

The “5 Truths” of the Gospel

Truth #1: Already Forgiven – all of your sins were forgiven on the Cross of Christ, except the sin of unbelief. Mark 3:28; Romans 5:10a; John 16:8-9

Truth #2: Made Clean – when you trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior, God takes out your old sinful spirit (heart) and gives you a brand, new clean heart. Romans 6:6; Romans 6:17-18; John 3:3,7

Truth #3: Made Righteous – as a Christian, you are now righteous in your spirit because Jesus, in the form of the Holy Spirit, lives in you. 2 Peter 1:4

Truth #4: In Union – you are “in Christ” because Jesus joins as one with you in your spirit. John 14:20; 1 Corinthians 6:17; Colossians 1:27

Truth #5: By Faith – you are righteous on the inside but your body is still dead to sin. Follow by faith the inner life of Christ so that you can live a righteous life. Romans 8:10; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:3b

The “5 Keys” to Understanding the New Testament

Key #1: Teaching of the Holy Spirit - only the Holy Spirit can make the Bible come alive since your human mind is incapable of understanding God's spiritual truths. 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Key #2: Proper Context - the New Testament must be understood in its proper Jewish context. Otherwise, the message gets misinterpreted and is dramatically changed. Romans 9:4; John 4:22b

Key #3: Spiritual Beings - all people have an inner spirit and an outer mortal body. Christians have a “born again” spirit that is righteous, but they still live in their not-yet-redeemed mortal bodies. 2 Corinthians 4:16, 5:1-6; Ephesians 4:24

Key #4: Jesus Emptied Himself - Jesus lived by the power of the Holy Spirit that He received at His baptism. Jesus lived by faith and not by His own power. Therefore, He is your model for a life of faith. John 14:10b; Matthew 12:28; Matthew 12:18

Key #5: Hebrew Law - God gave the Law only to the Jews; the Gentiles have never been under the Law. Romans 2:14; Hebrews 7:18, 28; Hebrews 8:13

Acts 2:44-45 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; [45] and they began selling their property and possessions and were **sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.**

2 Corinthians 8:12 For if the readiness {to give} is present, it is acceptable **according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.**

1 John 3:17 But **whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?**

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True Tracts

Giving and Tithing: What Does the Bible Teach?

The use of your spiritual gifts and the giving of money and resources are very important in your life as a Christian. There is a lot of different and sometimes high pressured teaching on tithing? What does the Bible have to say about giving and tithing?

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, **so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;**

What is Tithing and Giving?

The word “tithe” means a “tenth part” or 10%. Under the Old Covenant Law, the children of Israel had three mandatory tithes (taxes) that averaged a little over 23% annually. This was to support the poor and to support the Levites who worked exclusively in the service of the Temple. The tithe was not given as money* but as meat, fruit, vegetables, seeds and similar produce of the land.

***Note:** the tithe could be converted into money if the person could not carry the produce to the Temple.

Giving was also part of life for the children of Israel but it was not compulsory. The story of the widow’s mite is an example. (See Mark 12:42-45.)

In New Testament times, the Bible specifically states that giving is not to be mandatory.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, **not grudgingly or under compulsion**, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Giving is based on grace, not law. Grace is internal since, as a Christian, Christ lives in you. Faith is following the inner life that Jesus Christ is living through you. Christ motivates you in your spirit to do the “good works” that He has already prepared for you. God also blesses some with wealth so that they can live out their spiritual gift to give generously.

Romans 12:8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; **he who gives, with liberality**; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

A Familiar Verse

Have you ever heard this verse preached in church?

Malachi 3:8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings.”

This is an example of mixing Old Covenant Law with New Covenant grace. Under the Law, God told the children of Israel that He would bless them if they followed His laws but He would curse them if they disobeyed His laws. Verse 9 goes on to say ...

Malachi 3:9 “You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!”

Verse 10, often omitted in sermons, states the purpose of the tithe ...

[10] “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, **so that there may be food in My house**, and test Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

If you are being pressured by your pastor or anyone else in the church, they are not speaking the truth of God. All believers will have their works judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Giving that is based on human self-effort will be burned up with all of the other wood, hay and straw works.

Tithing in the New Testament Church?

You may be surprised to learn that the first known church document suggesting tithing was written 200 years after Christ; the practice of tithing did not become common until **700 years after Christ!** You can either conclude that the Apostles and subsequent Christians were just too ignorant to understand God’s will for 700 years, or you must conclude that people have changed God’s intent. When Jesus went to the Cross, the Law was nailed to the Cross with Him.

Colossians 2:14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees {the Law} against us, which was hostile to us; and **He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.**

As a result, external rules and rituals disappeared from New Testament church practices. Except for baptism and the Lord’s Supper, both teaching tools, everything else went internal – living by faith.

Compulsory tithing is harmful because it sets an artificial standard for giving. People who have been blessed by God are tempted to consider 10% as “fulfilling” their obligation. Maybe God blessed them financially so that they can give 40% or 70% or 90% to support the work of the Lord. Thousands upon thousands of evangelists and pastors in Asia and Africa do not have the resources to spread the Gospel. Christians are missing God’s opportunities and the joy of giving by grace.