



HOW TO MAKE 2009 THE BEST YEAR OF YOUR LIFE

**Message Number 4: "Give God the
First Dime out of every Dollar"**



QUICK REVIEW

This is the final message in our series on the subject, "How to make the year 2009 the Best year of your life."

From the very beginning of this series of messages we have stressed that 2009 will be the best year in spite of the trials, heartaches, and disappointments, not because there won't be any trials, heartaches, and disappointments. (Because there will be lots of them).

We emphasized the fact that for this year to be the best year of your life, you had to be a true believer. You must be saved. Jesus must not only be your Savior, you must make Jesus the Lord of your life.

In my opinion, the "Key" to success this year or any year was to "Put God first in everything." Jesus promised this in Matthew 6:33 when He said:

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

LAST MESSAGE IN THIS SERIES

This is the last message in this series and this is the last step.

1. The first step is to be sure you are genuinely saved. Jesus must be your Savior and your Lord.

2. The next step is to begin giving God the first thirty minutes of every day.

3. Follow that by giving God the first day out of every week.

4. Last, you give God the first dime out of every dollar and that is our subject for today.

GIVE GOD THE FIRST DIME OUT OF EVERY DOLLAR

Let's focus on our point for today, which is "Giving God the first dime out of every dollar." There are two important principles we should consider.

Two Important Principles

There are two very important principles involved here.

- The time you give God this money;
- The percentage you give.

1. God's Money Given First

The principle of giving money to God

before it is used for anything else is found throughout Scripture. Here is one example from the Proverbs 3:9-10.

"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

(NLT)

"Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything your land produces. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with the finest wine."

2. The Principle of Ten Percent

The principle of giving God ten percent is called "Tithing." The first mention of tithing is not found in Malachi. It is found in Genesis, the first book of the Bible.

Abraham (Genesis 14:18-20)



18 "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all."

Jacob (Genesis 28:16-22)

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of

God, and this is the gate of heaven.



18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: F128 but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. 20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF GIVING: TITHES AND OFFERINGS

1. The Tithe

The tithe is ten percent. The tithe is not a "gift." We don't give a tithe. We pay a tithe. The tithe belongs to God and God simply tests us by seeing if we will give (back to) Him what already belongs to Him.

(Leviticus 27:30)

"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD."

2. Offerings

The tithe is ten percent and it belongs

to God. Offerings, on the other hand, are those gifts you give freely out of your money. Tithing is mentioned in Malachi 3:9-10. Offerings are mentioned in 2 Corinthians 9.

Tithes (Malachi 3:8-9)



8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 10 Bring ye all the tithes into

the storehouse. . . . "

Offerings (2 Cor. 9:5-15)

5 So I thought I should send these brothers ahead of me to make sure the gift you promised is ready. But I want it to be a willing gift, not one given under pressure.

6 Remember this – a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.

7 You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully.

8 And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

9 As the Scriptures say, "Godly people give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will never be forgotten."

10 For God is the one who gives seed to the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will give you many opportunities to do good, and he will produce a great harvest of generosity in you.



11 Yes, you will be enriched so that you can give even more generously. And when we take your gifts to those who need

them, they will break out in thanksgiving to God.

12 So two good things will happen – the needs of the Christians in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanksgiving to God.

13 You will be glorifying God through your generous gifts. For your generosity to them will prove that you are obedient to the God News of Christ.

14 And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the wonderful grace of God shown through you. 15 Thank God for his Son – a gift too wonderful for words!

15 FACTS ABOUT TITHING

1. The tithe is not a gift you give to God because you are generous. It is a debt you pay to God because you are honest.

2. You have never given an offering to God until you have first tithed. An offering is something over and above the ten-percent you owe God.

3. Tithing has nothing to do with the church raising money. Tithing has everything to do with God raising children.

4. The tithe is to be given first, not given after you have paid all of your bills, eaten out, and have bought a new gun, dress, rod & reel, or a new set of golf clubs.

5. People who don't tithe are guilty of robbing God (Mal. 3:8)

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."

6. No person should ever be allowed to hold a leadership position in the church unless they tithe.

7. Tithing is not a demonstration of your generosity. It is a demonstration of your honesty.

8. If not for Tithers the doors of the church would close. Tithers carry nearly all of the financial burden of all local churches.

9. Tithing is where good stewardship begins, not ends.

10. Tithing is like Kindergarten in giving. It is where believers start when they are serious about getting their lives right with God.

11. Everybody can afford to tithe and nobody will ever "go broke" tithing.

12. The real purpose of tithing is to acknowledge God's ownership of everything.

13. Tithing is a good way to Lay up treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19-24).



19 Lay not up treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth

corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

WE CAN'T TAKE IT WITH US

I heard Dr. David Jeremiah tell the story of a rich man who was about to die. He called in three men: A doctor, a lawyer, and his pastor.

He said: "I've always heard that we can't take our money with us. But I am taking mine with me and that is why I've called you today."

The man gave each of them \$100,000 cash and made them swear that when he died they would place that cash in his casket.

The man died and after the funeral the three men had a meeting. In that meeting they each began to confess their sins.

The doctor said he needed some money to finish a clinic he was building so he "borrowed" \$25,000 and only put \$75k in the casket.

The lawyer confessed that he Had borrowed \$50,000 and only put the other half in the man's casket.

The preacher scolded them saying, "I'm ashamed of both of you. I put a check for the entire \$100,000 in the casket just like I promised."

14. Tithing is a good way test God to see if His promises are true.

15. Tithers can expect to be blessed by God.

THE BLESSINGS OF TITHING

1. The Promises of God (Mal. 3:)



10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

**God challenges us to "Prove Him."
Put God to the test to see if He will do what He says He will do.**

1. Open the Windows

God said that He would open the windows of heaven on tithers. It's interesting to look in Scripture a times when God "shut up the heavens." We are all familiar with 2 Chronicles 7:14, where God says: "If my people, who are called by my name, etc."

But how many of you have read verse 13? Verse 13 speaks of God shutting up the heavens. Let's read it.

(2 Chronicles 7:13-15)

13 If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;



14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 15 Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attention unto the prayer that is made in this place."

2. Pour Out a Blessing

God said He would pour you out a blessing. God said that blessing would be so big we wouldn't have room to receive it.

3. There won't be room to receive it. (Proverbs 3?)

"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

4. God will Rebuke the Devourer



God said He would rebuke the devourer for our sakes. What is a devourer? The devourer is a worm or insect that destroys a farmers' crop before he has a chance to harvest it, sell it, or eat it.



How does that Scripture fit today? We are not farmers. Couldn't we say that God will protect our investments so

that we don't lose all of the money we have invested? Here are some of the things of ours that could be devoured." The stock market, our 401K's, and the equity in our homes.

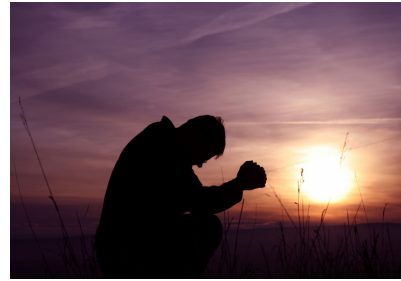
The "bottom line" is that God will protect those who love Him, honor Him, and obey Him, and manage His money like He has told us to do.

WHO REALLY PUTS GOD FIRST?

In the general population, only one out of every seven adults (15%) placed their faith in God at the top of their priority list.

- Only 23% of those who attend Protestant churches said their faith in God as their top priority in life.
- 51% of those who claim to be Evangelicals said their faith in God was their highest priority.
- 38% of the African-Americans surveyed said their faith in God was their highest priority.
- 34% of the people who attend a "house church" said their faith in God was their highest priority.
- The least likely group to put God first in their lives were young people under thirty years of age.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?



For the past several weeks I have carefully explained how you could have

the best year of your life by putting Jesus Christ first in everything.

1. Are you really saved?
2. Will you give God the first 30 minutes of every day?
3. Will you give God the first day out of every week?
4. Will you give God the first dime out of every dollar?

This message was preached by Pastor Gene Keith on January 25, 2009 in the Countryside Baptist Church of Gainesville, Florida. (352) 332-1493. You may visit out church website at **cbcgainesville.net** or contact Gene by Email at gk122532@bellsouth.com