

The idea that Jesus repudiated the Biblical commandments and was concerned only about ethical attitudes, is not only superficial, but grossly misleading. The message of Sinai gains rather than loses force. It remains as a beacon illuminating the righteous will of God. It is no longer a collection of abstract rules, but is intended as a means to know God and to obey his will.

One must be personally related to the law given to obey the law rightly.

What the N.T. is the self-deceptive way of seeking salvation by the law of works and all to the exclusion of grace.

Did Jesus tithe? Not only did Jesus believe in tithing but he practiced it also. However little Jesus possessed we may be certain that not less than a tithe was given through the synagogue or temple.

I believe this because first, Jesus was reared in a godly Jewish home where tithing was taught and practiced. The pious Jew tithed. Second, the O.T. was the scripture of that day and he loved it, and quoted it. The O.T. teaches tithing. Third, Jesus had come not to destroy the law but fulfill it. Fourth, God said of him that in all things Jesus was well pleasing to him. This could not have been so, had Jesus not kept his law perfectly. Fifth, Jesus never lowered the O.T. standard, but always raised them. Matt. 5:20 "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of heaven." The Scribes and Pharisees were tithers. We are to do more. Sixth, Jesus taught his followers to go the "Second mile",-- beyond what is required. One cannot go the second mile until he has gone the first. Jesus taught one should go beyond the tithe. Seven, his enemies sought to convict him of breaking the law of the Sabbath, it is strange they never accused him of breaking the law of the tithe. Eight, the law forbade the Pharisees to sit at a table with one who did not tithe, yet they sat with Jesus.

Did Jesus teach tithing?

Of course he taught it,--turn to Matt. 23:23. He commended the Pharisees for giving the tithe.

Intro: Charles Spurgeon warned Christians to beware of three things,--doubt, dirt, and debt.

Our church is in the process of cleaning off the debt. However, there is still some doubt that we need to do away with

Often we make a broad side statement,--under law and under grace. Since we live in the age of the gospel or grace, the law has been done away with. This understanding leaves us mixed up and in doubt.

I. Under Law

Our God is a God of law, and grace, but basically law.

He is a God of cosmic law.

Gen. 1:14. The planets move in their orbits with precision.

He is a God of natural law.

Gen. 1:11. The seasons without flaw produce everything after its kind.

He is a God of Physical Law.

Psalms 103:3. Immutable are the laws of the body and its well being.

He is a God of Social Law.

Ex. 20:1-17. The ten commandments are the foundation stones of any well-ordered society.

He is a God of Moral Law.

Gal. 6:7. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

He is a God of Redemptive Law.

John 3:16. For God so loved the world.

He is a God of spiritual law.

Matt. 25:29. The laws of Christian growth are clear.

He is a God of stewardship law.

Lev. 27:30 - the tithe - is holy unto the Lord

God is not the author of confusion - 1 Cor. 14:33. It is not to be supposed that God would ordain laws to regulate every phase of his universe and leave the matter of stewardship to chance. God owns all. The tithe proves man's obedience, the other nine-tenths proves man's love.

The idea and practice of stewardship is as old as the human race. Tithing was practiced long before the time of Moses.

There is therefore no point in the frequently heard statement that tithing was a Jewish law and therefore, is not applicable to us.

Tithing is found in the Mosaic law but it was in existence

long before that law was given. What Moses under divine guidance did was to take an ancient custom, stress its religious significance and incorporate it in the law for the observance of the Hebrew people.

Gen. 14:20 - Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec 400 years before the law was given. Next to the home and the Sabbath this one of the oldest institutions of the people of God.

Gen. 28:20-22 - Jacob, entered into partnership with God and agreed to give the tithe 300 years before the law was given to Moses.

Therefore, we discover that after 400 years or more of the practice of giving the tithe it was made a part of the laws given the people in Lev. 27:30-33. When Moses included the tithe in his law and the prophets preached it, they were not simply giving levitical regulations, but were going down to the bedrock of man's relation to God and his universe. The tithe was not the law of levites to finance the temple. It was God's law for the spiritual beneficence of man.

The law tells what the eternally righteous creator and Lord requires of his creatures. Since it is based on the nature and purpose of the changeless God, the law can never be abolished, but remains forever.

Ceremonial customs and observances belonging to the law under the old covenant have fallen away.

Duke McCall - A Christian went to the synagogue with Jewish friend. Offering plate passed and the Jew took out a roll of bills and peeled off several (a tenth). Christian's eyes nearly bulged out. Later Jew visited church with Christian. Plate passed. Christian felt around pocket, dropped smallest coin could find. Jew said "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"....

II. Jesus and the law

Some insist that while the law of the tithe is clearly taught in the O.T., it does not apply to Christian people, who they say, are not under law but under grace.

Well and good! But to what law do they refer?

Rom. 3:31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law? Of course then, reference is to the Levitical laws of ceremony and sacrifice.

It needs to be understood that the only law which ceased to operate under grace was that body of regulations laid

down by Moses concerning the rites and ceremonies of the levitical system which found their final fulfilment in the death and resurrection of Jesus. We have seen that the tithe antedates that system.

The coming of grace did not destroy the law of gravity. Are idolatry, murder, theft, adultery any less sinful under grace than under law?

The commandment Ex. 20:17 "Thou shalt not covet." Did Jesus regard this law as any less binding when he warned, "be-ward of covetousness". Luke 12:15.

In no single instance did Jesus drain out the meaning of the law. Matt. 5:17. He came not to destroy but to fulfill it. Always he filled it full with even greater obligations,--Matt. 5:13.

In Jesus' death and resurrection the ceremonial laws were fulfilled. No more under grace do we sacrifice sheep and goats. But the remainder, including the tithe, stands. People before Moses practiced it, Moses commanded it, the prophets taught it, Jesus did not destroy it,--"Till heaven and earth pass",--it stands!

Matt 5:19-20 - Jesus said "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, including the tithe, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven..."

Jesus did not stop on the surface of the law; he went deeper to probe its eternal meaning. Stealing, murder and other laws did not initially become wrong when Moses wrote them down. It had been always wrong to murder and to steal. These are fundamental and universal principles that flow from the nature and will of God. The believer stands under the rule of God, he is obligated to God's moral demands.

The sermon on the mount makes plain that the decalogue, rather than losing relevance for Christ's followers, is intensely relevant--elevated.

The eternal laws of God are binding on believer and unbeliever alike. The law is a looking glass that mirrors man's actual condition.

What then? shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid - Rom. 6:15.

The Bible refers to the law as:

Ps. 19:7 - perfect

Matt. 5:17f - imperishable

Romans 7:12 - Holy and good

Rom. 7:14 - spiritual

He certainly did not condemn it or tell them to cease. He told them to go further. Tithing will not make a man a Christian, but no Christian can afford to get along without tithing.

The charge that Jesus did not teach tithing will not stand up under careful examination. Tithing was something they were already doing and he did not need to criticize them for something they were already doing.

Did Paul tithe?

Yes, he was a tither before he became a Christian. He was raised a Jew in a Jewish home. He was a Pharisee of the straightest sect. It is quite probable that he was a member of the Sanhedrin. He lived in a good conscience. Acts 23:1 All of this would indicate he was a tither.

After his conversion would he practice less than giving a tithe? Indeed, He reached the place where all he was and had was consecrated to Christ.

The story is told of a bachelor who boarded with a comely widow who was a good housekeeper and set an unusually appetizing table. He thought; he proposed; he was accepted; the knot was tied. Then he astonished his bride by saying: "Hitherto as a matter of law and obligation I have paid you \$10 a week for board, but now as a matter of love I shall pay you one dollar a week and make special contributions from time to time as I feel like it." Should a man do less under grace and love than under the law?

Here's one for you,--Paul never said a word against tithing. He evidently looked upon it as the minimum of Christian giving. He seems to have taken it for granted. He taught that giving is a grace to be cultivated and not merely a duty to be grudgingly done. He looked upon stewardship not primarily as a means of getting money, but rather as a way of making men. "I seek not yours but you." (II Cor. 12:15)

Matt. 23:2-3 - His disciples said "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat...do what they bid..." It is taught here by implication.

We understand the tithe was not a scheme invented by the Levites, but is a basic law of God's universe.

1. A constant reminder of relation to God

The day of rest is an ever present institution to declare the work of the creation. The Lord's day testifies of God's work in redemption. Baptism and the Lord's supper are symbols of Christ's redemptive work. The tithe is the insignia of our relation to God. God owns all.

There is no position of our time or money we can claim exclusively as our own. It all belongs to God.

We must be cautious here,--in our emphasis upon the tenth, we are likely to forget the nine-tenths. Man is responsible not for some but for all. The tithe is the starting point.

2. To withhold the tithe is robbery

The words of God - Mal 3:8 "Yet ye have robbed me" - grave offense to rob one's fellow man.

The penalty Mal. 3:9 - "Ye are cursed with a curse" They ignore God's claim.

In giving the tithe man recognizes his dependence upon God. In refusing it, man declares his independence from God. He chooses to go it alone.

America groans today under a load of taxes. perhaps 80 cents out of every dollar goes to finance wars past, present and future. Every business man knows he is now working for a tax hungry government. The end is not yet.

For many years men have said they could not live on nine tenths of their salary. Now we live on far less. Some one has said that when Congress passed the law allowing an income tax exemption up to 15 and 20 per cent they made more tithers (?) than all the sermons ever preached on the subject.

Mal 3:11 - God promised material blessings to those who would tithe. Testimonies of increased wages, bigger contracts, have been realized

In closing, if God is the owner,--why not acknowledge it today. If you have never accepted him as your saviour do so now. You have broken God's law, by his law you realize how far short you've come to please him. Merge your life into the grace of God.

Natural man's most driving force is for
Self-preservation - makes him save,
makes him hide - tendency to get & hang
on to it.

Only by introducing him to higher force
can induce man to share voluntarily any
part.

1st Ask your self - what is my relationship to
God.

Some work about schemes, or 'The Jones', or
The Tax Collector, some even worry about a
neighbor's money & the way he spends it, if he
buys a lot or builds a house, or buys a
boat, or buys a new coat, or a new car,
it should have been an Austin instead of a Ford,
& etc.

Now what the other fellow buys or spends
his money on is no responsibility of mine, if he
is a wise manager of his money - congratulations.
How you spend your money & what you spend
it for is no concern of mine - & the way I
spend mine is no concern of yours!

But there is one that I owe an account
of my stewardship too - The Heavenly Father!
Do I give him his part? Do I give from
the heart? Have I recognized that God
holds me accountable for not only 10%, but
100% of my income?

There is no danger of outgiving God.

No only we but our Church
has a Stewardship - we are committed
to give out side of our church to some
of the following causes:

Bapt. Childrens home — 1500.00

Home for aged — —

Cooperative Program — —

Missionary Work Abroad — 2,000.00

Worship Assoc. - men — —

etc —

These are carried on by our Father &
offerings, we have a Lent. reduced
to 44 now -

If all of our members would join
our F - P. Me - Program we could
reduce it greatly before the year
ended -

I have the committees cards of
two members given me this week -
one is a Business Woman -

Widow - no reg. income but
wants to be a part of this worthy Program.

Lincoln said once "what is the most imp't.
thought that ever entered your mind" - answered "my
individual responsibility to God."

This is an individual matter.