

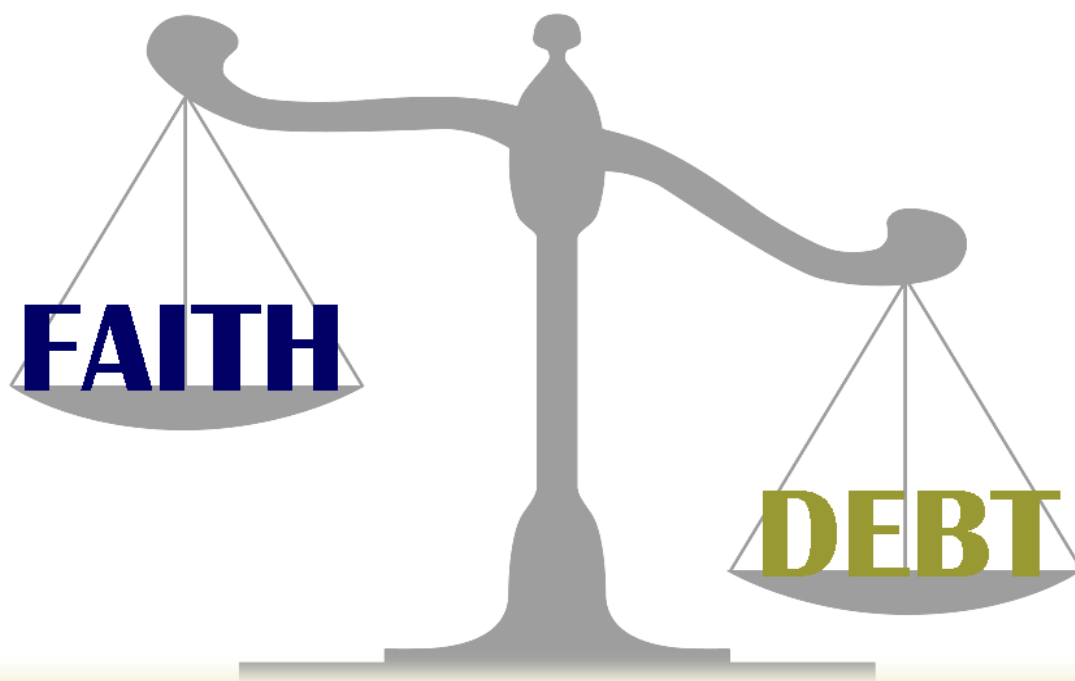


The
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Center

What Happens When Bills Replace the Tithes?

By

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Abstract

Every pastor of a church has to deal with their members regarding tithes and offerings. At times members of a congregation can accumulate debt and allow their bills to be more important than their tithes. When this happens the church suffers and cannot move forward in its goal for the will of God. Why do Christians think their bills are bigger than the tithe, especially when the tithe belongs to God? Christians must understand why they tithe unto God and its purpose for ministry. Paying bills should never replace the tithe.

Introduction

I want to explain how God feels when His children disobey His word and what He does about it. There are scriptures that reveal the anger of God. It is called the wrath of God. As parents we become angry at our own children when they disobey our instructions and so does God, the Father. Christians are God's children and His wrath comes against any area of our lives that flow in disobedience. Although He is the God of love, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, mercy and is longsuffering towards us, He does get angry at times like any parent would when a child disobeys. I would like to point out an area God needs His children to remember in order to build His kingdom and that is the tithe. It is the financial system and strength for the church. Christians have been told so many things about why they should tithe, but I want to keep it simple. We tithe to build the Kingdom of God in the earth.

In the past, people were taught to rely on God when giving their tithes and offerings. Today, people are taught to rely on the preacher with a charismatic lifestyle boasting about wealth and fame. As one who tithes, always remember there is a big difference in the truth of what God said versus clichés and false doctrine from preachers for the purpose of gain. Only God's truth can make you free. The significance of this teaching is to elevate the minds of Christians to understand and obey God's command to tithe and build His kingdom. Your bills should never replace the tithe. Do not let pressure be bigger than God.

When people get into financial difficulty, it is based upon how they spend. The lust of the eyes and the pride of life can cause you to get into debt. It is safe to say that in America, most of the time, the class of people labeled as poor are the uneducated. Without education, it puts you in a certain working class and you cannot purchase and live a certain way. A poor person's lifestyle is poverty until they find ways to improve their life by educating themselves. However, there is a middle class of working people who have furthered their education from high school through college, advanced classes, training, and technical school, but they are in debt. They live in good homes, drive nice cars, wear nice clothes, most are designer wear, but they are experiencing great financial difficulty. As a Christian, they hear sermons on how to use faith to come out of debt and that they are not blessed unless they give a certain way. The *prosperity message* gives them hope. They stretch their faith in accordance to the teachings that there are different steps to faith, and that there are categories of faith that have to be reached in order to move God. The *how to use faith* list goes on and on.

If your money is always the object of faith and that is your focus, then there is a neglect of the other parts of you that are not being developed spiritually for Christ. Think for a moment, your credit cards, new car, furnishings, jewelry and clothes are not oppressed by a demon, you are. You are the one who made the decision to get financing for these things and now you find yourself oppressed by a spirit as a result of your own lust. Was it the right time for you to buy these things or should focus have been directed toward building the Kingdom of God? When you build something, it is for a season, but your lifestyle will always be there. It is a constant.

When you accumulate new bills, it becomes additional debt to existing financial obligations such as federal and state income taxes, health insurance, social security, life

insurance, and a 401K retirement plan. These obligations are deducted from you at the point of payroll before you are issued your paycheck, and without complaint on your part. As a Christian who believes in God, and calls Jesus Christ your Lord, you did not allow Him to be Lord with your newly acquired debt. Giving God ten percent of your earnings was never considered before you made new bills and created debt. Now you have no room to pay your tithes and offerings, and in most instances God is the first one cut off, and the vision of the church suffers financially because of you. It is at this point you want to now use your faith to become debt free; you want to hear messages on how you can increase your faith to get a financial increase. Faith is not the problem; your lust is the issue. Is it more money you need or spiritual reproving?

Malachi 3:10-11 and Hebrews 7 proclaim that the tithe is the financial structure for the Kingdom of God in the earth, and that Jesus Christ is the High Priest that receives tithes for the church. The focus must be on why many Christians disobey God by not paying their tithes and offerings. Ephesians 2:1-3 has given me the answer. “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature children of wrath, just as others.”

Too many church members have returned to being sons of disobedience and the wrath of God is upon them. This is the problem. There are too many sons of disobedience not tithing in the church and God is angry with them. Wrath means anger, fierce anger, punishment, and vengeance. This is what comes upon the sons of disobedience. You must understand that it is not about your lack of faith, but your disobedience, and God can not move through disobedience. You are now punished through God’s anger and you can not come out of debt or get through

your circumstances until you obey Him. Again, I want to stress the problem is not faith, but disobedience. Obedience to God means integrity and intelligence that operate in the mentality of a Christian to be blessed. In Philippians 2:5, it says “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Mentality is important to God, that is why He wants your mind to be the same as Christ’s. Jesus obeyed His Father’s word and would never let His mind depart from the truth given to Him (John 14:10). Mentality has to adjust to God’s truth in the time of adversity. When pressure, depression, anguish and fear come and your emotions are pointing in the wrong direction, you must be ready to punish all disobedience with obedience. Please read 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 to identify what you must do to obey the word of God through mental attacks. Jesus did this in the Garden of Gethsemane. When faced with pressure, depression, anguish, and the attack of fear, Jesus adjusted His mentality. His obedience was I will obey my Father’s commanded word and die for you to have eternal life. My life is my ransom for you. Your pressure is, I will pay my bills and not my tithes. Matthew 26:39 is essential for your understanding. When Jesus said, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will but as you will.” He adjusted his mentality to conform to the will of His Father and not His own.

This teaching is to renew the minds of Christians to understand they have to tithe and build the vision of God. Therefore, church members must adjust their minds from being sons of disobedience to sons of obedience. There is a spirit that works in the sons of disobedience, and the scripture says that the spirit is the devil (Ephesians 2:2). Sinners have no biblical knowledge to obey God so the Lord is not calling sinners sons of disobedience. God identifies His children as sons. When a Christian disobeys God’s word, they are considered sons of disobedience and will receive the wrath of God. When Satan causes you to become a son of disobedience, it is

because your conduct has fallen into the lust of the flesh and you are fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. What is revealed in Ephesians 2:1-3 is that the wrath of God comes down on a son of disobedience, as it does a sinner. A Christian operating as a son of disobedience will be punished by God's anger as a sinner. Your sins have classified you to be judged just like a sinner. The problem is that some of today's preachers do not make sons of disobedience feel like they have sinned. How? Because they just tell their members that the tithes belong to God and move on to a blessing plan. I want to give you more than a blessing plan. I want to show you how you have fallen into being a son of disobedience. The devil can only perform through you by what he sees. If the devil sees lust in you, then he is going to tempt you with lust through the desires of your flesh and mind if you are not dead in trespasses of sins.

Debt comes from lust and people will purchase above what they are able to afford because of lust. Getting in debt is trespassing the will of God. Trespasses mean you are violating by overstepping boundaries not given to you. You were once dead to trespasses and sins, and now that you are back in debt you have become a trespasser. Your debts have caused you to violate God's will to pay your tithe and offerings, which means God can not open the windows of heaven for you or rebuke the devourer. All of this has come about because you live as a trespasser by violating the boundaries of your money, and have positioned yourself so that you can not tithe to help build the vision of the ministry and the kingdom of God. You must become dead to your trespasses again and you need something God is rich in, MERCY.

Sons of disobedience will follow a prosperity message to increase their faith and not work on their character, but a son of God would seek mercy and change their character to simply believe God through humility. What a son of disobedience needs is grace, mercy, and peace, which come from God the Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Titus 1:4). While God

is restoring the sons of disobedience through mercy, grace, and peace, adherence to the word of God must be the act of obedience to deal with the spirit that is causing the lust of the flesh and mind to trespass and disobey. While mercy is processing God's healing and forgiveness, grace is putting you back in favor with Him, and peace is soothing and calming your mentality; there is still a period of time that deals with your debt.

According to 2 Corinthians 9:6 when a person sows sparingly, they will reap sparingly. You must get back to sowing bountifully to reap bountifully. Just because you obeyed God and sowed your first tithe to the church in obedience, does not mean your debts are going away the same day. You made the bills and now you must pay them off while continuing to pay your tithes. In 2 Corinthians 9:8 what God has promised you is that grace, sufficiency, and abundance will be there for you in all things for every good work. Supporting the church financially is the work for ministry. Your tithes support every good work the church produces for God. Getting in debt will cause you to suffer, but what God says in 1 Peter 5:10 is going to bring hope, "May the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you." This scripture actually teaches us that mistakes will cause you to suffer. Suffering will cause two manifestations of *Fruit* to rise up in your spirit--longsuffering and self-control. Longsuffering will get you through paying off your debt and self-control will deal with your pressure to re-establish, strengthen and settle you. Any manifestation of the Fruit of the Holy Spirit is the anointing for your deliverance. Christians must get teachings on the anointing of the Holy Spirit and understand how it flows through them for victory. The anointing of God settles you. Once you have been settled by God, never again position yourself to let bills replace the tithes. As a member of the church it is your responsibility to obey God with your tithe and offering. That is the financial structure God has

set up for the church. As a member of the church, your life is committed to tithes and offerings to support the vision and work of the ministry your church has established for God.

May the Lord strengthen your mind to stay out of debt and away from pressure so your tithe and offering will never be hindered again. Lord, have mercy on us and show us your loving kindness as we obey you.

References

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Scripture References

1 John 2:15-17

Malachi 3:10-11

Hebrews 7

Ephesians 2:1-3

Philippians 2:5

John 14:10

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

Matthew 26:39

Titus 1:4

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

1 Peter 5:10