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TEN

TIMES

TEN

Ruskin
in the
Seven Lamps of Architecture



"And let us not now lose sight of this broad and unabrogated principle—I might say incapable of being abrogated so long as men shall receive earthly gifts from God. Of all that they have His tithe must be rendered to Him, or insofar and insomuch He is forgotten; of the skill and of the treasure, of the strength and of the mind, of the time and of the toil offering must be made reverently; and if there be any difference between the Levitical and the Christian offering, it is that the latter may be just so much the wider in its range as it is typical in its meaning, as it is thankful instead of sacrificial."



"God loveth a cheerful giver"

THE TEN TIMES TEN
of
STEWARDSHIP

(The following comments represent the writer's own convictions with no pretense of speaking by the authority of the Church. D. H. E.)

* * *

As the Moral Law is larger than the Ten Commandments so is the Gospel of stewardship larger than the tithe. And as each commandment is an integral part of the Moral Law so is the tithe an integral part of stewardship.

We shall examine the place that the tithe occupies in the stewardship of Christians.

I

TEN QUESTIONS ON STEWARDSHIP

1. *What is a Christian Steward?*

A Christian steward is a trustee who faithfully manages the possessions which God has committed to his keeping.

2. *What are the possessions which God has committed to us?*

God has committed to all, life, talents, time, money and the things which money will buy.

3. *What obligation rests upon the Christian steward?*

The Christian steward is obligated to manage faithfully all that God has entrusted to him. "Give an account of thy stewardship."

4. *What Scriptural rule covers this obligation?*

"Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

5. *Do the things entrusted to the Christian become his own?*

No more than does the manager of a property or business become the owner thereof. They are his only to use for the glory of God.

6. *What Scripture supports this?*

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13).

7. *What acknowledgment is the Christian to make of his stewardship?*

"He commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading" (Luke 19:15).

8. *Is the steward left to determine what that proportion should be?*

Yes, but according to God's established standards for the guidance of His people.

9. *What are some of God's established standards?*

The Ten Commandments as a standard of worship and conduct; the Sabbath as a standard for worship and rest; and the tithe as a standard for giving.

10. *Had Christ anything to say about the stewardship of property?*

Yes. One verse in every seven in the four Gospels and at least sixteen of His parables bear on this subject.

II

TEN QUESTIONS ON TITHING

1. *What is the tithe?*

The tithe is the tenth of our increase. One's increase is his gross income minus the cash cost of producing it.

2. *Does the one tenth for God imply that the other nine tenths belong to us?*

Stewardship covers the nine tenths as well. The payment of the tithe is only an acknowledgment that all belongs to Him. The payment of rent on your home is an acknowledgment that it is yours only in the sense of temporary possession.

3. *If all belongs to God why does He ask a tenth?*

For the same reason that He asks a seventh of time when it all belongs to Him.

4. *How does the tithe fit into the stewardship of property?*

In the same way that the Sabbath fits into the stewardship of time.

5. *Is there a difference between tithing and proportionate giving?*

Yes, a person who gives a fiftieth would be a proportionate giver, but certainly not a tither.

6. *Doesn't the Bible say to give "according as God hath prospered him"?*

Yes, in I Corinthians 16:2. This is in accord with what the tither actually does.

7. *Is the tithe the limit of a Christian's financial obligation?*

Certainly not! God's word to Judah was, 'Ye have robbed me in tithes and offerings.' The tithe is the starting point. Free will offerings should follow according to the degree of one's prosperity.

8. *Is there a difference between alms-giving and tithing?*

Yes, alms-giving represents gifts of charity. Tithing is the payment of a debt to God.

9. *Does not Christ say: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth"?*

Yes, but He adds, "that thine alms may be in secret".

10. *Is it anyone's concern what I give?*

Not what we give as alms. But it is of public concern whether we pay our debts. When we pay our laundress for her day's work—that is debt. When we bestow an added offering—that is alms.

III

TEN OLD TESTAMENT DEDUCTIONS

1. *Where do we get our information about tithing?*

From the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

2. *What place does it occupy in the Old Testament?*

A prominent place. From Genesis to Malachi tithing was practiced among believers.

3. *Did the tithe have its origin in the Mosaic dispensation?*

No, long before Moses, believers paid tithes.

4. *Does the Bible distinctly say that tithe-paying was required before Moses?*

No, neither does it say that Sabbath keeping was required before Moses. But it does say that God rested on the seventh day and hallowed it (Gen. 2:2, 3) and that Abraham and Jacob paid tithes (Gen. 14:20; 28:22).

5. *Was tithing made a part of the Levitical law?*

Yes, it was incorporated in the Levitical order as were the Sabbath and other permanent parts of the divine religion.

6. *Did the obligation of the tithe disappear at the close of the Levitical dispensation?*

There is no evidence that it did. Only types and shadows passed away. The tithe was neither a type nor a shadow of things to come.

7. *Is there a difference between a law and a principle?*

Yes, a law in itself may be changed. A principle, which deals with right and wrong, is abiding.

8. *Is the tithe to be regarded as a law or a principle?*

It is both. But it is the principle that creates the law. For example, we do not observe the Sabbath primarily because the Fourth Commandment requires it. The Fourth Commandment requires such a day because it is right. As such it is still observed among Christians.

9. *What would be necessary to dispense with an Old Testament law?*

Either it must be so stated or implied in the Word of God or it must have been fulfilled in the coming of Christ.

10. *What are some of the Old Testament statements regarding the tithe?*

"And he gave tithes of all" (Gen. 14:20).

"... of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28:22).

"Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed that the field bringeth forth year by year" (Deut. 14:22).

"Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings . . . bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse" (Mal. 3:8-10).

IV

TEN NEW TESTAMENT CONFIRMATIONS

1. *Is the tithe principle confirmed in the New Testament?*

Yes.

2. *Is there anything in the New Testament to indicate that tithing is still required?*

Yes.

3. *Did Christ give it His sanction?*

Yes, when He said to the Pharisees: "These ought ye to have done" (Matt. 23:23). His condemnation of the Pharisees was for making tithe-paying a substitute for Godly living.

4. *Is the tithe principle supported by I Cor. 9:13, 14?*

This passage seems to imply that ministers of the Gospel were to receive support in the same manner as the priests of the temple, which was from the tithes of the people.

5. *Does I Cor. 16:2 harmonize with the principle of tithe paying?*

Yes, it is every member, every Sabbath, giving on a proportionate basis.

6. *What support do we find for the tithe in the seventh chapter of Hebrews?*

Abraham paid tithes, not to a changeable priesthood as that of Aaron, but to Melchisedec who, as "King of righteousness" and "priest of the most high God", was a type of Christ. Christ was a "priest forever after the order of Melchisedec". This chapter connects the tithe with the permanent order of the New Testament.

7. *Do the Old Testament and the New agree on the tithe principle?*

Yes. It was practiced by Abraham—Gen. 14.
It was continued by Jacob—Gen. 28.
It was confirmed by Moses—Lev. 27.
It was commanded by God—Mal. 3.
It was sanctioned by Jesus—Matt. 23.

8. *Did Christ ever lower the moral laws of the Old Testament?*

Rather, He raised them. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20).

9. *Did the early Fathers support the tithe?*

Yes, Origen, Cyprian, Augustine and others tell us that tithing was practiced by the church of the first century.

10. *Does the New Testament promise blessings to the liberal giver?*

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work" (II Cor. 9:7, 8).

V

TEN FREQUENT INQUIRIES

1. *"Where is my tithe to be paid?"*

"Bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house." This is commonly understood as the treasury of the church and other agencies which further the interests of the kingdom of God.

2. *"Must it all be paid through the channels of one's own church?"*

The larger portion certainly should go through one's own church. There are other worthy causes however which are entitled to the Christian's support.

3. *"Is it proper to use the tithe for causes which are solely humanitarian in purpose?"*

We believe the Lord's tithe should go only where it will meet some spiritual need. Red Cross, Community Chest, Cancer Fund, etc., are designed to meet physical needs only and should be supported from the nine tenths.

4. "May the tithe be used for the physical support of needy relatives?"

We believe no more so than for the support of our own selves.

5. "Will this system of giving call for the keeping of accounts?"

It will if we are to be as business-like in dealing with the Lord as we are in dealing with our fellow man.

6. "Should I tithe while I remain in debt?"

It is certainly as important to meet our debt to God as it is to meet our debt to man.

7. "May I deduct taxes before computing the tithe?"

On business and investments, yes. On our homes, no. Our business represents income. Our homes are for our own comfort and enjoyment.

8. "Shall I tithe money received from inheritance?"

It would seem reasonable that if we tithe that for which we labor we should tithe that which costs us nothing.

9. "How often should my contribution be made?"

Every Sabbath should be the rule. This is a part of our public worship. "Upon the first day of the month let everyone of you lay by him in store."

10. "I am a young person in school with no income. How can I be a tither?"

You can still be a tither at heart and should be so counted in your congregation. Tithe whatever allowances you have. In the meantime your stewardship consists largely in the Christian use of your life, time and abilities.

VI

TEN COMMON OBJECTIONS

1. "We are not under the law but under grace."

But the next verse reads: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid" (Rom. 6:14, 15). The Christian should not be satisfied to do less under grace than did the Jew under law.

2. "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

So wrote Paul (Rom. 13:10). He also spoke of giving as a proof of love. "Show ye to them and before the churches, the proof of your love" (II Cor. 8:24). John puts it this way: "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth" (I John 3:18).

3. "If the tithe is so important why is it not included in the Ten Commandments?"

God connected tithing closely with the eighth commandment when He said: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me . . . in tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8).

4. "The tithe is too difficult to figure."

We manage to figure for our Uncle Sam. It shouldn't be more difficult to figure for our Lord.

5. "There are so many ways of calculating the tithe?"

There is but one right way. That is to determine fairly our real increase and pay a tenth of that.

6. "I think I should deduct the cost of living."

Wouldn't it be selfish to meet all of our own wants before considering the work of the Kingdom?

7. "The tithe system puts the poor man at a disadvantage."

We concede that the strict letter of the law would make it easier for one who is rich. The tithe is the minimum standard. The rich should go beyond—two tenths, five tenths or more. Mr. LeTourneau is reported as paying nine tenths of his earnings to the Lord.

8. "I give more than the tithe, but am not convinced that it is a New Testament requirement."

We respect your conscientious opinions. Your giving more than the tithe under grace than the Hebrews gave under law is a proof of your sincerity.

9. "I prefer to give as the spirit moves me."

If you spell spirit with a small "s"—man's spirit is as changeable as his emotions. The Holy Spirit has given us a higher standard to follow.

10. "Well, I just can't afford it."

Can we afford to miss the promised blessing? "There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty" (Prov. 11:24). "God loveth a cheerful giver."

VII

TEN IMPORTANT BENEFITS

1. Does tithing affect the conscience?

Peace of conscience is a result of duty well performed.

2. How does it make giving easier?

It relieves us of argument or debate with ourselves as to the amount we should give. Systematic giving is the easiest kind of giving.

3. How is tithing a safeguard against selfishness?

It helps to counteract that covetous desire to keep too much for ourselves. It centers our giving in God rather than in ourselves.

4. How does it stabilize our giving?

It provides a basis of giving which is not dependent on changing sentiment or spasmodic appeal.

TEN RATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

5. *How does it cultivate regularity in giving?*

It supplies a method by which on the first day of the week we can always have something laid by to give.

6. *How does faithful tithing affect one's character?*

It cultivates the virtues of honesty and integrity besides adding to one's own self respect.

7. *What effect does our tithing have upon others?*

It sets a good example before our children and our fellow members in the church besides benefitting all those depending upon the causes to which we give.

8. *How does it bear upon our relation to God?*

Tithing in the right spirit glorifies God and affords us an opportunity to prove His promised faithfulness to His people.

9. *How is it related to the work of the Kingdom?*

It demonstrates our willingness and desire to do our share in supporting the work of His kingdom on earth.

10. *Who is being cheated when our tithe is withheld?*

God, the church and the kingdom, of course! But most of all we cheat ourselves of the promised blessings.

1. Money is a good servant but can become a bad master. Rightly used it is a blessing. Wrongly used it can become a curse.

2. Man needs protection against his own covetous nature. God has provided the principles of stewardship to meet that need. The withholding of our little tithe will not impoverish Him but it can impoverish us.

3. This is the only plan revealed in Scripture to guide us in our giving. It was equally fitted to both dispensations and no alternative has been provided. If we reject this plan where do we turn for another?

4. Tithing church members, if not self righteous, are usually active in all other phases of the church's work. They are careful to "abound in this grace also".

5. The objections made to the tithe can with equal force be made against the Sabbath. Misguided Christians who oppose the law of the Sabbath use the same arguments that others make against the tithe.

6. The computation of the tithe under the money system of our time is a much simpler process than that of the Jew who tithed his flocks and herds and mint and anise and cummin.

7. We do not encourage tithing with the promise of mere material gain, though many testify that it has meant this to them. God's

promise is to "open the windows of heaven". The blessings from those opened windows may be material or spiritual. Many testify that they have proven to be both.

8. The tithe plan of giving was never meant to be a burden to weigh us down but rather wings to lift us up. The tithe, like the Sabbath, was made for man and not man for the tithe.

9. The prime purpose of Christian stewardship is to raise men rather than money. God wants followers who are unselfish and generous-hearted. Character in no small degree is molded by the use one makes of money.

10. We must not exalt the tithe as a cure-all for the church's needs. It has no virtue or merit in the sight of God apart from a consistent Christian life. If we tithe as did the Pharisees to whom Christ spoke, we shall fare no better than they.

"Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath" (Zeph. 1:18).

IX

TEN APPEALS TO REASON

1. It is reasonable to suppose that God would require us to give without leaving some standard to guide us?

2. Will God be pleased with the devotion of Christians who are content to give less than that required under law?

3. Is it reasonable for us to withhold the tithe upon the excuse that we are unable to compute it?

4. Is it reasonable to assume that the great missionary enterprise of Christ's church can be adequately supported by the spare change of church members?

5. Is it reasonable to expect church members to give intelligently if they are not instructed concerning God's plan for financing His kingdom?

6. Is it reasonable for Christians to take offense when the minister preaches on the duty of tithe-paying?

7. Is it reasonable for church treasurers to hold the people's contributions in the local treasury while Synod's treasurer pays interest on borrowed money to meet the church's obligations?

8. Is it reasonable for the officials of a congregation to take no interest in financial matters other than that of lifting the offering on the Sabbath?

9. Is it reasonable to expect Christians to "grow and glow" if they are laying up for themselves treasures upon earth and are not laying up treasures for themselves in heaven?

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).

10. Is it reasonable to suppose that the raising of money will solve the church's problems if we do not first give our own selves unto the Lord?

"It is not by might (of the tithe) nor by power (of money) but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

"The only 'almighty dollar' is the one placed at the disposal of the Almighty."

X

TEN STEPS FORWARD

1. Let the pastor or financial board see that some interested person is entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out the following plan of procedure.

2. Begin now to enlist members and organizations in a prayer movement in behalf of our financial responsibility. Enlist the interest and support of the young people.

3. On a given Sabbath, distribute tithing information provided by the Stewardship Committee, for study during the week.

4. Set apart the *following* Sabbath as TITHING SABBATH, to be observed by the church at large.

5. On this "tithing Sabbath" the minister is requested to preach on the duty, privilege and blessing of tithe-paying.

6. After the sermon, distribute enrollment cards to all members and adherents present. Request all to fill in the spaces as they feel led by the Holy Spirit. Make a special effort to

enroll the young people as tithers in principle though they may have no regular income to tithe.

7. Have the literature and card sent to all non-resident members together with others not present on "Tither's Sabbath". Request that the cards be filled in and promptly returned.

8. The financial board shall tabulate and file the results and report the totals to the Clerk of the Session. Husband and wife co-operating should be counted as two tithers. All communicant members who believe the tithing principle and expect to follow it should be counted even though they now have no stated income.

9. Make plain that our trust is not in money or the tithe but in God who is "able to make all grace abound toward you".

10. Set apart the *next Sabbath* as a day of thanksgiving to God for His help and to all who co-operated in this venture of faith. The pastor may on this Sabbath wish to explain the synodical budget and its needs and to inform the people on how their budget dollar is divided.

"The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the Lord hath commanded to be made by the hand of Moses" (Exodus 35:29).

Gladstone to his Son at Oxford



"In regard to money—there is a great advantage in its methodical use. Especially is it wise to dedicate a certain portion of our means to purposes of charity and religion, and this is more easily begun in youth than in after-life. The greatest advantage of making a little fund of this kind is that when we are asked to give, competition is not between self on the one hand and any charity on the other, but between the different purposes of religion and charity with one another, among which we ought to make the most careful choice. It is desirable that the tenth of our means be dedicated to God, and it tends to bring a blessing on the rest. No one can tell the richness of the blessings that come to those who thus honor the Lord with their substance."

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