

THE BIBLE VIEW

In This Issue:

[Give unto the Ministry and Ministers](#)

[Heaven Knows](#)

[Paying and Praying](#)

[Other](#)

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Give unto the Ministry and Ministers

Bill Brinkworth

Most folks are very squeamish when it comes to giving their money to a ministry. They do not think twice about giving money to buy novelties, snacks, the latest craze, or anything that grabs their fancy. However, giving to the Lord's work gets many upset and is a reason that has turned many away from attending church.

God's Word commands (Malachi 3:8) us to give our tithes (10%+ of our gross earnings) and offerings to the local ministry. Most understand that any ministry requires finances to keep its doors open. All know that electricity, A/C, padded pews, and rugs are not free and can be coaxed to help meet those expenses.

However, some givers are not happy that some goes to the church's leaders and workers. Although those same folks expect a paycheck when they work, they somehow think that their church leaders and other workers should work for free. Many do, but it is not biblical!

God used the support given to a local assembly to support the building, workers, and other needs even from the beginning. Here are some of what was given to the ministry and workers:

- Part of Israel's offering went to fund the priesthood.
"But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance." Num. 18:24 Also: Num. 18:26.
- People gave wood for the offerings.
"And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering" Neh. 10:34
- People gave of their crops so that the workers could eat.
"And to bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees" Neh. 10:35
- People gave their firstborn sons for the service of the ministry.
"Also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law (Ex. 13:2) ... unto the priests" Neh. 10:36
- People gave bread dough and other things.
"And that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage." Neh. 10:37

Although much of what was given was used for the worship of God, some was given for the workers of the ministry. Some was also given to be saved and to be used at later times (Neh. 10:38). It was stored in the “treasure house.”

The next time someone grumbles that his offering is used by the pastor, remind them it should be. It is biblical. If someone misuses it, that is not always our business. When what is given is used improperly that is between them and the Lord and the Lord will deal with it. They will not get away with any dishonesty of the use of what is given for the Lord’s service. Our responsibility is to give it to the Lord via the local church.

We are to give as God commands us and are to give happily. God does not need our money, but He needs to see that He and His ministries are more important than our usually selfish desires.

To learn more about what the Bible teaches about giving to God, please read:

<http://www.openthoumineeyes.com/bible-answers/tithing.html>

“I believe I figured out why many get upset when they learn they should give to the Lord. Money has become their green god, and they don’t want to give their deity away.” — B. Brinkworth

Heaven Knows

Bill Brinkworth

“And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. 43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: 44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” Mark 12:41-44

There is nothing we do that Heaven does not know about. In Mark 12 verses 41-44 this is illustrated by Jesus’ observance of people giving at a temple.

Jesus was standing by the temple treasury and was watching those giving their money to help meet the needs of the synagogue. From what was written in these verses we can learn much about what He knew about the givers then and probably knows about those that give today. We see that Jesus knew:

- Who gave. Jesus saw the rich and the poor give and knew who did not give.
- How much they physically gave. Jesus knew exactly how much a poor widow gave. He knew she gave two of the smallest Greek copper coins, (mites), to help provide for the temple’s upkeep. He also knew that rich people gave far more.
- How much their gift met to the giver. Jesus knew the rich gave out of their extra. It was not much of a sacrifice to them. He knew that the widow gave. Although her offering was nothing in financial comparison to what the wealthy gave, the Saviour knew that she gave all that she had. He knew the burden she had for the work of the Lord and how giving to it was more important to her than her many earthly needs. He knew her giving was sacrificial.

Keep Jesus' observance in mind the next time you give to your church ministry. He knows if you give or not, how much you give, and why. Most importantly He knows what the value of the gift meant to you.

Fifty cents in the offering plate may have been a lot 70 years ago, but today it is less than what a person would pay for coffee. Giving a pittance or not as much as we could be giving is just showing God the value we place on Him and His ministry.

God does not need our money. Certainly, He could point any pastor to a large diamond or a five pound golden nugget to meet the ministry needs. He, however, has chosen for us to sacrificially give our best to keep the Gospel going out to the world and to meet the needs of others. Our giving shows Him how important our local church is to us. What does He know about your giving?

“You give but a little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.” — K. Gibran

Paying and Praying

Spurgeon

A deacon in Maine came to a meeting that was taking a missionary collection. The pastor then asked, “Our good brother Sewell” to pray about the congregation’s giving. Sewell did not pray, but thrust his hand in his pocket and stood fumbling.

“Bring the offering plate,” he first requested. When the plate came, he put his money into it.

The minister said, “Brother Sewell, I did not ask you to give anything. I only wished you to pray.”

“Oh,” said the godly man, “I could not pray until I had first given something.” He felt obliged first to do something for the great mission work, and after having done that he felt he could pray for it.

Oh, if all of Christ’s people felt the same way.

“God has given us two hands; one to receive with and the other to give. We are not cisterns made for hoarding. We are channels made for sharing.”

— *Graham*