

intro: when it comes to tithing, there are a lot of people who have this weird misconception of it. Either we don't even talk about it, we think it's some old-school rule that doesn't apply, or some kinda suggestion for those super religious people. Well, I think we need to look at it differently just because it's one of the most mentioned subjects in Scripture and Jesus talks about it...a lot.

starting point: who cares if the Bible talks about it? who cares if even Jesus talks about it? well as someone who wants to take their faith seriously (esp. if they call themselves Christian) then you must believe that Jesus isn't just giving us some random set of rules to follow. Instead, he's trying to lead us to the best possible life. So yeah, let's listen to him.

what does scripture say?

- God owns everything: Psalm 50 talks about the bigness of God and what he really wants from his people. It means that He doesn't *need* anything. He's God. He owns everything. So question, what could you possibly give back to God? What is money, time, talents to God? Is it not stuff that He has already given you? So why does He "need" you to tithe?
 - So what? For the Christian, this allows us to enjoy all that our Father has given us BUT this also means we are stewards (managers) of his stuff. There's this great balance of "my Father provides for me" and "ok, I gotta make sure I use his gifts well"
- Everything is temporary: James 4:14 talks about how our life right now is kinda like vapor or mist. One second you see it and then you don't. Yup, compared to eternity, we're like a wee little speck.
 - So what? For the Christian, I must remind myself that all of this is just temporary. There is a greater reality and there will one day be a new heavens and new earth and I will have to give an account for what I did on this earth with God's stuff. Don't hold on to things too tightly.
- What you treasure reveals where your heart is: Matthew 6:19-21 is the main passage and there's two parts to it. The first part talks about investing wisely. Jesus is asking you to unplug real quick and pay attention to your life. Are you wise in how you invest in what you value right now? Wait, lemme break it down for you:
 - Notice a couple things from this verse:
 - Treasures are not the issue. They are actually good things that should point you towards thankfulness and also a seriousness on what you do with it.
 - The REAL idea is *how* you store them - unsafe, temporary place or safe, eternal safekeeping.
 - The key: what you treasure reveals where your heart is...and if your treasures could call you out, you better pay attention.

- So what? For the Christian, what does my lifestyle say about my faith? If I truly am a disciple of Jesus (i.e. a Christian) am I living as such? Or does where I spend my time and money betray me? Am I spending my time and money on things that actually will last for eternity?

what does this “tithing” thing look like?

- **Give graciously:** As Christians, if we understand that God owns all, all is temporary, and I must invest well...then we want to give graciously. We ought to be very open-handed with both our time and money. We don't hoard our time or our money to spend it on ourselves, instead we graciously give back to whoever is in need.
 - Practical steps:
 - Pray for God to remind you of everything He has given you (including the free generous gift of salvation through Jesus). Pray that your heart would be moved to extend generosity to others.
 - Pray daily that God would bring people in your path where you can show generosity of both words, time and resources.
 - Repent to God and to your community in areas where you have been selfish and where you have hoarded your words, time and resources.
- **Give of your time:** Time is probably more valuable to you right now than money as a student. But this is where real life change will come in. It'll come when you begin to tithe your super valuable time to the Lord and to others.
 - Practical steps:
 - Give back to God the time He has given you. Give back time to Him daily in prayer, study, and just enjoying Him. Be disciplined and jealous with this time and don't give it away to others (or games)
 - Give up your time to disciple & your community: Tithe your time back to loving and equipping others to grow. This may be calling someone up, it may be arranging time to meet face-to-face. This may include giving up time with school friends in order to be with a younger class at church for the purpose of building community.
 - We need youth to serve in awana this spring and the following fall. Consider giving up your Friday nights in order to do that for a season.
- **Give up your resources:** While you may think you don't have much, compared to the rest of the world, we are considered “rich”. We also looked at just the stats if Christians would just give back only 10% of their wealth what the world would look like. This is real-life stuff here guys...and we can make a HUGE difference.
 - Practical steps:

- Give to the church: giving to the church does a couple of things. It reinforces the idea of membership to the point where you're willing to invest in its ministry and mission. You giving to the church supports its leaders, missions world locally and globally, it aids in developing and cultivating ministries across multi-generational lines, and it provides resources for you to actually enjoy like a building, A/C, and chairs.
- Give to specific individuals: Consider taking other people out and blessing them by picking up the tab. Find people in our community and in the community who are in need. Donate to missionaries and campus ministers (i.e IV staff like J. Tran, or Joseph Kwan)
- Support our Compassion Children Robson and Sulvia. Your donations go to them being fed daily, shelter, clean water, clothes, education, bible study, and most of all a gift of being a "sponsor" to a child who is in need.

Final thoughts

- As a Christian, you must take this idea seriously because this is really a heart issue. Where is your heart for the Gospel? What does your heart truly feel about Jesus and following him? Then again, you can say one thing but how you spend your time and money will always call you out. My prayer is that when it calls you out...it reveals that you were wise and you invested in what was eternal and not temporary.
- The Gospel message comes out loud and clear in this topic. For Christ came down and became nothing so that we might have everything. He continues to give and give and allows us to partake in his mission. We get the privilege to partner with God while he accomplishes his mission to save and redeem. And we get to use all that He's given us and that's awesome because 1) we'll never run out of resources and 2) it's His to begin with so I don't have to worry about anything.
- I pray that you get on board quickly. There's so much to do and so little time. But moreso, you were created for adventure....deep down inside you crave the big story. And with God, He provides the biggest story but you gotta be willing to open your hands to what you think is yours and freely give away more and more until you have nothing...so that you can have ALL of God. Blessings.