



Christian Life Fellowship

Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



What If We All Tithed?

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Introduction:

What if? We are dreaming this month about the possibilities and potential of how CLF would look and what might be different IF we all tithed. Last week we looked at what CLF would look like if we all prayed. I hope this week you have been finding extra time to spend with God. I trust that the suggestions on the book marks have been helpful to you and that your prayer life has been impacted to pray with boldness, with confidence, with authority, with fervency, with faith and that the end results of this week will be a renewed deeper devotion to our Lord.

This morning I want us to dream together as to what CLF would look like if we all gave Biblically, which means we tithed or gave 10% of our income to the Lord's work. What might that look like for us individually? What might that look like for this fellowship? TEXT: **Malachi 3:10** – **“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,”** says the LORD Almighty, **“I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you!”**

I. Everything belongs to God.

We have to acknowledge the fact that everything belongs to God. If we look at the resources that are placed in our hands that way, we simply become managers and directors of where those resources are to be utilized. Managing resources can be challenging at best. God doesn't trust us with resources so that we can consume 100% of it on ourselves. He makes a promise to us that if we would bring all the tithes into the storehouse there would not be a lack in His house. Through my years of ministry, people from time to time have come to me who struggle financially. One of the questions I ask is, “Are you tithing, are you giving to God 10%

of your income?” I can honestly say that no one has ever said, “Yes, I am honoring God but I am really struggling here.” God wants there to be plenty in His house. I don't believe that God wants us to just squeak by. I said it last week, and I say it again now, I believe God doesn't want us to simply survive. He wants us to thrive and He wants to prosper us.

Those who do statistics on churches indicate that 20% of any congregation gives 80% of the income. Can you imagine what would happen at CLF if we all grasped the concept of tithing and did it to honor God and obey Him? Here's what I perceive would happen. God would bless our obedience so

abundantly that in the next twelve months we would double what we are currently giving to missions through our faith promises going from about \$25,000 annually to over \$50,000 annually. We would be able to hire a full-time children's pastor. We would be able to pay off our debt of \$170,000 and still have money to accomplish other things I believe God wants us to do. I believe not only would this blessing be one of resources, but I believe that God would bless in terms of new believers and the church growing spiritually and numerically.

Giving our resources to God is really not a financial issue, but a spiritual issue. Tithing becomes a matter of trust and obedience. The church budget should be an indicator of vision and what we trust God to do among us. Church income is a barometer of obedience on the part of God's people. When God's people obey and respond to God not because they have to but because they want to, God works in powerful ways. As we tithe, we give God something tangible with which to work.

When we become followers of Christ, we become a tool and a vessel of usefulness to God in terms of service, of time and of resources. We become partners and cooperate with Him in ministry. Do we really expect that God should bless whatever we give to Him? If we give Him nothing, what kind of return is expected on that? He says that we are to bring all the tithes into the storehouse that there might be food in His house. Food speaks of nourishment, of comfort, of satisfaction, of nutrition and it is a source of strength and life. God's desire is that there not be a lack but that there be plenty in His house.

All too often we look at what we don't have and we are limited by it. Have you looked at your lack instead of the abundance you have? When our Board sits down and says, "What can we do this year?". We begin by looking at the income from last year. I believe there are things that God wants us to accomplish but to do those things it costs money. We attempt to be good stewards of the resources that are placed in our hands but like anything else, we can only utilize what you as God's people give us to work with. If you are not tithing, then you are limiting what God can do here through CLF.

In Malachi, God told his people that if you are not tithing, you are a thief, robbing God of what belongs to Him. You may not realize how your tithing or lack of it impacts ministry, but it does. When we obey and honor God in a Biblical way, He is obligated to His word. "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my temple."

II. Heaven's windows will be open.

The blessings that God has for those who honor Him and practice this principle are incredible. God says, "I will open the windows of heaven for you." I don't know about you, but I like the thought of that. When I think of open windows, I think of fresh air; I think of sunshine. When I open my windows at home, whatever is outside can come in. If it is cold out, the cold comes in. If it is warm out, the warm comes in. If it is damp or humid out, the humidity comes in. The same is true with God. Opening the windows of heaven tells me that whatever is in heaven will come into my life and your life. The peace, joy, comfort and abundance of heaven are poured into my life and your life.

God goes on in [verses 11 and 12](#) – listen to what He says there in addition to His blessing. **"Then, for your sake, I will stop insects from eating your crops. They will not destroy the produce of your land. The vines in your fields will not lose their unripened grapes," says the LORD of Armies.** God who has control of weather, seasons and the production of fruit promised the people of Israel that he would stop the insects from eating their crops so the produce of their land would not be destroyed. He also promised that the vines would not lose their unripened grapes.

Those are huge promises of blessing for someone who was in agriculture. Today we are in other types of businesses. Don't you think that God could bless your accounts at what you do? Don't you think that he could make it so that in this economy you wouldn't lose business and that He would take care of things which are outside of your control? Absolutely. The bottom line was that He desired to bless and abundantly prosper His people and His blessing was predicated on their obedience to recognize Him and give Him ten percent or a tithe of everything. This is the only place in scripture where

we read the challenge to test and prove God in His promise. God goes on to assure us that there would not be room enough to contain His blessing.

III. His blessing is beyond our ability to contain.

I believe I have been incredibly blessed by God; I have a relationship with Christ. I have a strong relationship with my wife. I have a good relationship with my sons. I have been blessed with relatively good health. I live in America. I have a home to live in, food to eat, a job by which I can serve God and His people, a vehicle to get me where I need to go, clothing to wear, and on and on I could go. His blessing has been abundant. The only thing I have attempted to do throughout my life was to honor God with the tithe and add offerings to that. I have done nothing different than anyone else could do to inherit such Divine blessings. Since God is no respecter of persons, He will equally bless anyone who purposes to prove and test Him and obey the principles of His word.

The promise God makes here is that there would be so much blessing He would pour out that there would not be room enough to contain it or to take it in. Wow! I'd love to see that much blessing in this ministry and in your personal life! **Proverbs 11:24 – It is possible to give freely and become more wealthy, but those who are stingy will lose everything.** God challenges us to test Him, to try

Conclusion:

What would CLF look like if we all truly tithed biblically? I suggest there would be such blessing in personal lives and in this ministry that there would be greater ministry than ever before. Can we do this? Dream with me this morning. What if? What if we all did this. It would transform this ministry. Why don't we try it? Starting this morning? We are going to receive an offering as we conclude our service this morning. This is your opportunity to start testing God. What do you have to lose?

Him and to allow Him to prove to us that He can be counted on. It's like God is saying; "I dare you to put me to the test, because if you do, I'll prove to you that I'm God and what I have told you is true."

His response to our obedience is one of blessing. God's means of measurement is different from ours. His promise is to pour out in such amount, that we would not have enough room to hold it. That speaks of abundance, vastness, so there is not enough to take it in. I cannot imagine that much blessing. This is God's response to our obedience. When our sons were younger and they did something out of obedience that we had tried to teach them, we wanted to reward them in some way. God is no different. He will prove to us that the 90% we have left after we tithe will go farther with His blessing than the 100% we tried to manage all ourselves.

So I ask you this morning...what is it that keeps you from obeying? Is it fear, is it trust, is it control, what keeps us from doing this? Several years ago we did God's guarantee: A 90 day money back guarantee that our leaders stood behind and they said, "Try it for 90 days and test God. If you tithe by check and at the end of three months don't have greater peace of mind and see that God has supplied your needs then we without question would gladly refund every penny of your money." We had some people try it, and guess what? Not one of them came to us at the end of 90 days saying, "It didn't work, we want our money back."