

## Home Group Questions - January 6, 2018

from Michael Womble

1. Did you receive an allowance as a child? Were you encouraged to save your money or did you spend it all?

2. While the Bible clearly teaches that we should be responsible and be good stewards of our money, it also clearly calls us to do something that the world considers irrational: It calls us to give a portion of our earnings back to the Lord without expecting anything in return. It is not considered an investment, but rather, a sacrifice.

- Have you ever spoken to anyone who thought it was crazy that Christians just give their money away?
- Do you remember the first time you gave money to the church or the first time you decided to tithe? What were you feeling (joy, worry, uncertainty, etc.)?

3. Without cheating and looking at the questions below, can you think of any Biblical passages that speak on tithing or giving your money to the Lord or to the Church?

4. The idea of the “tithe” (giving 10% to the Lord) goes all the way back to the days of the Exodus. Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, the Lord commanded them to tithe once they entered the land. **Read Deuteronomy 14:22 and 28-29 with your group.**

It seems that God commanded the Israelites to tithe for (at least) 3 reasons:

- 1) to remind them that what they have (the Promised Land and all the produce that it yields) is not theirs, but was given to them by God
- 2) to challenge them to trust Him with what they have
- 3) to bless those in the community who were in need
  - The Israelites were not called to give cash, check or credit card, like we do today. They gave their livestock or their crops, mostly. How would giving actual produce and possessions feel different than giving money? Would it be easier or more difficult?
  - The collection of the tithe for the poor every 3 years also would have created a very communal, collective feeling to the tithe. Why is it good for us to see that we are giving together for common needs and goals?

5. In the New Testament, Jesus challenges his followers to take tithing a step further. He says (and Paul later reiterates) that it is not enough simply to give material things and check it off your list, but your heart must be in the right place as well.

**Read Matthew 23:23-24 with your group.**

- Many of us have been guilty at times of writing our checks to the church but failing to truly take time to care for the needs of others in our hearts and our daily lives. Why is it sometimes more difficult for us to tend to matters of the heart?

**Read Romans 12:1 with your group.**

- Paul says that we must not only offer up our money, but our entire lives to the Lord. In what ways has God been tugging on your heart to make more sacrifices for him lately?
- What is the thing that you have trouble sacrificing to the Lord? (In other words, what is one thing you would have trouble letting go of if God asked you to?)