

WHAT JESUS SAID – THEN AND NOW

Things I Don't Think You Know About Jesus and the Tithe

TEXT: Lk. 11:42, Mt. 23:23

INTRODUCTION: The title of today's message gave me grief. You see, I started to call it **Things I Bet you Don't Know About Jesus and the Tithe**. But the problem with that title is that I am not a betting man.

I honestly have an aversion to making a bet. I wouldn't bet \$100 in a casino or \$10 on a raffle, or \$1 on a lottery ticket. And the reason for that is not just the terrible odds against winning. The reason is that

God said through Isaiah that one of the ways Israel proved they were a rebellious people,

one of the ways they provoked the Lord,

was that they honored the false gods Gad and Meni.

Is. 65:11 *“But you are those who forsake the LORD, Who forget My holy mountain, Who prepare a table for Gad, And who furnish a drink offering for Meni.*

Gad is the false god of luck.

Meni is the false god of chance.

Listen friend, God has been too generous and kind to me for me to rebel against Him by trusting in luck to bless me or make me rich. God has given me all I need and more than I need. If there is something more that I desire that I do not have I would far rather call out to my Father in Heaven who loves me and who delights to give good things to His children, than to insult Him by spending money He has entrusted to my care in an act that places my hope and trust in luck or chance.

I tell you dear brother, for me to buy a lottery ticket or play a slot machine or gamble in any other way would be for me an act of idolatry. So I don't gamble, and I don't bet.

Now, that was not part of the sermon. I won't charge your wallet for it. You don't charge my clock for it!

But that is the reason I didn't choose the title “Things I Bet you Don't Know About Jesus and the Tithe.” But if I were going to bet, I would bet on this: that some of the things I am going to show you in the Scripture today about Jesus and the tithe are

things you do not know. It wouldn't be luck or chance, and frankly it is not because most people are so ignorant of the Bible. You will probably recognize all three of the passages where I am going to take you this morning. But many of you have never connected the dots.

Today I am going to help you connect the dots and in doing so, I am going to bless some of you. Not all of you, but some of you. By connecting the dots, I am going to put money in some of your pockets. How many times has a preacher promised you that?

OK. Here's the first thing that I think a lot of you may not know.

I. **JESUS RECEIVED THE TITHE BEFORE THE LAW WAS EVEN GIVEN.**

No, this passage is not found in 1 Hesiations. It is found in

Gen. 14:18-20 18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

A. **Who is Melchizedek?**

B. Genesis tell us

1. His offices
 - a. **King of Salem**
 - b. **Priest of God Most High**
2. His name
 - a. **King of Salem = King of Peace**
 - b. **Melek - king; tzadik - righteousness = King of Righteousness**
3. His actions
 - a. Served bread and wine
 - b. Blessed Abram
 - c. First to call the Lord "God Most High"
 - d. First recorded to receive the tithe (10%)
4. Things of great interest about Melchizedek
 - a. **Melchizedek appears suddenly on the scene.**
 - b. **He is king of the city that will be called Jerusalem, the city of God.**
 - c. **Abraham recognizes Melchizedek as his spiritual superior.**

- d. **Melchizedek acts with divine authority in blessing Abraham.**
- e. **One thousand years later David said that the Messiah would be a Melchizedekian priest.**

Psalm 110:4 The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You *are* a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

From all of these unusual traits and facts, we might make a very educated guess as to the identity of Melchizedek. But we have no need to guess.

C. The Book of Hebrews tells us who Melchizedek is.

Hebrews 7:1–3 1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” 3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

1. No father, no mother, no genealogy – no human ancestry
2. No beginning of days, no end of life
3. Like the Son of God
4. A priest forever.

Melchizedek is an Old Testament appearance of Christ.

And in the first mention of the tithe in the Bible, **Abraham gave the tithe to Christ, four centuries before God gave the law to Moses and Israel.**

II. WHEN JESUS CAME TO THE EARTH HE TOLD MEN TO TITHE.

Actually, he did this twice. Luke tells us about the time Jesus was having dinner in the home of one of the Pharisees, and Jesus says,

Luke 11:42 “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

Matthew tells us of a time that Jesus is teaching the disciples and the multitude.

Matthew 23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

Jesus makes the same point in both settings, using different words, just as you or I would in talking casually to different people on different occasions about a common subject.

A. Here's the setting:

1. The Pharisees were faithful tithers. Jesus was pointing out that they even gave a tithe of the leaves of mint or the seeds of anise that were used as spices in cooking. Yes, the Pharisees actually counted out the leaves of mint as they collected them and set every tenth one aside to give to the Lord, just like you do at home! The same for seeds.
2. Jesus rebukes them because while being so careful about the tithe, they neglected justice, faith, mercy, and love!

B. Now here is the point we need to see today to connect the dots. You cannot connect the dot if you don't see the point!

Jesus said,

“You ought to be careful with the tithe “These you ought to have done” but you should also practice justice, faith, mercy, and love! “without leaving the others undone”

So, let's connect the dots.

- **JESUS RECEIVED THE TITHE FOUR CENTURIES BEFORE THE LAW WAS EVEN GIVEN.**
- **WHEN JESUS CAME TO EARTH** (more than six centuries after God declared the covenant of the law to be broken), **JESUS TOLD PEOPLE TO CONTINUE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE TITHE.**

Now, I am only giving you three dots to connect, and I have promised that at least for some of you, I am going to bless you by putting money in your pocket. So this next dot is key, so stay with me.

This final point is in fact what I believe is one of the reasons Jesus told people to continue to be careful about the giving of the tithe. Here it is.

III. GIVING THE TITHE PROTECTS YOU FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF SOME OF THE DEMONS JESUS DEALT WITH DURING HIS MINISTRY.

A. Demons are real. Now you know that I am not a demon behind every bush kind of guy. But to ignore the reality and power of demons is dangerous. The Holy Spirit told Paul to warn us that we are at war with demonic beings.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

1. Demons are fallen angels who take their marching orders from Satan.
2. **Satan's purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy.**
3. **That is what the demons want to do as well**, and they want to do it to you and me.

B. Jesus cast out demons from people and expelled them from places throughout His earthly ministry.

C. God said that if we would trust Him by giving the tithe (10% of our income), He would not allow the Devourer Demon to destroy what God has already given us.

Malachi 3:10–11 10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try 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 *such* blessing That *there will not be room enough to receive it.* 11 "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the LORD of hosts;

1. Folks, this **does not mean that if we are tithers that the washing machine will never break or the car will never need repair.** We still live in a world that is cursed because of sin, and the law of universal decay operates in everything. So things wear out. Things break.
2. But **the devil and his demons break and destroy things before their normal time.** It is what they like to do.
3. **God promises that if we give Him the tithe**, acknowledging that He is the source of all and that we trust Him and His provision, **God will forbid the Destroying Demons from breaking our stuff early.**
4. **In addition God promises a multitude of other blessings**, some financial others not, but blessings **more than we will be able to count or realize.**

So, let's finish connecting the dots.

- **JESUS RECEIVED THE TITHE FOUR CENTURIES BEFORE THE LAW WAS EVEN GIVEN.**
- **WHEN JESUS CAME TO EARTH** (more than six centuries after God declared the covenant of the law to be broken), **JESUS TOLD PEOPLE TO CONTINUE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE TITHE.**
- **GIVING THE TITHE PROTECTS US FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DEMONS JESUS DEALT WITH DURING HIS MINISTRY.**

CONCLUSION: I promised I would bless some of you by putting money in your pocket. **So who gets this blessing?** Those of you

- **Who did not know this**
Or did not believe this
Or did not practice tithing
- **Who now will choose to believe this**
- **And who will begin to practice this**

I began to tithe as a child. My dad gave me a \$1 allowance twice a month for doing chores around the house. I put 10 cents in my special box and saved it until Sunday when I took it and gave it to the Lord.

When I started earning money mowing lawns, I gave the tithe. When I got my first hourly job on Saturdays during high school, I gave the tithe.

Karen and I have tithed our entire lives. We have watched God keep these promises all through our years. Across the way, we made some expenditures we later regretted and would undo if we could. But not the tithe. We would not try to recapture a single penny. Giving the tithe, which was commanded before the law, and after the law was ended, and which was also commanded by our Savior, has been nothing but a marvelous blessing to us.