

Financing the Vision

The Bible has a lot to say about money and possessions.

- Approximately 500 verses on prayer and 500 verses on faith.
- 2,000 + verses on money and possessions.
- More is said in the NT about money and possessions than heaven and hell put together!

Jesus talked a great deal about money and possessions.

- 16 of the 38 parables are about how to handle money and possessions.
- 1 out of 10 verses in the Gospels (288) deal with money and possessions.

How we handle money reveals a lot about our priorities, passions, and loyalties.

As Christians, God and His purposes should be our first priority when it comes to our money and possessions!

Why? God owns it all.

Psalm 24:1 *The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.*

Our money and possessions are ours in the sense that we are responsible for managing them on behalf of the Creator and Owner of all things!

We're just managing or stewarding God's possessions.

*He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for Him and make the **Kingdom of God** your primary concern. Matthew 6:33*

God has entrusted us with a stewardship as managers of His property.

God's Financial System

The financial system of '**Tithes and Offerings**' was initiated and given by God to His people in the Old Testament and it continued into the New Testament.

What is a 'tithe' and an 'offering'?

Tithe: **Gk** (dekate) - a tenth part of anything.
Heb (ma`aser) - a tenth part.

The practice of tithing (percentage giving) is the benchmark for Christian giving in God's financial system.

Malachi 3:8-11 “Bring your whole **tithe** into the storehouse (local church)...

Principal of the First.

Exodus 23:19 The first of the first fruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with **the first fruits of all your increase**.

Tithing is simply giving back to God what is already His!

All God's people give equally through tithing - one tenth, even though the amount can be different.

Freewill Offerings

The Bible reveals that offerings are ‘**over and above**’ the Lord's tithe and are directed towards the needy i.e., widows, orphans, poor, and foreigners.

The Temple Solomon built was financed out of the offerings of the people.

1 Chronicles 29:9 *“The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord.”*

Exodus 36:6 *“Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: “No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary.” And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.”*

The following three areas are a general Biblical guide where to give.

1. Local Church (the Lord's tithe)

Every local church is to be self-supporting in carrying out the ministry of Jesus.

Malachi 3:8-11 *“Bring your whole tithe into the storehouse ... Test Me in this, says the Lord, and see if I will not throw open floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have enough room for it!”*

The ‘storehouse’ was a place in the Temple for storing grain and other food given as tithes.

2. World-wide Missions, other Ministries, and for the Temple - church buildings (sacrificial offerings)

ACC has always supported the apostolic ministry in reaching the nations through world missions and Christian education.

3. **The Needy** (widows, orphans, poor incl extended family, foreigners)

Freewill offerings should be taken up to care and to support widows, orphans, and those unable to help themselves.

Proverbs 19:17 (nlt) If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord and He will repay you.

Proverbs 28:27 (nlt) Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing. But a curse will come upon those who close their eyes to poverty.

James 1:27 (nlt) Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles, and refuse to let the world corrupt us.

Giving is simply a natural expression of our faith, gratitude, and obedience to Christ as our Lord and the Centre of our lives!