,** between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition. {GC88 582.2}

What do you understand this to mean? What are the laws of men? What are the precepts of God?

The Revelation 14 text about the eternal gospel calls us to worship Him who made the heavens....
What kind of law does creation operate upon?

Could it be that Satan's lies about God, which corrupt our understanding of God's character and make God out to be something other than love, are that God's law is imposed that function like human law, and thus God becomes the inflictor of pain, suffering and punishment?

Again, historic Adventism thought so:

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, **it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan;** and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. {DA 761.4}

Notice, Satan's argument about God's law—that God's law is the type of law that requires the ruling authority to inflict punishment. If people are teaching theologies that argue that justice requires God to inflict punishment for sin are they preaching the true gospel, or are they are continuing Satan's argument from the beginning? Are organizations that present such a false gospel to the world to receive the tithes?

I was listening to Christian radio in my car yesterday and a man called in and asked how he can witness to Muslims about Jesus. He said he has tried to tell them that they don't have to do all their works to get into heaven, that Jesus paid the price and they only need to accept His payment by faith for their sins and they will be saved. The theologian expert on the radio answered by saying that he believes we need to focus on sin, that all our righteousness is filthy rags, that all our best is so filled with sin it is offensive to God. And that God is personally offended at our sin and cannot tolerate to look at our sin. Therefore, our good works offend God because sin offends God and the only thing that will satisfy the offense our sin has caused God is the perfect blood sacrifice of His Son.



Is this the gospel? No! This is the false gospel, this message is not the truth, it is all based on the lie that God's law functions like our law and that God is the one who is the problem who needs changing by the death of Jesus. The true gospel is:

- God was in the Son reconciling the world to Himself...
- For God so loved the world...
- If God is for us who can be against us...
- If you have seen Jesus you have seen the Father
- God is love, the source of all good, life, and health—God is not the source of pain, suffering and death.
- God's law is design law—the laws upon which life is built thus we worship Him who made the heavens...

Paul in Romans 2:13-15 states:

“For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, **do by nature things required by the law**, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts...

What kind of law can people do by nature? Do people by nature get circumcised? Do people by nature get baptized in water? Do people by nature pay tithe? What kind of law do people do by nature? Design law, which is God's law, which are the principles of love, truth and freedom.

So what is the gospel, the eternal gospel? The good news about God Himself, which requires we come back to understand God's law as design law and reject the dictator views of God.

Thus, programs and institutions that teach God as the source of inflicted pain, suffering, torment, torture, death, are not presenting the gospel and the tithe rightly should not fund such distorted views about God.

Let me put it another way, if we keep funding and promoting false views about God, will we ever finish the work of taking the final message of mercy to the world?

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, “The blessing in Malachi...” I think the lesson did a good job of pointing out that the blessings of tithing are more than financial, but spiritual as well, that tithing impacts our character development, strengthens our confidence and trust in God, humbles us and reminds us of where all blessings originate. This is a great point.

What do you think about this point in the paragraph, “Also, when we are blessed by God, we are obligated to share those blessings with the less fortunate.”?



How is this true?
How could this be misunderstood?

Read third paragraph, “From tithing a double blessing comes...” Why is it that the more you give the more you receive?

How can you get more by giving away what you have?
Is this the wisdom of the world, or is this foolishness to the world?

The last paragraph states, “Our heavenly Father did not originate the plan of systematic benevolence to enrich Himself, but to be a great blessing to man. He saw that this system of beneficence was just what man needed.”

Do you agree?
Why did humankind need this?
How is it a blessing to humans?

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, “Thus, salvation is a gift...” Let’s affirm the truth in this section:

- Salvation is a gift from God and it is not something we created, earned, or worked to merit!
- The title is God’s and we earn nothing by returning it to Him

However, there are several problems in this paragraph, what problems do you see?

Undeserving—if we mean by this word that we did not create the remedy, did not work to earn the cure to our sin condition then this is correct. However, if we mean we are so worthless, and of such little value that we don’t deserve God’s love and intervention to save us—then this is false. “For God so loved the world...” “While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” It is true we don’t deserve salvation as something we earned, but we do deserve salvation as the object of God’s love.

For instance, if your child disobeyed you and drank some poison—what would your child deserve from you? Would they deserve you to punish and kill them, or would they deserve you to intervene and save them? Why would they deserve your intervention, not based on their behavior being so good they earned your saving interventions, but because of who they are to you and your love for them.

So this idea of undeserving is understood either level 1-4, which is behavior-based and through the imposed law lens, or 5-7 through the lens of love and God’s design for life.

What do you think of this sentence “Salvation comes because the merits of Christ’s own perfect sacrifice are credited to our account.”?



- In this view what would be the problem if one didn't accept the credit to their account?
 - Sin would still be recorded in their legal record in heaven
 - In the Judgment God would find sin still in their heavenly ledger
 - God would then weigh up the list of sins and tally up an amount of pain and suffering and then inflict it upon the sinner before killing him or her

Is such a view the true gospel?

Should we use the tithe to fund this type of gospel?

Why is this gospel false?

First, they reference Ephesians 2:8,9, let's read the Scripture and see if what they say is what the Scripture says:

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

What does the Scripture say about salvation?

- It comes from God's grace
- We partake of it through our trust in God
- We do not create the saving remedy ourselves nor earn it
- It is a free gift from God
- So we cannot brag that we are better than others

Did you hear anything legal in this? Did you hear anything about accounts and credits?

So why is this view a false gospel?

- It is founded on the false law construct
- It misrepresents God's character and methods
- It incites fear and undermines truth in God
- It creates mental and spiritual barriers to reconciliation with God (doctrines designed to hide and protect us from God)
- It prevents people from opening their hearts to God for actual healing and restoration to godliness

I submit, it is this type of theological construct which has actually delayed the second coming of Christ and prevented the eternal gospel from going to the world and if Christians would begin examining the evidence for themselves and begin using the tithe to fund the true gospel then the world would be lighted and Christ would come.

What is the true gospel?



God is love—God runs His universe upon love, which requires genuine freedom, therefore God never coerces, never uses power to inflict punishment for sin. Why? Because such methods destroy love and incite rebellion. God’s laws are not rules like sinners make, but are design protocols upon which reality is built.

We are all born in sin, conceived in iniquity, born with a condition we did not choose, but which if unremedied will result in death. Thus, we are born with a terminal condition and have no ability to create a cure. Jesus came, “he who knew no sin became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God.” Jesus came to procure the remedy we could not procure. We now, through God’s grace and the victory of Christ, have the option of trusting God and partaking of the cure He provides at no cost to us. When we do this, we are transformed in the inner being, sinfulness—fear and selfishness, deceit, greed, pride etc. are **blotted out of our characters** and we develop the fruits of the Spirit. The records in heaven, in which our names “characters” are registered record the transformation and renewal that actually happens within us when we partake of Jesus. This is salvation, healing, renewing, regenerating the person within.

This only happens for those who trust God, and trust requires that we know God, thus the eternal gospel is always about God. This is the message we are to be taking to the world. This is what our tithes are to fund!

FRIDAY

Read question two—could it be that if Christians held back their funds from organizations that have misrepresented God that Christ would have come sooner?



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SABBATH MARCH 3, 2018 CLASS will meet at the Hamilton Community Church at 10:20 a.m. We will be back at the Courthouse the following week.

The Remedy APP: Thanks to all of you, our supporters, The Remedy App is now available for free for Android and Apple devices but *The Remedy* is not available on a multi-Bible app. My Bible App by by developer Denys Dolganenko at mybible.zone

SPECIAL Thanks to Karin Covi, who researched and found probably the best Bible App available on the market and contacted them and they have put The Remedy on their platform. This app has hundreds of resources available, can compare different Bible versions on the same screen and it is FREE! The Icon for the My Bible App is below:



NEW TV PROGRAM: Starting in March Come and Reason is launching a new TV Program—The Dr. Tim Jennings Show on WBTB Network.

Watch our website and Facebook page for announcements regarding the upcoming programs.

New Blogs—If you don't follow us on Facebook, then be sure to visit our website we are posting new blogs again, the go up every Tuesday, recently we posted:

March 24, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at the California Baptist University in San Bernardino CA, in conjunction with the AACC

May 4-5, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at Grace Fellowship, York PA, in conjunction with the AACC

July 27-28, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentation at New Life Church, Colorado Springs CO, in conjunction with the AACC

September 27-29, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Mega National Conference of the American Association of Christian Counselors in Dallas, TX

Last Thursday February 8, We had our first community lecture event on The Developing Brain at the Hixson United Methodist Church and it was very well attended and received. We had about 20 people from our class and online listeners come out and support us and I want to thank all of you for your support. Our next talk will be on **Neurobiology of Depression and Drug Free Treatments Thursday, March 8, 2018**

In partnership with Come and Reason Ministries and Hixson United Methodist Church

Mental Health Matters

Community Gatherings for Help, Hope and Healing

Neurobiology of Depression and Drug Free Treatments Thursday, March 8, 2018

Depression is a complex disorder with alterations in both brain and body, loss of brain volume with altered brain circuits and even change in genetic expression? Discover how you can minimize your risk of depression and make changes in your daily routines that can protect your brain. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings

Addictions and the Adolescent Brain Thursday, April 12, 2018

Adolescence is a time of marked vulnerability to addictions. Explore the brain's reward pathway, healthy activities which



activate this pathway and how addictions hijack normal reward circuitry and damage the brain. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings

The Mind- God's Design & What Went Wrong Thursday, May 10, 2018

The human mind was designed with separate and distinct faculties to operate in a beautiful harmony. Something has damaged that balance and caused pain, suffering and illness. Discover God's design for the mind, what went wrong and how to restore balance to your mind. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings

The Aging Brain Thursday, August 13, 2018

What happens to the brain as we age? This presentation will examine the evidence-based lifestyle and non-pharmacological interventions which will protect your brain and diminish your risk of dementia. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings. Copies of Dr. Jennings brand new book, *The Aging Brain*, will be available.

Fix for Failing Families Thursday, September 13, 2018

Families are under attack, more than 50% of marriages end in divorce, in the U.S. almost 900,000 children are victims of abuse each year, and 77% of childhood deaths are caused by one or both parents. Discover principles and practice to bring healing to your family. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings

The Science of Belief Thursday, October 12, 2018

In this seminar we will examine the science of belief and demonstrate how modern quantum understanding provides a scientific basis for the impact belief, including prayer, has on our physical health and can even impact the physical world around us. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings

Guilt Resolution Thursday, November 8, 2018

Do you struggle with guilt? Discover the difference between legitimate and illegitimate guilt and how to resolve each and how to prevent people from manipulating you with guilt. Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings

The God-Shaped Brain Thursday, December 13, 2018

Our brains are in a constant state of flux. Moment by moment new connections are forming, idle tracks are being pruned back and brain circuits are changing. Discover how our beliefs change our brain wiring, our physical health, and even which genes are turned on or turned off. Do your beliefs matter – more than you ever knew! Presenter: Dr. Tim Jennings