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The Place of the Tithe in New Testament Stewardship

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THE PLACE OF THE TITHE
IN NEW TESTAMENT STEWARDSHIP

by

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PREFACE

This thesis on The Place of the Tithe in New Testament Stewardship is written for the purpose of showing the demand for new standards of Christian Stewardship in the church, and for new application of the divine and unchanging standards of giving as well as living and serving. The challenge to "give" and "save" and "serve" meets us on every hand. The present world war reveals and demonstrates that men and women can give time, energy, talent and money in quantities thought to be impossible before this great conflict began calling for the best in all of us. What is possible for a national cause must also be possible for Christ and the Church!

The church has not yet reached the height of its possibilities in the administration of its substance for God. Much of the failure in Christian Stewardship can be accounted for by two facts. The pulpit for many decades failed to give out an authoritative message on the subject. The second fact is that the church failed to give personal instruction of a sufficient character to teach new converts what faith in Jesus Christ really comprehended.

This study of Stewardship has been made without

taking anything for granted. The aim has been to start at the genesis of the subject and carry the reader to the logical conclusion. This study in stewardship is written in the conviction that the tithe is a part of stewardship. It carries the thought of being given in loving loyalty, and not in Pharisaic legalism. Thus stewardship will be lifted to a new and permanent spiritual level, and the steward will be ready to acknowledge that "All that I have belongs to God." The vision of stewardship is the entire life, but some definite acknowledgment, in the form of a separated portion of income, is necessary, if stewardship is to be more than sound. Moreover, we have found the tenth to have a scriptural foundation as one of the principles of the Lord. Furthermore, in the realm of actual experience it is beyond contradiction that the acceptance of the tithing principle has brought spiritual enlargement to many lives.

We need a spiritual awakening in the realm of Christian Stewardship, which would bring every blessing needed in the church. If this study of stewardship will aid some Christians to become victorious in spirit and purpose of this subject, much will have been accomplished. The subject is vital both to the church and the individual, as it would dedicate both more fully in the building of the Kingdom of God.

Grateful acknowledgment is due and gladly offered to Dr. B. L. Kershner and Dr. A. E. Cory for stimulating instruction and helpful material; and to the various authors whose writings have been read in the preparation of this volume.

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CHAPTER I

GOD AND OWNERSHIP

At the very dawn of human history there came to a man of reverent mind and with a capacity for deep thinking, a revelation so great that his statement of this truth, "In the beginning God," has not been surpassed by the greatest philosophers of all ages since. This revelation has fanned into flame the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Was it on the hills of Judea that among the shepherds guarding their flocks and studying the stars as they marched in glory through the midnight skies, some human mind grasped the profound conclusion that there could not be such order, such beauty, such harmony, without a lawgiver? Was it on the desert that a wanderer, becoming conscious of the immensity of space and the smallness of the human being lost in insignificance in comparison as the grains of sand at his feet, became certain of the existence of a greater being than any human atom on the face of this earth? Was it a mariner on the high seas who, fearing the mighty forces of the waters, yet discovered that they obeyed a law, and that sun and moon, the rise and fall of the tide, the winds of Heaven, the great currents of the deep, were governed by an Infinite Power?

There are a few sad souls who refuse to recognize

a Creator, a Lawgiver. They wander up and down this earth trying with their tiny finite minds to account for the majesty of this universe of ours without any recognition of God; going so far afield with their theories that they bewilder some of those who attempt to follow their philosophies, and then they die and leave little trace of their thinking and their theories. Man impresses us with his power as he erects a sky-scraper, spans a river with a bridge of steel, builds a leviathan to cross the ocean, writes his check for a vast sum of money, asserts his right to dominion. But let us get up above the earth for a little while in an airplane and see how human beings diminish in size and importance, until at last, up a few hundred feet, one sees God's earth, and its outlines, its rivers and mountains, but man is lost in view. How terrifying it would have been up there in the sky if one could not have felt that the pilot was obeying the law of the maker of the thing which bore us through the air; and how fatal it would have been if he did not accept the fact that the designer had a right to say how his creation should be governed and to lay down a proper law for its use.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. This truth is not modified nor even affected by our modern discoveries as to the methods by which

He worked. It need not disturb my faith nor yours to know that He worked in a mysterious way His wonders to perform, and that through ages upon ages He went on perfecting this little planet of ours until it should be fit as a habitation for the creatures He wished to place upon it.

Recognizing God as the Creator, and the Lawgiver, we have yet to give due respect to Him. God is owner of everything. Concerning the idea of ownership, whence came it?

In common with all primitive peoples, the early Aryan tribes that settled in Italy held the very primitive notion that the best title to property is conquest.[1] There is no more primitive conception of ownership than this. It marks man on the level with the animals of the forest and the field. The leopard can hold his lair against all comers, therefore his title is supreme. The ants make their abode in the ant-hills, and none will claim their title. In such manner the early Aryans, in southern Europe as in Central Asia, held their possessions as property, and ownership which was at best precarious, whether a man's title to possession rested in brute strength, in superior skill, or in more watchful care. Nevertheless, primitive and barbarous though they were, these notions of property were fully adequate to shape community customs, and these community

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 38.

customs were the germ of civil law after the early tribal life of the people had developed into the larger life of an organized state.

In the time of the Roman republic, that, while we find the fact of ownership no longer depended on actual physical prowess, nevertheless the underlying meaning of ownership was unchanged from earliest times. Professor Morey says, "The customs of a barbarous age had become sterotyped into a regular judicial process, the heated wrangle had cooled down into a formal method of joining an issue, and the lance, which was a weapon of conquest, had become transformed into a symbol of ownership."[1] In a Roman court the formal method of avowing ownership was to touch the lance, just as in later centuries the custom of taking oath in an English court was to kiss the Book.

What did Roman law mean by ownership, or, to use the Latin word which has come down into modern jurisprudence, by "dominium"? Ownership signified, of course, the right to use or enjoy one's possession, but this was not the distinguishing mark. In the Roman law the essence was this: the legal power to hinder others from using or enjoying one's possession.

That the modern theory of ownership follows entirely the ancient Roman law is clearly seen by analyzing the development of any ordinary civil case in court. Pro-

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 39.

fessor Thomas Erskine Holland, of Oxford, in his masterful Jurisprudence, thus characterizes our familiar rights of ownership: "The essence of all such rights lies not so much in the enjoyment of the thing as in the legal power of excluding others." The law of ownership is keenly analyzed in these luminous words of Kant: "If a man were alone in the world, he could properly hold or acquire nothing as his own; because between himself, as Person, and all other outward objects, as Things, there is no relation." Robinson Crusoe, on his lonely island, could possess and enjoy the whole of it, but he "owned" nothing until the man Friday joined him; for, uhtil the coming of another man, it would be meaningless to say, "This ax, this gun is mine." Ownership, in our common jurisprudence, means more than than the possession or enjoyment of anything: it signifies the nearness, or possible nearness, of other people who can be hindered from possessing or enjoying the thing that is "mine".

Professor James, the noted psychologist, says: "The sense of ownership begins in the second year of life. Among the first words which an infant learns to utter are 'My' and 'Mine.'" The object may not be his, but he grasps it, and claims it as his own. It is his property. The modern race is like the child; if it can secure possession, it says: "The thing is mine." It is eagerly reaching out after wealth, like a child reaching

for a bright toy. What priceless possessions are within the grasp of the American people! Silver, gold, copper, iron, coal, zinc, lead, mineral wealth almost beyond comprehension! On these mountain sides are great forests with their wealth of lumber. Stored under these mountains are vast lakes of oil and gas. In the air above are stored the forces of electricity so valuable that our modern civilization could no longer survive without it. Wealth in the earth, above the earth, beneath the earth! How good God has been to His children! Will mankind pretend to set up claim of ownership to which he is not justly entitled?

There are two types of men who have little interest in this writing. They are the atheist and the criminal. Neither of these men are average, and our message is not for them. To all other men who acknowledge one God we address ourselves in naming the corner stone of this thesis.

God is the Giver, and is the absolute Owner of all things. "In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth."[1] "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."[2] "For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them."[3] "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."[4]

If the Lord created the earth, to whom did the earth belong? The rational man replies, "It belonged to God. He is the owner." This would seem to establish

1. Genesis 1:1
2. Psalm 24:1
3. 1 Samuel 2:8

from the beginning the question of ownership.

"And God created man." To whom did the earth belong after man was created? A Missouri farmer once replied: "It belonged to the man."[1] But the rational man knows that it belongs to God. God said to the man: "Replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over it." Man's relation is clear and definite. He is to subdue and have dominion or possession. By his genius, he is to make the earth contribute to his every need. He is not only to have dominion over the land itself, but over other created things. But there is no suggestion that man is ever to have ownership of the land. God said, "The land is mine."

The earth has two hemispheres, the eastern and the western. To whom did the western hemisphere belong? To whom did North America belong? The answer is, "They both belong to God." The United States was created by the Lord, and it belongs to Him. The State of Indiana was a creation of God, and He has ownership of it. Now, to whom does the farm belong? The man on the farm replies: "Of course, the earth belongs to God, but this farm belongs to me." The man paid good money for it. He has worked hard in breaking it up, and building a home there; therefore, the farm is his.

Here the discussion passes from the general to the individual. God created the farm. Society, through

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 17.

government, gave the individual the privilege of possession. Yet the minute the man gets the legal papers giving him possession, he at once sets up claim of sole ownership. He maintains that the right of possession includes the right of ownership, or, as the old slogan used to state it, "Possession is nine points of the law."[1]

Individualism thus arrays itself against the Creator and society. But these claims of the individual cannot be permanently maintained. Organized society, through government, granted him possession, but in times of war, or in behalf of the "eminent domain," or for other causes, it may reclaim the farm and there is no appeal. In tracing the title to his land, the individual can get no further than to the records of the government which gave him control. And back of the government stands the Creator. The logical conclusion is that God is the owner.

The registrar's record and the title deeds are complete; and possession is shown the individual according to law. The law grants a title to possession, but possession and ownership are not interchangeable terms. The two ideas are closely related, but they can never become identified. If no syllable of the Christian Scriptures has ever been written, nevertheless, it is inscribed in the very constitution of theism itself,

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 19.

"The earth is the Lord's; unto you it is given for a possession."

If, therefore, it shall appear that certain respectable notions of ownership have been buttressed into their honorable place by heathen laws rather than by Christian teaching, and if it shall appear that stewardship is the only doctrine of property that was ever recognized in the Christian Scriptures, or can ever have an inch of standing room in final Christian civilization, then we have found the proper attitude: "The rigtheous man will accept tne facts, and determine thereby his personal attitude toward his material possessions. He will cooperate, as he has opportunity, with righteous men and righteous movements whose purpose is to realize the cause of Cnrist in the world."[1]

Heretofore we have made random statements that possession and ownership are not identical. Life is a trust. To have is to owe, not own. Christianity repudiates tne pagan doctrine of ownership, and recognizes possession, honorably acquired, as a token of confidence on the part of the Divine Owner, and as its own pledge of fidelity in return.

To the pagan God is impersonal. He reasons thus: "Personality is necessary to ownership. God is impersonal. Therefore, God cannot own anything." The major premise is true. Without personality there can be no property. Ownership involves attachment to personality.[2]

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 28.
2. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 6.

Property and personality are inseparable. Personality suggests property and property suggests personality. You cannot get around this when you come to think of God, unless you think of Him as impersonal, and that is paganism. Out of the pagan idea, that man is owner have come two "dark streams of error," which carried the pagan teaching to the Middle Ages and bestrew them with debris.[1]

The first of these is asceticism. This is the doctrine that the material world is essentially evil; that salvation is obtained by mortification of the flesh; that one should renounce the material world, dress in rags, and withdraw from the world like a hermit.[2]

If human ownership is the true doctrine of property, asceticism is a necessity. The sin of covetousness is rooted deep in the human heart. How else can we get rid of it? If riches clog the higher life, the cure is poverty. Thus reasoned the pagan philosopher and the Christian ascetic. Under this conception there was no place for Christian Stewardship; for property is considered an earthly treasure and not something to be held in trust.

The second dark stream of error which flowed from the pagan theory was Feudalism, the curse of the Middle Ages. It affected the political and social life as asceticism affected the religious life.

1. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 6.
2. Ibid.

Under the Feudal Age all land in theory belonged to the King. Under him were the Feudal lords. The sovereignty meant not only the ownership of the land but the people of the land. Men considered themselves to be owners. Yet when the government began to take over, men realized that "nobody really owned anything."[1]

It is therefore a common fallacy to think that possession means ownership. Possession, according to Webster's Dictionary, "is the act or state of possession; the holding or using of property in one's power or in command." It is a fact that we are by no means owners of what we may happen, for the time being, to have. One example will serve our purpose. A robber has stolen an automobile during the night. The next morning a detective goes to search for the car. He sees a suspicious character driving an automobile, and, when he investigates, finds the number of the machine identical with the number handed him by the owner. The robber, despite his possession of the car, is not the owner. Possession, therefore, does not constitute ownership.

There are at least three definite proofs of God's ownership.[2] The Scriptures are the first to declare it. 1 Kings 20:3 reads: "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine says the Lord of hosts." In the New Testament, Christ's disciples were taught to pray: "Give us this

1. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 7.
2. Traverce Harrison, Studies in Christian Stewardship, p. 20.

day our daily bread." (Luke 11:3). We are also told that"every good and perfect gift cometh from above." (James 1:17). Thus the Scriptures clearly declare ownership, not in man, but in God.

The second proof of God's ownership, and which needs no further discussion, is the fact that He is man's Creator. He made us, and not we ourselves, and we are not our own.

The third and conclusive proof is the fact that we are Christ's and Christ is God's. Christ bought us and paid the price of His life, that we might be saved. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." (1 Corinthians 7:23). The world has never had a greater manifestation of love than the love of Christ for lost men. Therefore, our tie of love to God gives Him the right to all personality and property.

There are other proofs of God's ownership, but these seem to be sufficient to establish the fact through law and love.

To acknowledge God's ownership is to meet the will of God upon the express terms which will satisfy His will and convenience. Harrison marks a difference between "recognition" and "acknowledgment," by stating: "Recognition is clearly a matter of the intellect. Acknowledgment is the recognition that acts."[1] If we can make the word "acknowledgment" a burning flame of sincere meaning, we will not only solve our problems

1. Traverce Harrison, Studies in Christian Stewardship, p. 22.

of church finance, but we will send a thrill to the ends of the earth, because of what it will mean for the enlarged Kingdom of the Lord.

From the evidence gathered, and considering the challenging facts, we conclude that God is the owner, man is the steward. Mankind is simply the tenant.

With man as the steward, or tenant, let us consider the increase. If a man has a farm, and he admits God to be the owner, and he plants and reaps a crop yielding $5,000. The farmer says; "God owns the land, but the money belongs to me. I made the money." With perfect frankness we must admit that there is a clear difference between the farm, and the money made thereof. God made the farm without the help of man, but He did not make the $5,000. The farmer made the money, but is it his?

Can a farmer make $5,000 alone? Did he make it by himself? Could any individual alone make $5,000? A consideration of money-making processes will show that he cannot. Robinson Crusoe on his lonely island could not have made $1,000 in a thousand years.[1] Money-making goes back to the question of the factors in production. There are three factors- God, the individual, and society or the neighbors of the farmer. It takes these three factors to produce one single dollar. Note the part that each play in the stages of production.

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 22.

God furnishes the material. He furnished the land. He produced the fertility of the soil, the sunshine and the rain, the rotation of the seasons, the mineral wealth, the vegetable and animal life. No man, therefore, could reckon his wealth without recognizing the part God has played in its production. It is He that gives power to obtain wealth.

The individual is an indispensable factor. He plants and cultivates the crop. He digs the ore from the mines. He bores for gas and oil. He works in the factory. He discovers electricity. He harnesses the power of steam. He makes definite and necessary contribution. Without him, the process would be impossible.

But God and the individual cannot produce wealth without the assistance of society. How did the farmer pbtain the $5,000? Did he secure it from the production of wheat? Very well; the first thing he did was to plow the ground, and with a plow made by some one else. Society made his harrow, and furnished him with the drill with which to plant the grain. It was cut by a binder made by society. Society built the threshing machine, the wagon or the truck with which he hauled it to market, the railroad that carried it to the mill, and the grocery store which put it on the market; and society eats the bread made from the flour, thus creating a market for the grain. It takes all of these processes

before any farmer can secure $5,000. Hence the farmer is not independent. He does not produce his income alone. He has the assistance of his neighbors and his God.

Men are interdependent. The physician, the teacher, the minister, the poet, the inventor, the missionary, the explorer, the banker, the mechanic, the laborer, each makes money only with the coöperation of his neighbors. Life is so complex that we are dependent upon each other for our daily necessities. "Give us this day our daily bread," is truly the prayer of all the races of the world.

We come back to the question of the $5,000. It is owned jointly. Whether it be produced by the farmer, grain buyer, doctor, miner, minister, teacher, merchant, laborer, or lecturer, to whom does it belong? We have that it is a coöperative process; God, the individual, and society. Paul says, "For we are laborers together with God."[1] The Revised Version puts it: "For we are God's fellow-workers." It was a joint production, therefore it is a joint ownership. To be sure, the individual comes into possession of the money as he does in the case of the land, but he does not own it all. He is a steward who must be held accountable both by his Lord and by his neighbors to administer the money which comes into his hands.

1 Corinthians 3:9 , 1.

The purpose is well established that God is the Divine Owner of all things. By establishing this fact, we are able to arrive at the central theme of stewardship, which is to recognize God as the Owner. Unless God is the Creator and the Owner, there can be no stewardship. Upon this basis we are ready to proceed to a further discussion of the subject of stewardship.

CHAPTER II

THE MESSAGE OF STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is a much abused and overworked word, but we cannot escape it or put it out of our vocabularies because we are tired of it. Its message is too potent. It calls us back from false standards to show us anew the mind of Jesus Christ. If we claim to follow the Master, we must accept his scale of values.[1]

The word "steward" comes from the word "stiward," the prefix meaning house or hall, and the word "ward" meaning warden or guardian. Hence it means the warden or guardian of the house or hall. It may mean an officer or employee who guards a household, or has charge of the management thereof, such as the general administrator. In general, it is a man employed in a large family, on a large estate, to manage the domestic concerns, to supervise the servants, to collect rents, one concerned with the income, and one who keeps account of all expenditures.

Originally the steward was an officer on a lord's estate, having general control of its affairs. The steward was always a nobleman, and came into his own as manager of the manor. Figuratively, he is one who acts as custodian, administrator, or supervisor. In the modern usage of the word, the meaning being somewhat changed, the steward is one who manages clubs, or is stationed on ships,

1. Mrs. George J. Fix, An Anthology of Stewardship, p. 7.

or in airplanes, or other similar capacities.

The place of the Christian stewardship is involved in its principle and function. The tithe is not to be confused with the whole broad subject of stewardship, to which it is related.[1] A Christian steward is the keeper of his Master's goods. He manages his Master's affairs, for into his hands is committed a solemn trust. A Christian steward is one who believes and practices in his life the principle of Christian Stewardship. This is the principle: "All I am, all I have, all I know, all I can do is a trust from Almighty God, to be used for my highest good, for the blessing of my fellow man, for the glory of God, and for the advancement of his Kingdom."[2] God made all things; therefore God owns all things. And if we have anything, it is because God gave it to us. Money is not the whole of his goods. Body, brain, life, soul, and spirit are a part of that sacred trust. Christ told us about Dives that we might not waste God's goods in selfish luxuries. He told us about the prodigal son that we might not waste his goods in selfish vices.

Another striking defintion of Stewardship is: "Christian Stewardship is the recognition and fulfillment of personal privilege and responsibility for the administration of the whole of life, of personality, time, talent, influence, material substance, everything

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 238-239.
2. W. K. Green, The Principle of Christian Stewardship, (tract, p. 1).

in accordance with the spirit and ideals of Christ."[1] Possibly this is as good a definition as could be formulated when we think of Christian Stewardship in terms of life and life's relationship.

Stewardship is the attitude of a Christian toward his possessions. It is more than this. Stewardship is the Christian law of living. It is the stewardship of privilege, of opportunity, of experience, of education, of artistic talent, of mental and spiritual gifts. In a word, it is the whole inclusive stewardship of personality, for this indeed is a Christian life.[2] The Church is the steward of the mysteries of God. Civilization is steward of the higher values of human life. The men who have are stewards in behalf of those who have not.

From the word, steward, we must realize that we are wardens or guardians of his House, or in the light of the New Testament, his Church. We are supervisors, administrators, and superintendents of his affairs. We are entrusted with his Kingdom on earth. It is a personal responsibility, for each is a steward.

Stewardship is under a very strict compulsion. That compulsion is that a man be found faithful. Concerning the unfaithful steward, Jesus spoke these words: "He shall be cast into outer darkness." (Matthew 25:30). Stewardship may survive ignorance, but it can never sur-

1. George L. Morelock, Christian Stewardship, p. 3.
2. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 271.

vive the violation of allegiance. It is the business of the steward to be alert, but to be faithful is more than his business; it is his life.

Stewardship is a sense of moral responsibility for life in its unfolding and development and in its relationships and service. Life is a gift from God; life has been redeemed by Jesus Christ; life, or human personality, is the one supreme value among men. When one realizes the value of life, then life becomes to that person tremendously significant. He wants to make the most of his own life: to develop the powers of his personality to the utmost and then use them in service. Thus life becomes a trust to be administered for God.

We shall now see how God himself has chosen to place his own powers and resources under the law of stewardship, the same law that is applied to humanity. As far as it is known to mortal man, the story of creation is the first revelation of God's personal sense of stewardship. If one is looking for a picture of a lonesome God, he can find it in this description of the Spirit of God brooding over the face of the deep, restless until all his vast resources have been placed at the disposal of others.[1] Sam Walter Foss wrote:

> "There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
> In a place of their self content.
> There are souls like stars, that dwell apart,
> In a fellowless firmament."

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 36.

But it could not be so with God. It was contrary to his character, just as it is contrary to the character of any good steward to find pleasure in lavishing on himself the resources of his possessions. Paul points to cardinal principle of stewardship when he says: "None of us liveth unto himself." (Romans 14:7). But this principle first came from the heart of God who found it impossible to live unto himself, and yearning for a race of men who would move at the same impulses "God created man in his own image." (Genesis 1:27). Being all-sufficient in his infinite attributes, God, nevertheless, counts it his chief glory to graciously administer the exhaustive resources of his material empire for the benefit of the peopled world.[1]

"God teaching Stewardship" might well be the caption to the story of the garden of Eden. Parenthood involves responsibility. The father is bound to pass on his principles to his children. Creation was a supreme venture on the part of God in producing a breed of men who would share with him the enjoyment and administration of his boundless resources. No yearning mother could bend more wistfully over the cradle of her children than did God over the cradle of the race. Only a parent who has knelt beside some little cot to pray that his first-born might be a blessing to the world, can know how eagerly God planned that garden "to grow every tree that is pleasant," and how yearningly he desired that

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 36

the child should share his Father's passion for the welfare of the world. It is not quite true that God had only one Son and he made him a missionary; God has had millions of sons, and from the beginning he has sought to make them all missionaries in the truest sense that everyone should regard his life as a sacred trust.

As a steward, God reserved only one thing for himself in the garden, the rest of the garden being entrusted to Adam. God reserved his proprietor-ship by the very fact that He forbade that one thing should be touched.[1] It is a long road that leads from the failure of our first parents to such a cry as came from George Matheson's lips: "O love that wilt not let me go." The most touching part of the story of the garden is where, when the tragedy is done and the persons are still in hiding, a grieving Father goes out seeking his rebellious children, for God called unto him the man. It was love that called. So God set himself up to the task of gathering up the wreckage of Eden in order to start over again in working out his eternal purposes of making the kind of manhood that will share with him his compassion for the world.

From Adam to Abraham is the story of a long struggle with the forces of sin and evil, even ignorance, but God is making progress. In this scripture it is evident that God has found in Abraham a man who from the heart feels the same sense of stewardship that God felt. Indeed, it is God, the supreme Sovereign, who is crying out in com-

1. Clementia Butler, Ownership, p. 29.

passion for Sodom:

> "Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing:.... And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?.... And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for the ten's sake." (Genesis 12:1-2; 18:22-24, 32).

From the beginning this was God's work to create in men a moral responsibility as "my brother's keeper." There was no other way to make a moral world. Perhaps no one in the Old Testament expresses more passionately this burden for the salvation of the race than does Moses, the chosen leader of Israel in the day of their great sin. It is God in Moses who is speaking:

> "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto Jehovah, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet, now I pray thee, if thou wilt forgive their sin;-- and if not, blot me out of thy book which thou hast written." (Exodus 32:30,31,32).

In later years Moses perceives even more clearly that his longing for the regeneration of his people was really imparted to him from the heart of God, to whom he commends them in his last hours:

> "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I shall command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee." (Deuteronomy 30:1-3).

The failure of the Hebrew nation to accept its God-given mission is the most conspicious refusal of divine stewardship of all history.[1] But the love of God shines still more brightly through the gloom. Other people may take warning. Israel forfeited its leadership in God and among the nations through its failure. But God will "not fail nor be discouraged, till he sets judgment in the earth." So even the darkness of the great rejection is relieved by the increasing number of glorious souls who give voice of the stewardship of God, and as the prophet evangelists reveal to an ever-widening constituency the pleading heart of the heavenly Father.

In the scripture that follows we have come to that part in the history of the Kingdom when political degeneration is rapidly, increasingly evident. King after king has risen, and rebelled against God, and departed. Nevertheless, God still pleads with his people. Throughout the Old Testament, God continues to plead with his people to accept his program of stewardship.

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 43.

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

This loving gratitude which Isaac Watts expressed as he surveyed the "wondrous cross" is exactly that which God had been trying to arouse in human hearts from the beginning.[1] We have seen God pleading with his people in the Old Testament. Finally he said, "I will send my own Son." Calvary is only another phase of the love of God that first placed man in the garden of Eden as the caretaker of a wonderful place, that bore with him through the long years of rebellion, that called to him tnrough the law and the prophets, and in the fulness of time made the climax of all appeals in the coming of the Child of Bethlehem. Accordingly, God's stewardship is best realized in the incarnation that began in Bethlehem and ended in the supreme tragedy at Calvary.

As the incarnation was God's supreme appeal, so Pentecost was the final act in the fulfillment of the Divine stewardship.[2] The age-long task had been to make man in God's own image. The law and the prophets could create a fear and abhorrence of sin, Bethlehem and Calvary could inspire a love for the character of a God who forgives and seeks to the uttermost; but how can a man lift himself up by his boot straps? How can

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 45.
2. Ibid., p. 47.

a man be victorious over his sins, or be a good steward like unto his Father? It is impossible without some superhuman help. Man may love the higher law, and make sincere efforts. But all human efforts must end in the wail of Saul of Tarsus, "O wretched man that I am," were it not that God made one final appropriation of his divine resources and at Pentecost inaugurated the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Henceforth the victorious life is the privilege of every child of God, even as Jesus promised, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you."

It is impossible to have an adequate account or conception of Christian Stewardship without taking into account the life of Jesus Christ. He was the Perfect Steward.[1]

Jesus not only taught stewardship, but he lived stewardship. It is rather strange that even as good a mother as Mary should have failed to recognize and realize that a boy of twelve is not too young to begin a philosophy of life.[2] "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:46-49). The conviction of allegiance to his Father was with him as a boy, and it grew stronger through the years.

When Jesus prayed, teaching the disciples, it was a prayer of dedication: "Thy will be done." Jesus

1. George L. Morelock, Christian Stewardship, p. 4.
2. Ralph Cushman, I Have a Stewardship, p. 37.

reveals his consciousness that life is a stewardship, planned by the Father, in his constant dependence upon God. The steward must frequently report and consult with his Lord. The Father is the source not only of the program but of the power that his human representative shall need in every part of his task. The son is still the steward and no exception to the rule. Many were the nights he spent in prayer while his disciples slept, thus showing that with the deepening sense of stewardship comes the growing burden of responsibility which drives men into closer communion with God. So habitual had this communion become in Jesus' life that his only relief in Gethsemane was to lose himself in in the will of God.

The philosophy of Jesus with respect to stewardsnip may be summed in these words: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18:36). Jesus' words were very revolutionary. They had omitted political kingdoms, and social benefits. They are void of the so-called worldly pleasures. It was his choice to be about the Father's business.

Jesus taught the message of stewardship in his teachings. At least sixteen of his parables reveal his emphasis upon this Old Testament doctrine, and

yet here is one of the most stubbornly resisted truths of the scriptures. Indeed, how few, even among "tithers," really "see through the eyes of God" and regard seriously God's personal ownership of land and wealth and life.[1] But let a person once see this truth and realize its practical implications, and God not only becomes a Presence personal and real, but the entire conception of one's relation to all industry and the Kingdom of God is revolutionized. As an English writer puts it: "It makes a vast difference in the long run whether a man has at the back of his mind, in all of his judgments, the principle, 'One has a right to do as one likes with one's own,' in the crude sense of what is his and may remain so, without the breach of the law of the land; or, on the other hand, the idea of property as a social trust or stewardship. Change of attitude is the most practical thing that can happen to men."[2]

Moreover, in the teachings of Jesus, the word "steward" is vital, not only because Jesus and his disciples recoined it, but because it is difficult to find any other word that will exactly express the same meaning. Jesus used many words to portray the true relationship of man to God, such as: "servant," "husbandman," "sons,""friends," "stewards," and "heirs." However, it is evident that none of them can be used to the total exclusion of the others. Each one is not only freighted

1. Ralph Chushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 53.
2. Ibid.

with a broad aspect of the precious message that Jesus taught but each has also the limitation of being unable to suggest the whole truth. Accordingly, no word is altogether satisfactory, but among these words the one that Jesus emphasizes as most broadly covering the whole scope of human relationship to God is "stewardship."

Such words as "trustee," or "agent," or "representative," are cold, and are at best merely suggestive of the meaning that Jesus puts into the Oriental word "steward," for in the Orient the steward was not only trustee and a servant, but still more, he was the friend. So close was this friendship that it was written of Abraham's stewardship, "All the goods of his master are in his hands." Likewise Joseph was steward in the house of Potiphar, and the confidence and esteem in which he was held is evidenced by the statement that the master "left all that he had in Joseph's hand." Thus when Jesus is searching for a word that will express both the responsibility and friendly relationship which God desires shall exist between men and their heavenly Master, he goes over into the Old Testament and brings forth the picture of an Oriental home where the master has indeed placed the moral and even physical and spiritual welfare of all concerned in the hands of his trusted friend, the steward.

So Jesus taught the great philosophy of life and

and clustered his teachings around the word "steward." It is doubtful, therefore, if a better word can be found to express the general relation of a man to the supreme Person and to the Kingdom. Jesus not only uses it, but evidently has it in the background of his thinking when he does not use it. Many of his parables, such as the parables of the vineyard, the talents, the good Samaritan, and the prodigal son, bear witness that while the word "steward" or "stewardship" is not always specifically used, yet Jesus' philosophy is perfectly clear. Every thing that God made, and that Jesus did, was for the making of man. "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" was the way Jesus put it to the fishermen. Had they been carpenters, he would have said, "Follow me and I will make you builders of men." Had they been capitalists, he would have said, "Follow me and I will make you investors of men." But by "men" Jesus meant far more than the flesh-and-blood house. Yes, our Lord ministered to men's bodies and to their material needs, but it was all aimed at reaching the soul of the man in order to bring him to decide for God. This is the end of the teaching of Stewardship by Jesus Christ.

There is a definite obligation and responsibility in stewardship. Obligation is the act of obligating, or binding one's intentions to a course of action. It it a promise or vow to the acceptance of the task. It is an oath, or a pledge of allegiance to the duty involved. So we may say that it is the binding tie that

that makes one liable for the duty he has assumed. And surely he has assumed a great duty when he becomes a Christian.

Before one may assume an obligation that involves a response to duty, one must be responsible, or possess the qualities of being responsible for what he has thus assumed. The legal statutes of our land requires that one be twenty-one years of age before he becomes liable to a contract, or for debts encountered, and many other responsibilities. When he reaches this age, he is a man in his own rights. He assumes responsibilities, and pledges himself in obligation thereto. The Christian life is definitely similar. It is the state of being morally and spiritually responsible, and being liable in the eyes of God for our failures.

When we obligate ourselves to God, we are then responsible as stewards. There is a world-wide obligation to fulfill the mission of Jesus in preaching his Gospel. When a person accepts this obligation, he involves himself as a steward of his wealth. The very fact that the Christian has an income, or has accumulated wealth, puts him under an obligation to do good. For wealth is potential power.[1]

In assuming obligation, the Christian recognizes stewardship by the voice of conscience. No Christian, in good conscience, can refuse to give what his Lord requires. While conscience is partially a matter of

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 58.

education, yet in this enlightened age, a man is fully aware of the fact that to make a profession of serving the Lord lays upon him the obligation to live up to that profession.[1] The average man is neither a knave or a fool. He is prepared to accept a plain statement of principles and facts, and he is not disposed to violate trust or evade an obligation. Now, the fact that there is an obligation in stewardship is very plain.

A faithful steward is required in honor to increase his possession, for he thus enlargens his Lord's estates. The cowardly steward who hid his master's talent was rebuked, and justly so. A man is to earn all he can, save all he can, and administer all in the Lord's service.

Our belief in Christ must culminate in Christian service or else the belief will wither away. Jesus said: "Let your lights shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16). In giving his parting instructions to his disciples Jesus said: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." (Matthew 28:19). These passages ring with optimistic call to service. We first express our belief in Christ and then go to work.

The importance of the call is that we shall make it our business to serve, even as Christ served. The object of the call is to show that "in none other is there salvation." The place of service is world-wide,

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 288.

for Jesus said: "Go ye therefore into all the world." Jesus, himself, was the pattern of service as shown clearly in the parable of the good Samaritan. Again he clearly revealed the purpose of his life when He said: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28). "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matthew 20:27).

From the example of Jesus we realize that we are stewards of service in our lives, spiritual experiences, and for our fellow man. All may serve, and the fields are open in personal work, teaching, ministering, caring for the needy, and seeking the lost. This is what is meant by stewardship of service.

There is another stewardship which is that of time. In six days God completed the work of creation, and saw that it was good. On the seventh day God rested, and blessed that seventh day. Surely God intended us to know that one day in the seven belonged to him.[1] When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, He said: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8). He does not say: "Go to church on Sunday, and that is enough." God really wants us to count one day out of the week as His day, and spend it in doing things for Him.

We conclude that God has set apart one-seventh of our time as his. It is evidently the first day of the

1. Traverce Harrison, Studies in Christian Stewardship, p. 71.

week is the day to be set aside. It was on this day that Christ arose from the dead. It was on this day that the Church of Christ began. It was on this day that the early Church met for the purpose of partaking of the Lord's Supper, and other acts of worship.

The reasons for proper stewardship are quite obvious. There is the brevity of life to be considered, and the employment of what time we do have should be for the greater service for the Master. The value of time is not to be overlooked. It is remarkable what can be accomplished in a short time. Paul, in less than thirty years, planted churches over sections of Asia Minor. Jesus ministered only for three years, but transformed the world to such a degree that it has never had its equal.

There is an account to be rendered at the judgment. It is evident that rendering a good account of our time will serve to promote our own enjoyment, enlarge the sphere of our usefulness, and be a powerful check on the many evils that now curse our world.

The Christian, furthermore, is a steward of his material substance. In laying the foundation of this thought, we are confronted with the question: Shall a man and his money be related in terms of ownership or of stewardship? If it is in terms of ownership, the foundation of God is denied.[1] Therefore the recognition of God's ownership is essential in con-

1. Traverce Harrison, Studies in Christian Stewardship, p. 80.

sideration of money as administered by the steward in faithfulness.

The stewardship of money includes more than a recognition of God's absolute ownership of all things and the practice of tithing as acknowledgment of that ownership.[1] It includes all that is involved in the acquistion of wealth. Our stewardship begins not in our giving but in our getting. The important thing is to recognize the fact that the Christian is God's steward in his calling, his business, or in whatever way he acquires his wealth. It also includes a definite stewardship administration of all that is acquired. Stewardship means trusteeship, and trusteeship involves administration. A man is to acquire his income, care for it, invest it, spend it, distribute it, and is responsible to God for what he does with it.

There are two ways of coming into possession of wealth. These two ways are by gift or inheritance and by our own efforts. The desire to make money is practically universal. Thus arises the thought of the responsibility of how to use our money wisely. Some one has said: "It requires more sense to know how to use it than to save it." The steward is required to know how to spend it. He should take into account his God, and his responsibilities of life.

A man has no more right to determine the terms and conditions of his stewardship than he has to de-

1. Charles A. Cook, The Larger Stewardship, p. 110.

the terms and conditions of his admission into the kingdom. This prerogative belongs to God and in his Holy Word he has clearly set them forth.[1]

The whole message and purpose of Christian Stewardship is involved in recognition of God's ownership, and in our complete obedience to Him. Suppose the principles and the practice of the stewardship discussed in this chapter should be very generally incorporated in the lives of the members of our churches throughout the land, suppose this stewardship should be made the standard for Christian living by people of God generally, what would be the result? What would be the effect in church efficiency in all its various departments of activity and service? Would there be any lack of devoted workers for any work that needed to be done? Would there be any gaps anywhere that would need to be filled? Would there be any lack of men or means for the work of Christian missions at home or abroad? Would there be anything to hinder the triumphant onward march of the Church of Jesus Christ in the world?

The answers to the questions in the foregoing paragraph are obvious. Every steward faces his obligation for the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Prior to his ascension Jesus committed the stewardship of the Gospel in the Great Commission. What has the Gospel accomplished for the human race? The Christian

1. Charles A. Cook, The Larger Stewardship, p. 113.

steward would testify that from it he has received forgiveness of his sins, regeneration of his soul, a new interpretation of life through Jesus Christ, a sense of security, a new way of life, the assurance of immortality: and that these blessings are for all men. He could also testify that the Gospel has brought innumerable blessings to the race as a whole; an ever-expanding sense of the spirit of mercy and compassion; and includes the law of love for our fellow men.

With this background of knowledge and conviction, the Christian steward of today is faced with the problem of giving the same response that the early followers of the Lord gave. Not only will he make that response, but it will be his challenging task to lead others to the same response. Stewardship is all of life. The steward will make no reservation of time, talents, physical strength, mental powers, material resources, or of life itself to reach the goal that Christ has placed before him. He will indeed and in truth be a good "steward of the manifold graces of God."

CHAPTER III

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF TITHING

In a matter of such vital importance as the training of mankind into unselfishness, through giving, is it conceivable that God would have no definite plan? Would he have been likely to leave it to the haphazard of human choice, to determine whether or not offerings were to be made an integral part of worship; and, if so, on what basis? There can be no other basis except that which God has ordained. When the average man speaks of the law of God, what does he mean? Perhaps it would be fairer to ask, "What ought he to mean?" for there is no little confusion at this very point.

The Mohammedan, for instance, is the type of many people. The Mohammedan is a verbalist. Show him the words and he asks for nothing more. The words are his law. If the words can be changed, the law can be changed. His mental training for centuries has been such that it is difficult for him to enter the temple of the truth. He is forever climbing over a scaffolding of words outside the truth. It is for this reason that Mohammedans are the most difficult problem of modern missions.[1] It is quite true that they believe uncompromisingly in one God, they accept Moses and the prophets, they honor Jesus

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 225.

Christ as the greatest, though not the last, of the prophets. Literal and carnal interpretation of many spiritual things separates the Mohammedan pole-wide from Christian contacts and conceptions. His only point of contact is words, and words divide men rather than unite them.

The Jewish lawyers in the days of Jesus were men whose intellectual training was almost identical with that of modern Mohammedans. They certainly magnified the law, and without a doubt many of them were sincere. But how they vexed and harassed the soul of the Master! They were versed in the Scriptures, and could quote the statutes by roll and number, yet the law itself, the heart of it, was hidden from their eyes.

Jesus Christ did not teach the words of the Book; he taught the core and heart of things which were engulfed in the depths of the Book.[1] This is why the people said he tuaght with authority, and not as the scribes, who were mere copyists. Hate in the heart is murder; a lewd look is adultery; love is the fulfilling of the law, and teaching like this gets into the marrow of things. This is Christianity. It can never be the letter; it is always the spirit. Therefore when an intelligent Christian speaks of the "law of the Lord," he always means that hidden but vital element of truth which proceeds from the very nature of God himself.[2]

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 226.
2. Ibid.

The form of God's law may be expressed in words, but not the living heart of it; for there is no speech nor language; its voice cannot be heard.

A sure conclusion follows. When a Christian man finds in the Holy Scriptures a law of the Lord, expressed in words, he is to seek with knowledge and judgment to discern the wide meaning of that law. It is not an adventitious growth. It is not an accident. It is a due expression of the divine nature. There is depth to it. The outward form of it may change, but the core of it will remain.

Such, for instance is the law of the Sabbath and the Lord's Day. "One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," thus speaks the great apostle of Christian liberty. Is a man therefore permitted to ignore the day of God? By no means. He is required the more to observe it with uncompromising honor, for, as a Christian, he has entered into the keeping of the Lord's Day; he recognizes its broad and spiritual sweep. He accepts (though he may not know why) this appointed day as "the law of the Lord." He partly discerns the working of that law in the world about him. He observes that men and animals, brain and muscle, come to their best development when, at intervals of seven days, they rest from their labors.[1] The land

[1] Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 227

recovers tone when it lies fallow for a sabbatic year. All life springs up refreshed after a season of quiet. To say that a seventh day of rest is merely "the law of nature" gets nowhere, for, even so, the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, the open truth, that is the Lord's law. The Christian will therefore honor the Lord's Day, and permit others to honor it, because he honors the Lord who gave it. He will not observe it with slavish fear, for he is not a slave; but he will not desecrate his liberty by the undiscerning exercise of it. As to the specific day, it was given by the Lord. If the first day of the week, the resurrection day, seemed a fitting day for rest and worship, and was thus designated in the beginning of the Church, why should the Christian insist on another?

Here, then, is the law of the tithe. Like the Sabbath of the Old Testament, and the Lord's Day of the New Testament, the tithe did not happen; it was appointed. Like the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, the tithe is not arbitrary; nevertheless it is fixed. A seventh of days and a tenth of increase are alike "holy unto the Lord." In neither case is it possible to determine the ratio to be set apart except by direct revelation. Why not, for instance, designate every tenth day as a day of rest and worship, or every new moon? Ten is easy of computation, and the lunar month is a natural division of days. The "week" is unknown in heathen lands. Why, then, should a seventh of days be named? There is

absolutely no reason that appeals instinctively to a man's mind. It must be revealed. In the same way there is no reason, which appeals instinctively to a man's mind, why a tenth of increase should be set apart. It must be revealed.

Now, when intelligent men, being reverent in spirit, recognize that certain numerical ratios have been named, such as the seventh and the tenth, they accept them, not only because they are written in the Bible, but because, being written in the Bible, they must represent deep and actual values in the mind of God. Part of the values may be discerned by men. When, therefore, the tithe is named as one of the primal laws of God, the reference is not to designated words of Holy Scripture, but to the being and nature of God. The authority of God's law is not arbitrary; it is necessary, not as a statute law, but, as a fundamental law. It inheres in the truth itself. This is what some good people mean when they suggest that, for a Christian, the law of the tithe can be no other than the law of "loving expediency." To be sure, if by expediency one means a shift or a convenience, the suggestion drops from consideration by its own paltriness. But if expediency signifies fitness or suitableness, then expediency is the very core of God's law of the tithe. To set apart a tenth in acknowledgment of God's ownership is fitting, it is suitable, even as the Lord's Day is fitting and suitable; it is God's way. To the intelligent Christian this is final. The

Jew looked for a statute, but the Christian finds a law.

The law of the tithe is exceedingly simple. Like other primal laws of God, it is intended for universal observance. It is therefore direct, comprehensive, and complete. No law of the Creator has been hackled by the hands of friends and enemies as this ancient and gentle law of God. Its fiercest foe is now, and always has been, legalism.[1] God's sole appeal for the tithe is to the heart of men. It was therefore peculiarly obnoxious that this law among the Jews came to be used for the display of legal righteousness. Therefore, the Bible statutes should be known and understood, but it is dull intuition that will put forward these statutes as the reason why a man should acknowledge the divine ownership. Such dullness breeds confusion. "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Tithing is often taught as a commandment of the law, enforcing the will, whereas it is a commandment of the Lord, enlightening the eyes; it makes clear and plain what intuition has already apprehended. If a Christian man is informed that he ought to set apart a tenth of his income because it is thus written in the Scriptures, it is like a grocer sending a statement of account along with a copy of the penal code.

But did not the prophet flash the sword of the law before an entire nation? Did he not scourge them with

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 230.

the question, "Will a man rob God?" (Malachi 3:8). Surely, this is the truth. But to whom were such biting words addressed? Manifestly, to men who knew the law, and who were wickedly evading it while they pretended to observe it. The prophet was speaking to "tithers," for it was tenth-givers who were polluting the altar of God. They were bringing their tithes. The Jews never forgot this law of the Lord; but what kind of tithe was it? They were blind, lame, and sick animals, polluted bread, meager and shrunken sacrifices, and these were for the King of the whole earth! These punctilious tithers of ancient days were offering to God what they would not dare bring to the door of a petty magistrate. Such words as Malachi spoke to the Jews endure to this day for all men, who, knowing God's law, evade it. However, our allegiance to law reaches back into the meaning of worship itself, and is lost in the mystery of God's ownership. There is no least suggestion of maintaining the authority of Jewish laws. The ratio of giving has been named by God himself as man's acknowledgment of the divine soverignty. There is no record and there is no suggestion that this primal law was ever abrogated.[1]

The collection of the tithe for the service of the gods is recognized in the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. The system of tithing appears as old as the race. Collyer says: "Now since this proportion of one in ten, is

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 235.

certainly indifferent in itself, as one in seven or one in eight, it is reasonable to suppose that the custom of paying tithes so general among different and distant nations, must have had some divine direction for it, and that it came from Adam to Noah, and from him to all posterity until by dispersion it spread over all the world."[1]

Grotius says: "From most ancient ages a tenth has been regarded as the portion due to God, and the evidences of this fact are found in both Greek and Latin histories."[2] The Arabians by law, says Selden in his History of Tithes, required every merchant to offer a tenth of his frankincense to the priests for their God, or gods; that the Phoenicians, following the example of Abraham, devoted a tenth of their spoils of war to holy uses, that it was a custom in Italy to pay and vow tithes to their deities until the latter times of the Empire; that the German Saxons, who mainly peopled England, sacrificed a tenth of all captives to Neptune; and that Cicero once exclaimed, "No man ever vowed Hercules a tenth in hope of increasing his wit."[3]

The Carthagenians practiced it, and misfortune coming on them when their wealth made them forget the duty, they repented and returned to the practice. Didymus, of Alexandria, says it was a Grecian custom to consecrate the tenth of their increase to their gods. Cy-

1. R. H. Lampkin, The Scriptural Foundation for Christian Liberality, p. 89.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 90.

rus and Xenophon paid tithes to heathen gods.

Pliny says the Ethiopians made trade unlawful without the observance of the tithe. The striking words of Montacutius are that "instances are mentioned in history of some nations who do not offer sacrifices; but in the annals of all times none are found who do not pay the tithe."[1]

In Babylon, the Esra was a tithe of the produce of the land paid to the temples. It is said that among the Greeks for a thousand years before Christ, tithes were called for the temples and it is recorded that five hundred years before Christ, Simon, the great general of the Athenians, after defeating the Persians took out of the spoils of battle and dedicated them to his god.[2] In J. W. Duncan's Our Christian Stewardship, he quotes the Professor of Assyriology of Oxford University as saying that the Esra, the tithe, was in ancient Babylonia paid from the firstling of the land to the temple.[3] Also Pliny states that the Arabians recognized the tithes for their gods. Herodotus also states that the Phoenicians, after their victory over the Thessalians, dedicated a tenth of their booty to their gods. A tenth of Xenophon's loot after a great victory was given to the shrine of Apollo and Diana. A century later Demosthenes speaks of the sacrilege of retaining the tenth from the gods.

1. R. H. Lampkin, The Scriptural Foundation for Christian Liberality, p. 90.
2. Clementia Butler, Ownership, p. 37.
3. Ibid., p. 38.

"The divine institution of the tithe," says Edward Gibbon, "exhibits a singular instance of correspondence between the law of Zoroaster and that of Moses."[1] From the McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia we quote: "Inquiring into the reason for which the number ten has been so frequently preferred in cases of tribute, both secular and sacred, voluntary and compulsory, we remark that the process of paying tithes obtained among the different nations and from the citizens dates into the remotest antiquity."[2] "As we see it then, the law of the tithe is practically coëxistent with the human race, even as the Sabbath. These principles were so instilled in the mind of man that when the race became scattered over the face of the earth, speaking different languages, worshipping different gods, that they all practically consecrated one day in seven, one-tenth of the fruit of their toil to their gods."[3]

Indeed, so universal was the payment of tithes among the Greeks, that Julius Pollux, as quoted by Dean Comber, reckons the phrases, "to offer a tithe," "to vow a tithe," "to dedicate a tithe," as being synonomous with that of divine worship. Pisistratus, chief magistrate of the Athenians, received tithes from the people, which as his letter to Solon proves, he spent upon the gods.[4]

At Delos, Apollo had the tithes; indeed, this god

1. Clementia Butler, Ownership, p. 38.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Adam Townley, The Sacerdotal Tithe, p. 42.

was called the tithe-maker, because dedications were usually made in that proportion.[1]

Respecting the Romans, the testimony is equally the same. Pompeius Festus, who lived in the reign of Augustus and Tiberius, says, as quoted by Paul the Deacon, "the ancient (Romans) offered every sort of tithe to their gods."[2] Diodorous Siculus expressly said, "many of the Romans, not only of meager estates, but of the very rich men, consecrated their tithes to Hercules."[3] Plutarch tells us that Sylla gave the people a magnificent entertainment on account of his dedicating the tenth of his substance to Hercules. He also tells us that Camillus the Dictator vowed to give the tenth of the spoil of the city Veii to the Pythian Apollo.[4] Lucius Mummius, the Roman Consul who captured Corinth and completed the Roman conquest of Greece in 146 B. C., is still another example of a conqueror who dedicated spoils of war to Hercules, and this we learn from an inscription which says it was done according to ancient custom.[5] These examples might be multiplied, but it is not necessary.

To summarize, then, as to tithe paying in Europe as far back as thirteen hundred years before the Church, or Christian era, we find this custom prevailing among all the peoples known to history.

1. Adam Townley, The Sacerdotal Tithe, p. 42.
2. Ibid., p. 43.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 42.

When we reach the period of authentic history we read of Spartan generals, Roman dictators, lawyers, farmers, shepherds, merchants, sailors, miners, and cooks believing it to be right and religious in offering a tenth of their increase to the gods.[1] What, then, is suggested by this army of facts concerning tithe-paying from Europe, Africa, and Western Asia?

When philogists observe that many words of a class belonging for instance to agriculture, linger in use among peoples widely separated and having no visible connection with one another, infer that at some time in the remote past the ancestors of such peoples must have lived together and had a common language.

And such conclusions are called scientific; what is the inevitable conclusion, then, in reference to tithe-paying? That at some remote period in the past these now widely divergent peoples were one, and that the infinite God had revealed to them his will as to tithe tribute, that it is of divine origin. Now, whence came a custom so contrary to our selfish nature to be thus universal, and exactly the same in its amount, unless it had been derived, all over the world, by tradition from one and the same source? And what would have had sufficient force to cause so general an acceptance of such a self-denying law as that of tithes, except the original command of God Himself, preserved af-

1. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 43.

ter the dispersion at Babel, by a universal tradition founded on a deep conviction that it was one of the very most important acts of Divine worship, and designed to be observed by all men in all ages?[1]

We cannot conclude this chapter or this thought on the pagan usage of the tithe any better than by the following quotations from the very able work, (written about 1682) of the lucid and erudite Dean Comber, in answer to Selden's History of Tithes: "To conclude, we may discern the tithe was everywhere reckoned God's part, and originally the priest's portion. The Gentiles who had not the law, were in this point a law to themselves; their gods, their priests, their temples had tithes paid of all kinds of profits. If this universal agreement came from some tradition of the primitive Patriarchs, then it was first revealed from God. If it came from the equity of the thing itself, or, rather, were continued upon this ground when it had been first introduced by the other, then it is agreeable to natural reason, and it is a monstrous absurdity for Christians to murmur or dispute against that, as a heavy tax, which Turks and Pagans freely consented unto. Would the bare light of nature, and obscure tradition of which no original appeared suffice to lead the Gentiles to this duty? And shall we, who know the practice of the primitive Patriarchs, the precepts of the law, (never yet repealed as to a single

1. Adam Townley, The Sacerdotal Tithe, p. 44.

tenth), the practice of the Jews, the fair intimations of its continuance in the New Testament: shall we be backward to believe the Divine right of tithes?"[1]

Indeed, there is no other way of accounting for the universality of this remarkable law other than attributing it to God through revelation. The first statement in the Levitical law, concerning the tithe, is the announcement of the great fact that "all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." (Leviticus 27:30). This is a simple announcement of a pre-existing law.[2] The statement is without limitation of time, place, or condition. The statement has no past or future, but one eternal "Is the Lord's."

Thus, we conclude that the tithe law did not begin, neither did it end with the Mosaic law. But it is co-existent with and adequate to every material need of the Kingdom of God on earth.

It is our object to prove that the law of the tithe antedates all Mosaic legislation, which fact, if proved, will weaken, if not destroy, all argument to the effect that the tithe should end with the Mosaic or Levitical law. We have already drawn a convincing conclusion from history, showing the pagan usage of the tithe which antedated the Mosaic law. Now we shall endeavor to draw our argument from the Scriptures.

1. Adam Townley, The Sacerdotal Tithe, pp. 45-47.
2. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 24.

In the Scriptures, we read that in the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, God reserved a portion to Himself. (Genesis 3:3). "But the fruit of the tree, in the midst of the garden, God hath said ye should not eat of it: neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." We do not mean to say that this claim was in keeping with the literal tithe law, but it was in accordance with the principle and spirit of the law. The object was, no doubt, to maintain the principle of his ownership, and the faithful obedience of his subjects. Indeed, ownership was the theme. The reason which God gives for re-enacting the payment of tithes as part of the Mosaic law is, that all belongs to Him, hence it seems an almost necessary conclusion that all equally belongs to Him, even from the beginning. It is worthy of note that the judicious Hooker has given the sanction of his profound judgment to this opinion.[1] Thus the principle of the sacred portion was established in the very beginning. Violation of that principle brought the death penalty, and affected the destiny of the race.[2] The sin was in appropriating God's portion to man's own needs.

Going back to the Book of the Beginnings, we find the second instance of man's downfall, this time with respect to improper giving. "In process of time at the end of the days (evidently a cycle of days, or when the Sabbath came around) it came to pass, that

1. Adam Townley, The Sacerdotal Tithe, p. 29.
2. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 14.

Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the first-lings of his flock and of the fat thereof." (Genesis 4:3-4).

That these two men, so diametrically different in disposition, should have come at the same time to the same place each with an offering, could not have been without design, indicating a divine appointment, an institution, a plan.[1] Meager though the record is, it contains a clew to the solution of our problem. In Tertullian's rendering of the context, in his Answer to the Jews, (chapter 5), the record runs thus: "God had respect unto Abel and his gifts, but unto Cain and his gifts he had not respect. And God said unto Cain, 'Why is thy countenance fallen? Has thou not sinned, if thou offerest aright but dost not divide aright? Hold thy peace. For unto thee (shall) the conversion (be), and he shall lord it over thee." (Genesis 4:4-7).

Mr. Selden, in discussing this passage, quotes Tertullian, who wrote in the second century in the following language: "Since is it not, if indeed, you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, you have sinned.?"[2] Again, Clement who was a companion of Paul, gives the following quotation of this passage: "If thou shalt offer right, but not divide right, hast thou

1. David McConaughy, Money the Acid Test, p. 116.
2. Walter C. Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 16.

not sinned."[1] Grotius, Prideaux, and others also agree with the above rendering of this passage.

In studying the passage more closely, we will note: first, these two men brought of the fruit of their respective occupations. Second, Cain is spoken of as bringing a "sacrifice," while Abel is quoted as bringing the "first-born" (an expression often used as meaning the tithe)[2] of his sheep and fatlings."

Mr. Barrister, in his book on the subject, gives us the following observations on this incident. First, the mentioning of the several employments of these men would be without point and meaningless, if applied to any ordinary sacrifice, such as a sin offering, but it is quite in place if applied to tithing. Second, the phrases "process of time," or "after days," point to the end of a substantial period, whereas the bloody sacrifice, if in existence at that time, was a daily institution. So it is very evident that Cain's offering was rejected because he failed to bring the right division of the Lord's portion.[3] Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock, but Cain brought the "little potatoes."[4]

Upon that epoch-marking event the writer of the Hebrews makes this inspired comment: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice." (Hebrews 11:4). It is of worthy note to mention that some

1. Walter C. Nash, The Law and the Gospel of the Tithe, p. 16.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. Ibid.
4. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 14.

scholars render this in the following fashion: "a more abundant sacrifice." Abel is said to "offer by faith," and faith must be grounded in some declaration of the Divine will. Hence it is concluded by learned authors that God had Himself instructed Adam, and he his sons, as to the exact nature and quantity of the offerings to be made to Him but that Cain, from a faithless, covetous disposition, did not offer the required portion.[1] This argument carries great weight to every unprejudiced mind.

The learned Grotius also, though not a Churchman, and therefore with prejudices rather opposed to the principles of this system, yet sanctions the idea that Cain did not offer of the best, or else gave a less portion than the tenth, which, says he, "from the most ancient ages was the portion due to God, and the vestiges thereof remain in the Greek and Latin histories."[2] Dr. Landsell, on this subject, says: "We may venture the hypothesis that God from the beginning taught Adam that it was the duty of man to render a portion of his increase to his Maker, and that portion was to be not less than a tenth; then we shall see that the facts recorded in Genesis not only do not contradict such a supposition, but corroborate and strengthen it."[3]

The story of Abraham is very much different from that of Cain. Abraham recognized the principle of the

1. Adam Townley, The Sacerdotal Tithe, p. 30.
2. Ibid., p. 31.
3. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 204.

sacred portion and was blessed. No one can read the story of Abraham, the father of the faithful, the type of the Christian, paying the tithe to Melchizedek, the type of Christ, without knowing the root of the principle of the tithe was planted in the Patriarchial Dispensation. Four centuries before the Mosaic law was given, Abraham recognized God as Divine owner, and that the tithe was a sacred portion. "And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was a priest of God Most High. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all...." (Genesis 14:18-20).

This is the first undisputed mention of tithing in the Old Testament. An outstanding question arises: Where did Abraham learn the obligation to pay the tithe? Professor Sayce states that this offering of the tithe by Abraham was no new thing, that Abraham was long familiar with the practice in his Babylonian home.[1] He also states there are many tablet receipts in the British Museum for tithe money paid to the sun-god. It is not a sufficient answer to say that he learned it from the surrounding people such as the Babylonians. He was obeying God, and as the Hebrew writer (Hebrews 7:6), states it, it was in obedience to the right of Melchizedek as "Priest of the Most High God."

1. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 46.

Another clear revelation concerning the sacred portion in the Patriarchial Dispensation is the case of Jacob. In the spiritual ecstacy of that exalted vision of the ladder then leaned against the stars, God revealed Himself to Jacob. This vision resulted in the most practical vow of Jacob to establish God's House, and to maintain it with the tithe. It cannot be objected that this was a voluntary offering. Yet, how did it happen that Jacob arrived at the same principle, the tithe, as Abraham, and the same portion that Moses later acknowledged? Or was it a mere coincidence that Abraham and Jacob struck upon the same division of Jehovah's portion? It is very evident that Jacob had been trained in the practice from childhood, and under the moral influence of his night vision he was convicted of the sin of defrauding God and forsaking the teaching concerning this universal law of the tithe , and simply entered into a covenant with God to do his duty.

How are we to account for this ancient tithe paying by nations widely separated in many ways, if it were originally left to every man to give for religious purposes according to his own inclinations, as much or little as he pleased? How did it happen that so many people hit upon the tenth as God's portion, rather than a fifth or a fifteenth? It may be urged that we do not read of a law in Genesis for the payment of the tenth,

but is that a proof that no such law had been given? Do you suppose there was no law against murder, for breaking of which Cain was punished? Or against the act of adultery, in keeping with which Judah said of Tamar, "Bring her forth and let her be burned?"

Noah is the first who is expressly called a righteous man, and Abraham the first who is said to have believed God. And yet we know that before these Abel and Enoch were both righteous and certainly believed in God, as well as others. The mere omissions, therefore, of definite mentions of a law relating to tithe paying in Genesis is no proof that such a law did not exist. Indeed, long before the Bible was known, this law was a part of the life of the peoples of the ancient world.

In the Mosaic dispensation we have a clearer revelation. The starlight of the patriarchs gives way to the moonlight of the Mosaic age. The Law is added and the ceremonies of the Tabernacle and the Temple foreshadow the Christian Institution. There is "more light," but it is still an incomplete revelation.[1] The moon shines by a borrowed light. It is only a reflector of the "Sun of Righteousness."

The fundamental principles of the seventh and of the tenth are reenacted in the Mosaic Law with many other additions. It should be noted that even as God did not give the Sabbath day as a new institution, but said

1. John G. Alber, The Golden Wedge, p. 5.

"Remember the Sabbath day." In like manner, He does not refer to the tithe as a new institution, but reminds the people that the "tithe is the Lord's."[1] "Note that Moses did not originate the tithe," says Albert T. Fitts, "but simply reenacted and developed the principle which had been established at creation by the Creator of the Universe."[2] "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is Jehovah's; it is holy unto Jehovah. And if a man will redeem aught of the tithe, he shall add unto it the fifth part thereof. And all the tithe of the herd or the flock, whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto Jehovah. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed. These are the commandments, which Jehovah commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai." (Leviticus 27:30-34).

Under the theocracy of the Mosaic institution God was the absolute owner of every possession. "Now if ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, ye shall be my own possession from among all peoples, for all the earth is mine." (Exodus 19:5). "The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." (Leviticus 25:23). To the ancient principle of the seventh are added the Sabbatical ob-

2. Albert T. Fitts, The Tithe Is a Debt, p. 4.
1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 205.

observances of the law. To the original principle of the tithe is added other tithes for national purposes and twelve different kinds of offerings, foreshadowing great facts in the Christian dispensation.

It must not be supposed that the Jew stopped with the payment of the first tithe. That, indeed, acknowledged God's sovereignty, but it did not fulfill his obligation. If some modern Christians have supposed that the tenth as a voluntary tax for the support of the Kingdom is a hardship, let them recall that the Jew was yearly asked for an amount that is estimated anywhere from a fourth to a third of his income.[1] Alexander Campbell says of this matter: "I have been calculating the amount of property necessary to the support of the Jewish religion, and have elaborated this result: that one-half of the time and money, a full moiety of the whole resources of the nation was exacted."[2] And this agrees with many other writers, who have reached the same conclusion.

The Mosaic law was very exacting with respect to the use of material substance. In Deuteronomy 14:22-27, we have mention of an additional or second tithe. "Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed which cometh forth from the field year by year, and thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose, that thou mayest learn to fear

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 207.
2. R. H. Lampkin, The Scriptural Foundation for Christian Liberality, p. 93.

the Lord thy God always; and if the way be too long for thee so that thou art not able to carry it thou shalt go into the place which the Lord shall choose and thou shalt bestow the money for whatsoever thy soul desireth, and thou shalt eat there before the Lord and thou shalt rejoice there and thy household and the Levite that is within thy gate." It will aid us to better understand this tithe to say that all the males in Israel, together with their families, journeyed to the sancturay in the city of Jerusalem several times each year for the worship of God, and the second tithe was to pay the expenses involved in these visits, including the expenses of burnt offerings, sacrifices, and other things.[1] In other words, the Israelite was to have the opportunity of eating and rejoicing before God, he and his household, and the second or festival tithe was to furnish the means for doing this. You will notice by way of distinction that the offerer of the first tithe had no say as to its disposal; the disposal of the second was largely in his own hands.

We have also a third tithe, (Deuteronomy 14:28), "At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow shall

1. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 50.

come and eat and be satisfied that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest." This may be called the tithe for the poor. So we have the first, the Lord's Tithe; second, Festival Tithe; and third, Tithe for the Poor.

In the Jewish dispensation, the tithe became national. It applied to the twelve tribes of Israel on their way to the promised land. It applied to them when they returned from exile into Babylon and rebuilt their cities and their temples of worship. God's work was not left to chance. The leaders were not even volunteer leaders. They were chosen and appointed to do this God-given work. The major purpose of this God-given Stewardship shows that worship and sacrifice were to be kept alive through the special work of those appointed; namely, the priests and Levites who were set aside for this sacred task. The people were to be supported while they gave their time and their energy to this important spiritual duty.[1]

The Levites were paid tithes for the spiritual care they exercised. "And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." (Numbers 18:21). "It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they

1. Bert Wilson, Progressive Stewardship, p. 19.

have no inheritance." "But the tithes of the children of Israel.... I have given to the Levites to inherit." (Numbers 18:23b, 24).

The next step in the development of stewardship is with reference to the setting aside of the priests and Levites for special tasks in connection with the care of the tabernacle, and the worship thereof. As the altar was a place of worship and sacrifice among the patriarchs, so the tabernacle was to be such a place as the Israelites journeyed from Mount Sinai to the promised land.

Instructions were given for the numbering of the tribes and the order of travel. "But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered."(Numbers 1:47). "But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof....and they shall minister unto it." (Numbers 1:50). "And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." (Exodus 29:44-45).

It is quite evident from these verses that as the worship became more elaborate it had to be organized. Some one had to be appointed to look after the arrangements and appointments. What was "everybody's business," was "nobody's business," and God understood this. He

knew the people must be made to understand it. Hence the instruction to consecrate one tribe, the Levites, with Aaron and his sons, to minister to the tabernacle and all the worship and sacrifices in connection therewith.

This was clearly understood by the leaders of Israel. As the great march proceeded through the wilderness the Levites stuck to their appointed task of ministering to the people. They "were not numbered among the children of Israel." If such was to be their sole task, it became necessary for them to be supported. How this was done will be made clear.

After the period of wandering, and the Israelites had taken possession of their "land of promise," there was the task of dividing the land. The Levites were to have no inheritance, no land in the Jewish nation. What were they to have? What were they to do? How were they to live?

They were to be scattered geographically among the other tribes all over Palestine. As the teachers of the law, as the scribes of the law, the leaders in the worship of God, they were to be so located that they would be accessible to the entire population. In other words, worship was not to be neglected. The plan was a national plan so that the people might not forget their God who brought them out of the land of bondage.

"So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs." (Numbers 35:7). "Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine." (Numbers 8:14). So the Levites were located in forty-eight cities, and they were able to reach the entire nation in a short time. Their support was not left to chance. That would have meant confusion, chaos, and defeat. Israel was a nation. A new dispensation had dawned. It was absolutely necessary therefore that these teachers, priests, scribes, leaders in the law of God, should be assigned their work and that they should be supported in it. The tithe was the answer, the tithe of the increase of the field and vineyard from all the people of the tribes. By this method the importance of the new religion was impressed upon the minds and hearts of the people of the entire Jewish nation.

The Levites not only received tithes, but in turn paid tithes of that portion which they received. The tithe of the Levites was given for the support of the priests. Since Aaron, the priest, and his sons, served in the Tabernacle of the Holy Place, and once a year in the Holy of Holies, it was necessary that they be supported in this service. What more natural or orderly arrangement that that the Levites who received tithes,

should tithe their own tithes for the support of Aaron, the priest?

"Thou speak unto the Levites....When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe." (Numbers 18:26). "And ye shall give thereof the Lord's heave offering to Aaron the priest." (Numbers 18:28b). This then is the national plan of the stewardship of the tithe. There was the the tithe of all to the Levites, and a tithe of the tithe from the Levites to Aaron the priest.

The subsequent history of God's people under kingly rule clearly represents them as prosperous and happy so long as they observed the laws of Moses and the laws of God, while any departure therefrom plunged them into untold troubles.[1] In this deplorable condition they were left until they resumed the laws of God. It is remarkable that the Jews never failed to prosper when they brought their tithes into the storehouse. In the time of Nehemiah we find there was confusion and trouble, and when the great leader inquired into the cause, lo, they had failed to pay the tithe for the support of the Levites. Then he contended with the rulers and the tithes were brought in, after which there was peace and prosperity.

1. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 51.

The history of tithing stewardship makes it clear that tithe paying degenerates when it is forgotten that the purpose is not so much to get the tithe as the tither. While the Scriptures makes it clear that the tithe was necessary to sustain the priesthood and the house of worship, yet it is clear that God's primary concern was that all his children should remember and acknowledge their dependence upon the Lord, the Giver.[1]

On the other hand, Israel was punished severely when they misplaced the Lord's sacred portion. It is a curious fact that during all the centuries in which Israel paid the tithe that we fail to find any request that it be repealed or lessened. In the sight of God it was a very great sin to put God's portion with the individual's portion. God's portion must be kept separate and not appropriated to our own ends. Jehovah said to Joshua, "Israel hath sinned....they have taken of the devoted thing, and have also stolen, and they have even put it with their own stuff." (Joshua 7:11). So great was the sin in God's sight, that the death penalty was imposed for violation. It was a serious offense.

So serious was the offense that not only Achan but all Israel suffered. Her armies were overwhelmed with defeat. "The hearts of the people melted and became as water." "And they put dust on their heads." Jehovah stopped Joshua in the midst of his wailing prayer, and

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 210.

told him that the reason for their failure was in the fact that Israel sinned in taking the devoted thing. "Therefore the children of Israel sinned, and could not stand before their enemies. The Golden Wedge was the barrier that separated Israel from God.

How long this Mosaic order of faithfulness was carried out, we do not know. Samuel in protest against Israel's asking for a king, declared that "he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants." Also "he will take the tenth of your flocks: and ye shall be his servants." (1 Samuel 8:15-17). It is likely that the sacred use of the tithe was early perverted under the kings. We hear no more of the system until the time of Hezekiah. Gradually the nation backslid from its obligation until the writer, Malachi, in protest, wrote, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings; ye are cursed with a curse, for ye robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be meat in my 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." Malachi 3:8-10). And the last words of Malachi are, "Remember ye the laws of Moses, my servant."(Malachi 4:4).

In this chapter it is quite clear that there is not a single statement in the Old Testament that would lead one to think that this law was limited to that peculiar dispensation. In fact, it is obvious that the law of the tithe is universal and for all ages. In the third chapter of Malachi we find that the Lord is one who never changes. "For I am the Lord, I change not." (Malachi 3:6). In this verse God tells them that all of their poverty, spiritual dearth, and oppression came as a result of their disobedience to this law. The statement is not that God had not changed in the past only, but He says, "I change not," meaning that He is the same forever in His attitude towards this law. He never had changed in the past, and never would in the future.

The first statement in the Levitical code, as we have noticed, is a universal statement without limitation of time, place, or condition, and next to the last chapter in the Old Testament, Jehovah has declared that so long as He in unchangeable, just so long the law of the tithe will endure, and those who do not bring it into the storehouse are cursed with a curse. But, if they will bring it into the storehouse, He will pour out such a blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.

CHAPTER IV

THE TITHE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The grace of giving is one that comes slowly, and God has always recognized this principle, and led his people slowly; but ever upward.[1] All history testifies to the minimum of one-tenth, and it seems always to have been the foundation upon which liberality has been built. If one would answer this question by an honest, logical inference, any thought of anything less than a tenth is out of the question, for he will contemplate a style of giving for which less than a tenth, in even the poorest poverty, would be a repudiation of faith itself. They or the individual would be surrounded by an atmosphere of fervid joy and love, the deeds of which are "every good work," "distributing," "communicating," "making sacrifices with God is well pleased;" then they would find examples of liberality sanction up to the "half of his goods," as in the case of Zaccheus; and in a poor widow up to "all her living;" in the Apostles "forsaking all," individuals "selling all," the deeply poor in the depths of poverty, giving to the more poor, out of "a great trial of afflictions," abounding in riches of "liberality," giving, yea, "beyond their power," and to crown the whole, the Master giving always, and storing

1. R. H. Lampkin, The Scriptural Foundation for Christian Liberality, p. 94.

never, and then giving himself a ransom for all. And though these examples are rarely enforced, they are never reproved, but commended. They are set forth as worthy of emulation, and what they have done, "wherever this gospel has been preached," has stood as monuments to liberality, before which the pleadings of self-seeking and covetous greed must slink away into darkness, where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

But the weakness of the human heart that is not sanctified in the grace of our Lord to know the blessedness of giving above receiving, would invoke the law of love to save the pocketbook. There is a defense offered against any definite law, which says, "The law is love." But this does not come from those who are troubled with over-giving, for the objection is against a law of minimum duty, that would prevent the rule of selfishness. They think the law of love is flexible and perforated on the under side. The objectors and their defense are not consistent, for law sets bounds, and love, of all laws, is the most exacting. Love is least selfish, "seeking not its own." It can never feel, never do, never give enough. To-morrow it will do what to-day seems impossible. The law of love is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." Would they invoke this law?

Then to the law and to the testimony. The New Testa-

ment must yield something specific, and there are those who would be free, but need the stroke of revelation's "Thus saith the Lord" to strike the manacles of selfishness from their souls. It is an open question with many, even the students of the word, whether tithing is in force under the Christian dispensation. From right or wrong motives they have thought it one of the things "which neither they nor their fathers could bear." We can well understand their misunderstanding on this point, for there is sufficient warrant in the New Testament to make the tithe binding today, and that is why we are writing this thesis.

The New Testament is a book of principles and advances upon the Old Testament as from negation to positiveness; from "Thou shalt not" to "This do and thou shalt live."[1] When a matter like the question before us is to be settled the moral force of the subject is for consideration; and if we can not find "thou shalt tithe all thy income" in the New Testament, shall we say the question can not be proved? The eminent statesman, W. E. Gladstone, says, "To constitute a moral obligation it is not necessary that we have a positive command. Probable evidence is binding as well as demonstrative evidence; nay, it constitutes the greatest portion of the subject matter of duty. And, therefore, a dim

1. R. H. Lampkin, The Scriptural Foundation for Christian Liberality, p. 97.

view of religious truth entails an obligation to follow it, as real and valid as that which results from a clear and full comprehension." If it could not be established that a positive command for tithing is to be found in the New Testament, certainly there must be some evidence adduced, more than is forthcoming, to invalidate the claim made for its binding action. And with this said we wish to examine this book for confirmation of the view presented.

In view of the fact that there is no hint or logical inference in this book that the tithe was abolished by Christ's death, "for Christ came not to diminish our obligations but to increase them," it remains to be shown why it is not yet in force. The tribe of Levi was thus supported, and if you couple the "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," with "The laborer is worthy of his hire," you must show that the tithe is more equal to these, and that whatever that is, is forthcoming. There is no minimum limit until the claims of the gospel are met. If it can be shown that one tithe impoverished the Jew, then it must be classed as one of the things "which neither they nor our fathers could bear," and that this was one of the things that Peter referred. If it can be shown that the Christian can live on nine-tenths of his income, and as much more as he pleases to use, and yet not be guilty of selfishness and covetousness, even to the rejection of all claims of

all claims of the gospel until "he feels like it," then it will be time enough to say the tithe is not in force. If it can be shown that the Christian can bring what is left, and the meanest, out of his prosperity, and yet be more acceptable to God than the Jew, that by law made only the first of the field and flock, and without blemish, acceptable, then it will be time enough to believe the tithe is abolished. Where does "seeking first the kingdom, and his righteousness" commence? Can God be first, yet come in as last considered? Why, it is not a proportion nor any proportion that is denied, but the principle involved. The tithe was first taken. Now suppose you do not consider this amount a duty. Take, then, any amount; when will you make the reckoning? Will you wait until all other claims are settled? If you could conscientiously consider this question only, that it shall come first, you could not fail to see what is involved. Take what is generally considered as the only law for the Christian: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store as he may prosper," and conscientiously live up to it, and the law of the tenth will not trouble you, nor will you want to dig under it. You can see that though there is no fixed proportion given in this passage, yet if you seek the answer from the New Testament, everything seems to push up to a scale of proportion from which all shrink.

How much, then, shall the honorable Christian steward put aside as a fair proportion with which to honor his Lord? There is a wide difference of opinion, and a still wider practice. One man will give one per cent, another two per cent, another five per cent, and another ten per cent. Others say they will put aside something for the Lord when they feel like it. This promiscuous and unsympathetic plan of dividing hinders the spiritual growth of the individual and blocks the progress of the Lord's work. The starting point should be the tithe.

The question is raised by some who do not desire to pay the tithe as to whether it was specifically mentioned by Christ as a New Testament requirement. They want the chapter and verse. On the other hand, there are those who say that the tithe is a New Testament command just as the Lord's Supper and Baptism. A frank discussion on the subject is now in order. Most people will be surprised to know that there are but six references to tithing in the New Testament. Let these be examined to discover just what the teaching is on the subject.

The first reference to the subject of tithing is in Matthew 23:23, which reads: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith; but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

This passage is also recorded in Luke 11:42, but with reference to another occasion. Thus twice Jesus emphatically said ye ought to tithe but never use it as an excuse to leave the other undone. It is objected that this was said to a Pharisee and not to a Christian, This objection is groundless, and foolish. Nearlly all of Jesus' teaching was given to Jews. These two passages are unmistakable endorsements of Jesus for the tithe. How many do we want to know His will? The Golden Rule is given but twice. But we would do Jesus wrong unless we see that it was the principle of the tithe that he was advocating. He did not command afresh "as from a New Testament Sinai" the law of the tithe any more than he did the law of the Sabbath and Lord's Day, or the law against murder, stealing, and the like. But just as he sought to lift his disciples into a new atmosphere where they could see the spiritual significance of the Mosaic laws, and the far-reaching and binding principles running through them, this was his purpose in his undoubted indorsement of tithe paying.[1] This was indeed the point of his criticism of the Pharisees. He told them that they did well to pay the tithes, but that they did wrong in thinking that the tithe, or any holy habit was an end in itself. The failure of the Pharisees was to perceive the tenth as the acknowledgment of the total surrender of all possession, and the pledge of a godly

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 215.

life of mercy and justice. And it may be added that any lesser conception of the tithe than that which Jesus had in mind is bound to end in narrowness and legalism.

The third reference to tithing is found in Luke 18: 12, which reads: "....I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get." A Pharisee was here speaking. He stood and prayed and thanked God that he was not as other men. Jesus condemned this self-righteous Pharisee; being a Jew, he was, of course, expected to give tithes of all that he possessed, and should not be commending himself to God for doing so. This Pharisee was not rebuked for payment of the tithe, and it is logical to assume that nothing was said with reference to discontinuing payment thereof. He was merely a self-righteous man, one in striking similarity to the two references already mentioned.

The fourth reference is in 1 Corinthians 9:13-14, which reads: "Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." Reference is made to Numbers 18:21-24, which gives an account of how the priests which were of the tribe of Levi were supported by the tithes of the other tribes. The Apostle Paul says that in like manner... "even so did the Lord ordain that they proclaim the gospel shall live of the

gospel." The teaching is very plain, and is evident that the Apostle Paul is endorsing by analogy the system used in the Old Testament. It was to be exactly in the same manner. It is an ordinance of Christ to be used for the support of those who give themselves to the ministering of the gospel, and who have no other source of income. The apostle had in mind the tithe and offerings as the method of the support of the Levitical priesthood when he wrote those words. If the tithe was repealed as circumcision was, think you that he would have used such an argument? The very fact that he opposed circumcision so vigorously proves that he would have opposed the tithe if he had understood that it was done away in Christ. The very fact that Paul uses this argument for ministerial support proves that he endorsed the tithe. It proves more. It proves that Christ also endorsed it, else Paul would not have called it an ordinance of the Lord (Christ).[1] It is a commentary on the "ye ought to" of Jesus.

Please note that it is called an ordinance. That baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances we do not question, though they are nowhere called such in the New Testament. We have given them great prominence, and rightly so. But the one thing that the New Testament has called an ordinance we have relegated to the rubbish heap. If this is an ordinance, there is as good reason

1. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 34.

for us to accept, preach and practice it as for us to accept, preach and practice any other ordinance, which more than substantiates our argument, and basic proposition, and makes further argument unnecessary.

The fifth reference to tithing is found in Hebrews 7:1-10. This is a discussion of how Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek in the patriarchial dispensation. It also restates that the sons of Levi received tithes for their support from the other tribes. It says that the Levites who received tithes also paid tithes. The writer then discusses, in verses 11-19, the enlarging ideals of Christ's priesthood. He says of Jesus: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Then he definitely states: "For there is a disannulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness and the bringing in thereupon of a better hope through which we draw nigh unto God."

The sixth reference to tithing is in Hebrews 7:20-25. These verses continue the discussion regarding the Levitical priesthood, and only indirectly refer to tithing. They state that "by so much also hath Jesus become the surety of a better covenant."

In Hebrews 6:20 we note that Melchizedek is the pattern of the heavenly Priest who instituted the feast of the "bread and wine" and receives tithes. The writer shows that Melchizedek was superior to Abraham, for

Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek and received a blessing from him. But Abraham was superior to the sons of Levi, who also received tithes, for "they came out of the loins of Abraham." (verse 5). Now Christ is a "priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Therefore, he is superior to the order of Aaron, "men who die," for "it is witnessed of Him that He is a priest forever." (verse 17). "And here that men die (Levites) receive tithes; but there He (Jesus) receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that He liveth." (verse 8). The argument of this chapter takes it for granted that Christ tithes his people.

Now with fair and open minds let us look into this matter. We maintain that even if anyone could establish the contention that the antecedent to "he" is Melchizedek it would not break down the argument for the tithe, for Melchizedek received the tithe. Jesus being of that order would also be entitled to tithes. Jesus being the reality of that order would also be entitled to a tithe with a plus. Inasmuch as the greatness of Melchizedek is established by the fact that he received tithes from the patriarch, if anyone could prove that Jesus did not receive tithes, the same argument would prove Jesus to be inferior to Melchizedek and also the Levitical priests.

Let us look at this mysterious character, Melchizedek, who was "without father or mother, or geneology or beginning of days or end of life." Was he a real man of

flesh and blood without earthly father or mother? Was he a physical being without beginning of life? All of these questions are inconsequential to the obvious end in view. One hardly thinks that anyone will argue that Melchizedek is alive somewhere in the flesh. If one argues that he still lives in the sense that he died and went to glory, we could claim as much for Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob.

This unchanging priesthood is the element that makes him a type of Christ. It is in Christ's resurrection that Christ came to be supreme. On the other hand, is there one to argue that Melechizedek had a resurrection, and that he is able to save to the uttermost? Or that he is making intercession for us?

The second irrefutable argument that it is Jesus that receiveth tithes is built upon the word forms as they appear in the original Greek text.

In Hebrews 7:6, we find the thought referring to Melchizedek. "But he (Melchizedek) whose descent is not counted from them (the sons of Levi) received (past perfect tense) tithes of Abraham and blessed (past perfect) him that hath the promise."

When we come to verse eight, the verb form changes to the participle present, and literally reads, "And men that die are receiving tithes, but there he is receiving them of whom it is being written that he lives."[1]

1. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 37.

Then as now many were paying tithes. Who receives tithes? Is it Christ or Melchizedek? Then as now it is Jesus that receives tithes.

The present participle indicates that the living One is still receiving tithes. Will anyone argue that Melchizedek is still receiving tithes? If the writer of the Hebrews intended for this to refer to Melchizedek, why did he change the tense from the past perfect to the participle present? The receiving of tithes is going on at the same time of the witnessing of the resurrection.

All the apostles witness to the resurrection of Christ. There is witness that He lives; that He is able to save to the uttermost; that He, with his own blood, entered into the greater and more perfect tabernacle; into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us; and that we have such a high priest, who is on the right of God in heaven.

In order to make Hebrews 7:8 refer to Melchizedek, one would have to establish the resurrection of Melchizedek; that there are witnesses to his resurrection; that he is able to save to the uttermost; that he is in the presence of God with his own blood making propitiation for us; and that he occupies the place ascribed to Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God.

It should be clear to the reader that we not only have

the words from the lips of our blessed Lord, but we have also command for proportionate giving from Paul, and his "even so" which he declares to be an ordinance of Christ, and now is this strong word from Hebrews which shows that the tithe is a part of the pattern. We maintain that this latter is sufficient to establish our basic proportion even if we had nothing else.

The obligations of the Christian, therefore, are not less than the Jew, but more. His opportunity is not smaller, but greater. The Lord did not reënact that his followers should pay a patriarchial tithe, a Levitical tithe, a festival tithe, a poor's tithe, a demai tithe, but to exercise the Christian principle even as He endorsed it. Christ said, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill." But it is a sad fact that Christ's own followers have reversed His statement and are teaching that He came not to fulfill, but to destroy the law.[1] Even the minister seems to have failed to comprehend the meaning of the word"fulfill." To fulfill means to fill full, or to keep the law. Christ came to give man power by grace to do that which he could not do by nature, or in other words, He came not to pull the law down, but to lift man up to it by breaking the powers that formerly held him down.

The moral or fundamental laws of the Kingdom are binding so long as that Kingdom stands. The law of

1. Walter C. Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 29.

the tithe, the laws against stealing, adultery and murder were binding for all time. They were binding long before there was a Jew.

There are many other New Testament teachings and examples showing clearly that the Christian is obligated in tithing stewardship. "They sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need." (Acts 2:45). Tithing? To be sure, but far more than that! Again, it was said of the early church members: "...and great grace was upon them all. For neither was there among them any that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need." (Acts 4:33-35). Is there any record in the Old Testament, or in secular history, where a tithing Jew did a thing like that?

John's teaching was this: "Whoso hath the world's goods and beholdeth his brother in need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:17). And James taught clearly that stewardship should be based upon ability and need: "If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food...and ye give not the things needful...what doth it profit?" (James 2:15-16).

The principle of the tithe is also endorsed in 1 Corinthians 16:2, where Paul exhorts the Corinthians that every one lay by himself in store for the first day of the week, as the Lord has prospered them, for unless there was some standard of proportionate giving established, one man might think that one-hundredth was according as the Lord had prospered him and be just as sincere as the man who decided that one-tenth was the proportion that he should give. Too many men use this text as a basis for putting in dimes on Sunday. We must have the standard of the tithe.

C hrist raised the standard of the Christian dispensation far above the law of Moses. In the Sermon on the Mount he clearly raised the standard. The fact that he told his disciples to first seek the Kingdom and his righteousness, with the promise of temporal blessings to be added unto them (Matthew 6:33) shows that the standard of giving was raised above all former requirements. He made a clear distinction as to the principle of the tithe when he said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.

The fact is, that 16 of the parables of Jesus deal directly with the proper usage of money in connection with the better life. Scarcely any other subject, if any, received as much attention from him as this subject.[1] Throughout man is treated as the steward of the

1. A. T. Fitts, The Tithe Is a Debt, p. 6.

manifold grace of God, and he is to discharge his debt by ministering to man. Parables that deal directly with this subject are: the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30); the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31); the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-14); his instructions to the rich young ruler (Luke 18;18-23); the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21); the judgment scene where the wicked would be cast into hell for not ministering to man's needs (Matthew 25:31-46); and the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). There are parables in the Gospels that deal with the subject, but these are enough to establish another basis of proof.

In discussing a few of the parables briefly, the first on the rich young ruler, we see that his quest was eternal life. Jesus told him what to do. Why did he turn away sorrowfully? He had the wrong conception of ownership. He thought the riches were his. As long as a man holds to this pagan conception of ownership he will hang onto it even if it damns his soul. The story of the rich man and the camel and the needle's eye is a striking parallel.

In the story of the rich fool there is no sin in the way he obtained his wealth. His land produced plentifully. The sin was in the way he used it, all of it on himself. "Soul, thou hast much good...take thine ease.." Then came the voice of God, "Thou fool, this night is

thy soul required of thee." Tell me now, "Whose shall these be which thou hast prepared?" "So is he that layeth up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God."

In Luke 16, we find the story of the unjust steward. This steward was a man who misplaced his master's goods. The comment that Jesus made was this: "Make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness (money) that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? If ye have not been faithful in that which is another's who shall give you that which is your own? Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

It is obvious that the reason why there is not more in the New Testament about tithing is that it was not necessary. The Old Testament was the Bible of the early Christians. In it the instruction was abundant. The writers of the New Testament were Jews. Every one of them paid the tithe.[1] Every member of the Apostolic Church understood this requirement of law. They were zealous for the law. The tendency was to bring over Judaism, and to bring more than was required. The Apostle Paul gave his life to save the Church from certain Jewish institutions that were fulfilled in Christ. Think you that under the fulfilling of the law, and the fullness of the blessings of the blessings of Christianity, that these men would give less or teach less than the old law required. With a

1. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 26.

world conquest before them would it have been on the part of wisdom to abolish the tithe? Since tithing had been taught for thousands of years and had become firmly fixed as a habit and principle of the race is it not out of reason to think of God abolishing it now? Jesus placed money above every thing in his teachings when he said, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

There is a further necessity for a divinely fixed proportion from the fact, that were it left to the mere will of the individual members of their flocks, it must, while human nature is what it is, be exceedingly uncertain. Practical religious teaching is necessarily most unpleasant to those who are endeavoring to trim between God and the world; and do not these, alas, form the bulk of professed Christians. Ordinarily when they become offended with their pastor's teachings, will ultimately withdraw their subscriptions. I wonder how the Church in Jerusalem, or in Ephesus, or Rome was supported? How often did they have pie suppers, raffle parties, and other scheming methods for raising financial support? No, He who saw from the beginning, has proved the method of tithing, which prohibits ruinous evil, and which is a debt due to Him. Then, too, the system of tithing puts every Christian on the same basis of equality, the tithe.

The Christian faces no greater difficulties in paying the tenth of his income than did the Jew and the pagan. The Jew was a poor man and lived in a poor land.[1] According to the government estimate the average income in America (1919) was five hundred dollars, and is steadily increasing. It is altogether probable that American church members spend more on luxuries than a tenth of their income. It must be remembered that the Jew paid at least one-third of his income, while there are but relatively few Christians who even pay the tenth. The need of money for the Kingdom is greater today than in Jewish times.

It must be a proportionate giving, "let each lay by as the Lord has prospered him." It must be systematic, "upon the first day of the week." It is also an individual proposition, "let each lay by." The decision to pay the tenth has brought every one who has tried this plan many spiritual blessings. Many who have started out in the adventure of proportionate giving have announced a new epoch in Christian experience. Did not the Lord say: "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." (Malachi 3:10). The Lord does not change. He will

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The New Christian, p. 79.

bless the Christian the same way that he blessed the faithful Jew.

In a summary of the argument for the tenth we have shown that it is the proportion evidently accepted by the patriarchs; later incorporated into the Jewish law; and it was finally endorsed by Jesus himself; and it is a significant fact that no other percentage is anywhere mentioned in the Word. Paul most certainly bases his exhortation to proportionate giving upon the proposition of the tenth. Under the gospel, men ought to do as much and more than the Jews did under the law, else how can Christians abound in the grace of giving? The Christian faces no greater difficulties in giving, and the need is far greater under the Christian age. The spiritual blessing and satisfaction which mark the decision of accepting the tenth as the first proposition, and warm dissatisfaction with any smaller amount, are the arguments for the tenth. The facts of these truths cannot be denied.

If the pious old Jew, grubbing away on his rocky hillside, with spade in one hand and sword in the other, could dig out one-tenth for God for every nine that he kept, what does love demand of me in this fertile, enlightened Christian land? If faithful Abraham, who had only the first seven pages of the Bible for his Gospel, if David, and Daniel, and Isaiah, looking for-

ward by faith alone to a Christ who should come after, felt bound to pay God their tenth; what of Christians, who have heard the story of Bethlehem, who have drunk of the water of life, who have met and loved the Good Shepherd, who have seen by faith Jesus lifted up upon the cross, who have heard the voice of the Spirit saying: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee."[1] We are still under the tithe in this century even as the church of the first century.

1. Clementia Butler, Ownership, p. 43.

CHAPTER V

THE SIN OF COVETOUSNESS

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the sin of covetousness as is obvious in the question of Malachi, "Will a man rob God?" There is a sin in the church that we are afraid to mention. I will tell you what its common name is, what its aristocratic name is, what its historical name is, and what its scriptural name is: its name is covetousness. Francis of Assissi said that the people came to him confessing every known sin except the sin of covetousness; that never in all of his experience had any one come frankly confessing that he was guilty of that sin.[1]

The first set of written laws God gave to the race was the Ten Commandments. They were written on tables of stone that they might not be forgotten. The first nine dealt with man's relation to God and neighbors and things. The tenth dealt with the secret places of the heart and soul. It was, "Thou shalt not covet." Place alongside of this the statement of Jesus: "Beware of covetousness."

The dictionary definition of covetousness is: "to inordinately desire; to be excessively eager to possess." Hence covetousness is not a sin of the hand or the body.

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 119.

It is not an outward act. It is not written in the laws of the nation. A man cannot be arrested for covetousness. He cannot be fined or sentenced to jail upon the charge of being covetous. Yet more is said in the Bible against covetousness than any two sins.[1] Why? Because covetousness, which is an attitude of mind, of heart, of soul, is at the fountain head of desire and conduct. The wish is father to the thought, and the thought is father to the act. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Although a covert or secret sin, covetousness manifests itsllf outwardly.

The principle of the tithe furnishes a safeguard against covetousness, the most subtle of sins. A whole volume could be written on this subject. It is more terribly condemned than drunkenness. Both the Old Testament and the New class it with adultery and uncleanness. (Exodus 20:17, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 1 Timothy 6:9-10, Ephesians 5:5). A careful study of the Bible will note that such sins as "fornication, covetousness, idolatry," go hand in hand. We try to lose the scarlet, we have shunned the green, but we are wearing the purple.[2] The Lord asks: "Will a man rob God?" We have answered by saying, "Yes, we will take it," and we have a notion we can get by with it.

The blight of covetousness would manifest itself even if there were no teachings on the subject. It

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 120.
2. Ralph S. Cushman, The New Christian, p. 62.

is a modern as well as ancient sin, and the modern man would do well not to pass by lightly these sign-boards which warn him of its pitfalls.

How familiar is this sentiment from the writer of Ecclesiastes: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase." (Ecclesiastes 5:10). Ezekiel, the weeping prophet, had a keen insight into human nature, and lifted up his voice against ungodly gain: "Thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbors by extortion, and hast forgotten me, sayeth the Lord God. Behold therefore, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain." (Ezekiel 22:12-13). Job, the richest man of his day, knew well the foolishness of putting his trust in gold: "If I have made gold my hope or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence, if I rejoiced because my wealth was great and because mine hand had gotten much,....this also were an iniquity." (Job 31:24, 25, 28).

Jesus tried to win men from that which consumes and destroys to the great and indestructible things of life: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where

your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:19-21). Paul classed covetousness with other gross sins: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness." (Romans 1:29). Paul also wrote to Timothy: "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, oh man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." (1 Timothy 6:9-11).

The New Testament is a picture gallery of rich men who became covetous, apostates, traitors, who lost their souls through the love of money.

Judas was a man of high attainments and great ambitions. He had a certain amount of respect from the other apostles in that he was chosen treasurer of the group. The love of money entered his soul, and with a covetous heart, he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and later bought his field of iniquity.

Three of the Gospel writers record the story of the rich young ruler, a man of godly morals, but who came to the point of deciding between his Lord and material possessions. Dante has called this the "Great Refusal."

The roots of money were deeply rooted in his soul. He denied his Lord and kept his money.

There is the tragic story of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man's whole earthly existence is summed in two short verses: "There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.... The rich man also died and was buried." (Luke 16:19, 22). But after that came the judgment. There was no happiness there. In his agony he cried out: "Send him (Lazarus) to my father's house, for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them lest they also come into this place of torment." (Luke 16:27-28). The answer which was sufficient for him and for all rich men of the present day: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets (and Christ) neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:31).

In some respects, a still more tragic story is found in the parable of the rich farmer. (Luke 12:16-21). With his new barns filled, and overflowing, he said: "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry."

This is not simply a first century parable, it is a chapter out of the twentieth century as well. In discussing this story, the chief emphasis has usually been placed upon the fact that the man was brought to quick

judgment. "This night is thy soul required of thee." But that was not the only major point. Another thought that obviously outranks the preceding one is this: that the man had become so materialistic in his outlook on life that he expected to nurture his soul on the grain which he had piled up in his barns. Think of it: "Soul, eat, drink and be merry!" That sounds as if it had been taken from yesterday's newspaper. Is it possible that men think they can bring their souls down to the level of their stomachs? That men will degrade their souls by attempting to gorge them with that which can only satisfy their bodies? What kind of a soul does a man have who tries to feed it on corn and beefsteak, and stocks and bonds?

Surely sometime men ought to learn that the soul feeds on love, worship, adoration, purity, consecration, and sacrifice, the things which cannot be piled into barns, the things which money cannot buy, the godlike qualities in human personality which go to make up greatness and Christ-likeness.

There is a law in physics that no two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time. This law holds true in spiritual affairs. The love of money crowds out the love of men and the love of God. This was expressed by the Master when He said: "No man can love two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love

the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." It is self-evident that wealth whether it be much or little brings its temptaionswith it. Men who seek wealth do not remember this. What are some of these temptaions?

In the sin of covetousness we find the temptations of riches. The power of wealth exercises a peculiar influence over men. To thousands, the supreme aim of life is securing money. When it is secured, it becomes the center and circumference of existence. They talk money; they almost breathe money; they put their trust in money. They do not feel the need of any power other than the power of money. They have said to gold, "thou art my confidence." They forget the statement of Jesus: "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter the Kingdom of God."

There is the temptation of being selfish. The wealthy man has no need to be selfish, but very often a selfish spirit is developed by those who have wealth. "The covetous person lives as if the world were made for him, and not he for the world."[1] Too many men are covetous of their own selves.

There is the temptation to be idle. Some one has said, "the idle brain is the devil's work-shop." No man can be truly happy or useful who is idle. Self-realization is possible only through work. A man may

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 126.

say: "I have enough money so that I do not have to work any more as long as I live." God pity the man who loafs because he can. God will bless the man who works because he wants to, even if he doesn't have to. A man may not be compelled to work for a living, but he is compelled to work to keep his soul. It grows on work, on helpfulness, sympathy, usefulness, sacrifice.

There are other temptations, such as, being wasteful, extravagant, and the temptation to lower physical and moral standards. There is the temptation to forget God and Christianity, and this is a very pronounced temptation. How strange it is, but true, that men are "inordinately desirous" of obtaining that which may steal away their love of God, and destroy all the finer instincts of their souls. The story of the fall of Adam, of the sin of Cain, of Judas, and of Pilate, are all striking parallels in this line of thought.

The church has a duty to save all men, including the wealthy. Not all wealthy men are covetous. However, many of them are covetous, and lonely. They have gathered around them a group of selfish souls like themselves. Often they do not know what to do with their money, or how it might bring joy and happiness into the world. Many of them would welcome a straightforward suggestion about the best use of their surplus wealth. The church needs to help save them from wealth, and this great sin

of covetousness. It is natural to criticize the stingy man, the covetous man, and the "tightwad." However, we made the stingy man, or the "tightwad." By lack of education, and silence on the Christian use of money, the church has created the stingy man. Now that the church has a quickened conscience on the subject, shall it run to the man, and tear him asunder? Not so. The church must labor long and patiently with those whom it failed to teach, and try to win them from error of long neglect. The church must be made a place where men are won from lives of avariciousness and greed, to lives of usefulness and unselfish service.

The minister has a duty toward covetous men. The minister is the pastor of the rich as well as the poor. He has to show the covetous that their souls are as precious in God's sight as any other soul. Covetousness is sin. The covetous man is a sinner. "The wages of sin is death." The minister exercises the right of leadership and spiritual over-sight toward those who sin in other ways. If a member drinks or gambles or falls into other gross sins, the preacher feels it his right and duty to go at once and win him back to right living. No one denies him that right.

The man who is getting rich, or who has become rich, and at the same time has grown covetous, needs the oversight of a minister, and the Word of God. He is betraying Christ and the church just as much as the drunkard or the gambler. The selfish rich man is con-

demned by the Scriptures and society. It is not necessary to ask him to give up his money, but it is necessary, if he is to continue as a Christian, for him to give up the love of money. He must cease to covet money, and the evil things that money will buy. Otherwise he has no part in the Kingdom.

It is not necessary to have a million dollars to be covetous. A person with a thousand dollars, or nothing, may be as stingy and miserly and selfish as the man of large means. Those who have little but who are envious, who hanker after ease and money, who covet wealth to escape work and responsibility, are as guilty of the sin of covetousness as if they actually had money. Covetousness is not the thing, it is the "inordinate desire." Wherever the disease of covetousness is found, whether among wealthy people or poor people, it should have the attention of the minister, and the elders, and other brethren of the flock.

How can the minister and the church best save men from covetousness? The minister can deliver frequent sermons on tithing stewardship, on wealth and its temptations and also its proper uses. Let the minister look over his sermon notes for the last five years and he will discover how he has neglected his public teaching on money and tithing. Much is said about Gospel preaching. No man is a Gospel preacher who does not preach the Gos-

pel of stewardship and warn men against the sin ov covetousness.[1] There are countless numbers of ministers who have not preached on the message of stewardship in years.

People have a right to know the road to security from this evil. Whether it be by preaching or by personal work, the task must be accomplished. The Bible School and other functions of the church should have the message. The Church officers must know the message, and in turn, be able to impart it to those in error.

Another peril of covetousness is the fact that it silences the instinctive question of the good steward: "What am I here for?" Covetousness leads to the death of all stewardship consciousness because it virtually ignores God's claim to ownership, refuses to consider his call to service, and blindly closes its eyes to the inevitable day of reckoning. The tragedy of Ananias and Sapphira is one of God's most striking warnings concerning the sin of covetousness. If God should deal as drastically with the church members today who covet prominence but hold on to their money, what percentage of the church members would be carried out dead? This question was addressed to a certain minister, who found it convenient to answer, "Such questions should be left to the Great Judge."

Covetousness brings certain judgment. Moreover, the curse does not go single-handed. The lust for pre-

1. Bert Wilson, The Christian and His Money Problems, p. 133.

eminence generally accompanies the love of money. Covetousness has this one thing in common with stewardship in that it cultivates an ambitious spirit, but there is a world of difference in the motive and result. Some one comparing Napoleon and Phillips Brooks, said, "The one sought the world for himself, the other sought the world for Christ."[1] There is a tomb in Florence, Italy, which reads: "Here lies Estrella, who has gone to Heaven to enjoy a fortune of fifty thousand florins which she sent ahead in good deeds."[2] There is the supreme goal of stewardship, and the opposite of covetousness.

This sin of covetousness often causes men to dicker with the Lord, and wrangle with excuses as to why they rob God. Men will ask: "Do you mean that we should pay $100 out of the $1,000 after the rent, lights, groceries, and all the rest are taken out?" That is exactly what is not meant. If he waits until the last of the month, or at the last moment, to pay the Lord, he will likely have nothing left for Him. The only safe way is to set aside the ten per cent before any other debt is paid. Other questions are asked, but they are, in reality, meager excuses.

The above question and similar ones are excuses in attempt to get by without paying God the due amount. These people desire to be known as liberal givers, and yet are giving their dimes and quarters.

1. Ralph S. Chusman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 140.
2. Ibid., p. 144.

A well-to-do business man made a pledge both to the forward movement and to the underwriting debt of his communion. When appealed to for a gift to the missionary board to close the year without a deficit, this business man sent his check with instructions that the gift was to go to the missionary society, and was also to pay his underwriting pledge and his original forward movement pledge. Since one check was to do the work of three, no wonder it was sent by special delivery!

There are plenty of Christians who carefully set aside a portion of the income for religious purposes, and then dissipate it in its distribution. They give a quarter to a beggar, or go to a church supper and pay fifty cents for a seventy-five cent meal, and feel they have made a contribution to the Lord. They scatter the money promiscuously without any careful thought or study as to how it might be used to bring power to the church if combined with the gifts of others. When the month or the year has gone by, the Lord's share has been dissipated, and no constructive contribution has been made which adds permanence to the cause of Christ. This is certainly unfaithfulness in the matter of stewardship.

Now let us more fully consider the objections that arise to the tithing plan, objections that are often raised by the covetous, and otherwise. And foremost

among the objections is the very common one: "We cannot afford to do so." In an age so luxurious as this, such an excuse does indeed sound strange in the ears of the faithful. Some will say: "Yet, now, to expect a man with only $500 to pay $50 to his church would be deemed most oppressive; while, to look for $1,000 in the tithe from a $10,000 income per annum, would be simply thought absurd; even though such payments are required only on the ground that ministers are, as the appointed ambassadors of God and the dispensers of His infinite goodness to man."

Such an objection, however, proceeds from a secret distrust of God, which is nothing else but infidelity of the heart. And another objection is that the tithe ended with the Mosaic law, and we have shown clearly that this objection is false in a previous chapter.

Another objection of the covetous is that it would make the ministry rich. However, that could not possibly be true. In the first place, the tithe is paid for the supporting of the Gospel, and in turn, the preacher lives of the Gospel. It would not make the ministry rich, but would hasten the evangelizing of the world.

The point of this objection is groundless. The apostles, with Judas as the treasurer, preached for three years, and were supported as they went preaching.

Jesus had established a treasury for them. They had a living. By this method, and by entertainment in the homes of friends and others, the cost of their livelihood was cared for. The point here emphasized is, that Jesus and his disciples were not beggars.

The emphasis on preaching is paramount in the Christian Church. Jesus gave his commission concerning the preaching of the Word. It was in his last hours with his apostles when He told them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). We are told that immediately thereafter, "they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them." There was no covetous spirit in their work.

"Can a covetous man be saved?" This is a predominant question, and the answer is, "Certainly, a covetous man can be saved, but not as a covetous man." Dr. Poteat phrases it thus: "No man is ever admitted into the society of the King of Love except as a pauper both as respects material worth and moral worth. It is because he sees and acknowledges his unspeakable destitution, his bankruptcy of soul, that he cries, 'Save, Lord!'"[1]

But the peril of the covetous man lies in a growing inability to see his "unspeakable destitution," his "bankruptcy of soul," either because of self-esteem which increases under the attentions and flatteries of his friends,

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 147.

or by dickering with the Lord, or because, as Jesus says, he comes to trust in mammon rather than in God. "When I had nothing, I found it easy to trust in God, but after my inheritance came it seemed as though that were the only thing between me and the poorhouse." This was the explanation which an honest soul gave to her minister in answer to his inquiry, "Why have you decreased your contributions to the church?" Accordingly, while the stewardship passion for Christ's kingdom is endangered by a hundred perils which covetousness brings, the danger which Jesus emphasized most was that of substituting trust in money for trust in God. A suggestive illustration comes from Scotland. A certain rich man was giving his testimony, recalling the day when his total wealth was a shilling. "That night," he said, "I wandered into a mission, and when the collection was taken I dropped it all in." Rather pompously he continued, "From that day I have prospered, for I gave everything I had to the Lord."[1]

Indeed here is the crux of the matter. A covetous man must dare to fix his trust solely on Christ if he is to be saved. This means the acceptance of the principle of stewardship, and the recognition of God's ownership, not of a tenth merely, but of all. As Jesus said, "He that renounceth not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple."

1. Ralph S. Cushman, The Message of Stewardship, p. 147.

Money is a danger. We pass by too easily the searching, warning words of Jesus. Nothing can fool men like money. It seems so powerful that it makes men forget the supreme God. It feeds pride until a man thinks he has no need of his Lord. It constantly invites selfishness. It commands so many things that men forget the real goods which it can never purchase: righteousness, love, and a clear conscience. There is only one way of escape: an evil master, it can be a splendid workman; the minister of hell may become a servant of light. All power is danger except as we link it to some high goal.

The sin of covetousness must be brought to light. All its hideous and contaminating influences and consequences must be made known. The Christian and covetousness cannot dwell together. As man's outward acts must be Christian; as his contacts with his neighbors must be Christian; the desires of his heart must be Christian; and so must the innermost recesses of his soul be Christian. The church of the living God must be purged from the evil spirit of covetousness. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven."

CHAPTER VI

THE TITHE AND THE EARLY CHURCH

We are definitely constrained to think the early Christians, the Gentile converts as well as the Jewish, observed the law of tithing as a debt, and that all mention of gifts and offerings was with the presumptive evidence that it was so understood. We cannot see how this would be otherwise. This had been the custom of the Hebrews as a religious rite, it was observed by the surrounding nations, and viewing the fact that the whole of the New Testament teaching inculcates an unprecedented manner of giving, it stands inviolable against contradictory but illogical inference.

At the end of an intense though brief public ministry, Jesus Christ left behind him a handful of disciples. But He left more. The air of Palestine was permeated with a new ideal of life. Men rejected the Teacher, but they could not escape the teaching. Fifty days after the crucifixion of the lonely Teacher the air grew vibrant; the Spirit of the Man had come back to men, to abide with them forever. At thought of the Pentecostal church the pen leaps to a hundred fascinating themes. But we eliminate them all and hold rigidly to our one subject of Stewardship.

Stewardship and Pentecost are related. Concerning

these men, it is written: "Not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." Much has been spoken and written concerning the so-called "communism" of the Jerusalem Christians. Whatever else it was, the financial program of the Pentecostal church was no formal attempt to "level up" and "level down" the property holdings of its members. It was a stewardship and not a communism of possessions.[1] There was no least compulsion among them, neither was there any general conversion of possessions and goods into money, for the purpose of the general distribution, but only "as every man had need." This last statement is twice repeated, and wholly discredits various attempts to make the New Testament sponsor for communistic schemes of property division.

Jerusalem was crowded with multitudes who had come up to the annual feasts. The conversion of these Jewish pilgrims meant profound life changes. Many of them could return no more to their provincial homes, but would have to make new plans for themselves and for their families. It is no dream of idle words when a man gives up all for conscience' sake! These men were not poor because of thriftlessness. The fact that they had made long trips to reach Jerusalem would indicate that many of them had surplus means. But they were in extremity. They were in actual need of food, having expended their ready funds,

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 68.

and being alienated from former friends and relations because of the "Way."

In such circumstances the Christians, whose homes were in or near Jerusalem, recognized their unique responsibility of stewardship, and, to their lasting honor, they met it loyally and with no shadow of evasion. Gladly they threw open their homes to these homeless ones, their new brethren. They had all things common. But generous hospitality, even such as this, could not meet the exigencies of those momentous days. The converts multiplied. Persecution seemed not to hinder them; it was indeed the first mass movement of the Christian Church. God was calling out a new people, and the men who had been trained in the school of Christ were keen to recognize it. Stewardship must now mean more than hospitality; it must go farther than gifts and offerings. The blood-red doctrine of Jesus Christ was preached again, and the magnificent response of the Jerusalem Church was a royal proof that these men had been "born again" in the very truth.

The first Christians in Jerusalem were all Jews; this must not be forgotten. They had already tithed their possessions in acknowledgment of the divine ownership; they had also paid the customary second tithe to provide for the expense of the Jewish feasts of Passover and Pentecost. But now had come the real test of their

stewardship; they must recognize the unmeasured emergency of the present hour, and prove the meaning of Christian brotherhood. To provide bread for the hungry, that the gospel of their Lord be not a stumbling-block, their goods and possessions must now be turned into money. And why not! No man among them said "that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." He was administering for another. It was more than tithing, it was giving of every thing to meet the need of the hour. We are told by the religious writers of the time that the liberality was such that teaching tithing was not of direct necessity; but when time moved the Church from under the Apostolic instruction, when the people were convinced that the immediate return of Christ was uncertain, and when the sacrificing zeal of Che Church began to wane, the liberality of the apostolic period, which was far in excess of the tithe, ceased.[1]

The appointment of "the seven" to care for the neglected widows of the Hellenistic Jews is another good example of stewardship. Though "not one of them said that aught of things which he possessed was his own--and neither was there any among them that lacked," it was because distribution was made to each, "according as any had need." It was not a uniform distribution of goods, nor is it reasonable to assume or infer that every one among them parted with all his goods. That "as many

1. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 36.

as had houses and lands," means that every one sold their houses is without reason.[1] To believe this is to infer that they were fanatical and their enthusiasm overstepped the bounds of common sense. Their religion was not for a day, and there is no need of theorizing about socialistic rules governing this body in a mistaken benevolence that it was found afterwards necessary to correct by acting more rationally, but it was the sober, yet spontaneous expression of the love of God and man that had taken hold of their hearts. What they did would be perfectly right and rational for the church to do to-day, and what she would do if she were submitting to the Spirit's guidance in the stewardship that is committed to her. The Mosaic institution made ample provision for the unfortunate class, and the new dispensation was an awakening among the Jews to their neglected duty in genuine benevolence.

A realization of the true purposes of possessions took hold of these converts that made them see unlike we see today, and as long as the "need of any" was manifest, no man counted anything his own until that need was met. We see what an awakened conscience will do after some definite law has fixed an obligation.

Pass to the record in the eleventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and we see how this matter was understood. When the "famine to be over the world" was made

1. R. H. Lampkin, The Scriptural Foundation for Christian Liberality, p. 109.

known by Agabus, through the Spirit, prompt action was taken. The same spirit of benevolence was manifested as was first seen in Jerusalem. If the former had been an outburst of fanatical communism, the result would have been a caution here to act more slowly. The church in its infancy needed as badly as we do to-day to know the grace of giving. Giving will always be an essential part of the Christian religion, and what is most needed in the church to-day is to return to the spirit of the early church. Theirs was a beginning, but when such is their record, what would not be the measure of our giving if we had the spirit with our present properties and opportunities!

Paul by occupation prior to his call had been a tent-maker. In three places he partially supported himself at his old trade. But not entirely as his own testimony indicates. There is no record that Paul partly supported himself as he went preaching aside from these three places, Corinth, Ephesus, and Thessalonica. His life was surely too busy and his work too important to allow his energy to be consumed as a permanent program in earning his daily living. Paul received an income from his preaching, which we learn in 11 Corinthians 11:8-9. Later, Paul apologizes to the church in Corinth for not requiring them to assist in his support. In 11

Corinthians 12:13 in his statement, "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong." Paul partially, not entirely, supported himself as a tent maker to relieve the church. And he later discovered that that was a big mistake!

Paul still further claims support for preaching and the preacher by his review and comparison with the Jewish dispensation. Over half of the ninth chapter of 1 Corinthians is taken up with teaching on the care and support of the ministry, which fact we have shown in a previous chapter.

It is quite evident that the church in the days of the apostles practiced more than the tithe in their giving. They abounded in liberality. However, during the latter part of the second century, and the first part of the third, worldly ambition began to assert itself. Self-interest supplanted the interest of the Kingdom of God and covetousness began to take the place of liberality. Under the influence of this cooling zeal and financial depression, the authorities of the church were greatly handicapped and began to seek relief. When the standard of liberality fell below the tithe, the rights of the Kingdom of God were asserted, and the people were exhorted upon the authority of the Word of God to "Bring the tithe into the storehouse," as the quotations of

the earliest writers will show.

Tithing was taught as a moral obligation until the reign of Constantine, when it was made compulsory.[1] The subject soon degenerated to a common tax, levied for the support of the church and state, and in this form we are tracing the subject through the centuries of Church history.

Selden, in his book on the subject, says: "So liberal in the beginning of Christianity was the devotion of the believers that their bounty to the Evangelical Priesthood far exceeded what the tenth could have been."[2]

Dean Prideaux, who wrote in the seventh century, says: "In the first ages of the Church I confess we find no mention of tithes because the zeal of Christians was then such that they gave more in their voluntary offerings than the tithe would amount to."[3] Prideaux goes on to say: "Thus, till the fourth age of the Church, all the necessities of the Church were fully answered by the voluntary offerings of the faithful. What was given in this way did much exceed a tenth of their income. But then, this zeal beginning to grow cold, and some offeringstoo little, and others nothing, a question hereon arising how much it was that every one was bound to give, it was generally determined among the fathers

1. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 37.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

and doctors of the age, in conformity to what Tertullian and Origen and others had taught before that ... all those offerings ought to be made in the proportion of a tenth of every man's income for the whole year. And this being what was the practice of all the heathen world round about them, as to the gods which they worshipped, and what all they that came into Christianity, whether it were from Gentileism or Judaism, had been before accustomed to, it was with the more readiness submitted to, and it thenceforth became, by the unanimous consent of Christians, the received doctrine of the Church that all men were obligated thereto."[1]

Gibbon, in his history of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," says: "The converts who embraced the new (i. e., Christian) religion were permitted to retain the possession of their patrimony, to receive legacies and inheritances, and to increase their separate property by all lawful means of trade and industry. Instead of an absolute sacrifice, a moderate proportion was accepted by the mininsters of the gospel, and in their weekly or monthly assemblies, every believer, according to the exigency of the occasion, and the measure of his wealth and piety, presented his voluntary offering for the use of the common fund. Nothing, however inconsiderate, was refused, but it was diligently inculcated that in the article of tithes the Mosaic law

1. Walter Nash, Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 38.

was still of divine obligation, and that since the Jews, under a less perfect discipline, had been commanded to pay a tenth part of all that they possessed, it would become the disciples of Christ to distinguish themselves by a superior degree of liberality and to acquire some merit by resigning a superfluous treasure which must so soon be annihilated with the world itself."[1]

How did the Church Fathers of the first centuries understand the apostles' teaching on the law of the seventh? First we shall quote a heathen witness. Pliny, the persecutor, in a letter to the Emperor, wrote, "On a stated one day the Christians meet to sing a hymn to Christ as God, to take an oath to commit no theft, or adultery, or fraud, and to partake together of food."[2]

Justin Martyr, A. D. 110-165, tells us what the set day was, that was spoken of by Pliny. He says, "On the day called Sunday by the Christians they hold their assemblies for reading the Scriptures, prayer to Christ, alms giving, and the Lord's Supper."[3] Now as to the principle of the tenth Justin Martyr shows how the church in his day was continuing the apostolic communion, and like the church in Jerusalem, whose gifts far exceeded the tithe, had sufficient care for all.[4]

Irenaeus, A. D. 120-202, says, "The precepts of the perfect life are the same in each Testament...The Lord did not abrogate the law, which also those who

1. Walter Nash, The Lww and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 39.
2. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 30.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

are justified by faith, did observe previous to the giving of the law, but He extended them. Instead of 'thou shalt not commit adultery," forbid even concupiscence: instead of 'thou shalt not kill,' He prohibiteth anger; instead of tithes, to share all with the poor. Now all these were not doing away with the law but extending it. Sacrifices there were among the people (the Jews); sacrifices there are, too, in the Church; but the species alone have been changed, inasmuch as the offering now is made, not by slaves but by freemen."[1]

In the Apostolic Constitution, A. D. 300, we read, "Of the first fruits and tithes and after what manner the bishop is himself to partake of them and distribute them to others. Let him use these tenths and the first fruits, which are given according to the command of God, as a man of God....The Levites who attended upon the tabernacle partook of those things which were offered to God by the people....You therefore, O Bishops, are priests and Levites, ministering to the church.... For those who attend upon the church ought to be maintained by the church....Now you ought to know that although the Lord has delivered you from the additonal bonds and does not permit you to sacrifice irrational creatures for sin-offerings, etc., yet He has in no place freed you from those obligations which you owe

1. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 30.

to the priests, nor from doing good to the poor."[1]

Not far from Carthage lived the great Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, who speaks of tithing in many of his discourses. From one of his sermons, all of which were preached on this subject, he says: "By the grace of Christ, dearest brethren, the day is now at hand in which we ought to gather the harvest, and therefore should be thinking about returning thanks to God who gave it, both in the matter of making offerings and of rendering tithes. For our God, who has deigned to give the whole, has condescended to seek back from us the tithe, doubtless for our profit, not His own."[2]

On another occasion Augustine says: "Our ancestors used to abound in the wealth of every kind for this reason that they used to give tithes and pay the tax to Caesar....We have been unwilling to share the tithes with God, now the whole is taken away. The scribes and Pharisess gave tithes for whom Christ had not yet shed his blood....I cannot keep back what He who died for us said while He was alive, 'Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' They gave a tenth. How is it with you?"[3]

From Italy comes the opinon of Ambrose, elected Bishop of Milan in 374, who in many of his sermons

1. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 38.
2. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 63.
3. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, p. 31.

pressed the duty of tithe paying. In one he speaks thus: "It is not enough that we bear the name, if we do not the works of Christians, and the Lord hath commanded that the tithe of all our increase is required."[1] "God has reserved the tenth part unto himself, and therefore it is not lawful for a man to retain what God has reserved for Himself. To thee He has given nine parts, for Himself He has reserved the tenth part, and if thou shalt not give God the tenth part, God will take from thee the nine parts. A good Christian pays tithes."[2]

Again Ambrose says: "What is it to give tithes faithfully, but that no one offer to God what is worse or less than the tithe either of his corn or of his wine, or of the fruits of the trees, or of his cattle, or of his gardens, or of his business, or even of his hunting. Of all the substance which God hath given us He has reserved a tenth part to Himself. Therefore, it is not lawful to retain that which God hath reserved to Himself, that God will take away the nine parts if we do not give Him the tenth."[3]

Jerome, A. D. 345-420, wrote to Nepotian, saying, "I, if I am the portion of the Lord, and the line of his heritage, ...like the priests and the Levites I live on the tithe, and serving the altar am supported

1. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, p. 63.
2. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 41.
3. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 31.

by its offerings. ....What we have said of tithes and offerings which of old used to be given to priests and Levites, understands also in the case of the Church. ....If any one shall not do this he is convicted of defrauding and cheating God."[1]

Chrysostom, who was born at Antioch, 347 A. D., speaking of the payment of tithes by the Jews, says: "Oh! what a shame is this that what was no great matter among the Jews whould be pretended to be so among the Christians. If it were a dangerous thing to fail of giving tithes then, to be sure it is much more dangerous now. I require no great matter but that as the Jews who were infants in religion and laden with many sins did pay, so let us pay, who expect heaven. I speak not as making a law, or forbidding to give more, but requiring that less than a tenth be not consecrated. This must be observed by all that gather any just cause."[2]

The opinon of Origen, who was the greatest religious writer of his age, and who was born in the year of 185 A. D., or about seventy-five years after the death of John the Apostle, should carry with it considerable weight, he having been a pupil of Clement, who was converted under the ministry of Paul. Origen says: "The law of tithes is to be observed by us

1. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 38.
2. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, pp. 40-41.

according to the letter, because Christ, while speaking of the Pharisees, paying tithes of mint, saith, 'This ought to be done.' And in another place, 'Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,' etc."[1]

As the church fathers have spoken with one voice on this subject, so have the councils of the early church. Ten councils of the church up to A. D. 790 ordered all Christians to tithe.[2] We quote from one of these, the council of Macon, which convened in A. D. 585. This decree is valuable to our purpose here, because it shows not only the attitude of the church toward the tithe at that time, but because it gives the information that the "whole body of Christians for a long time kept the law of the tithe inviolate," but by the time of the council they were beginning to neglect the tithe which was considered divinely ordained. It sounds like First Corinthians 9:13-14. The decree is as follows:...."The divine laws also taking care of the ministers of the church that they might have their hereditary portion, have commanded all people to pay the tithe, that the clergy being hindered by no sort of employment, may be at leisure for the spiritual duty of their ministry. Which laws the whole body of Christians for a long time kept inviolate, but now by degrees, almost all of them

1. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 40.
2. John G. Alber, The Principle of the Tithe, p. 38.

have shown themselves prevaricators of those laws, since they neglect to fulfill the things which have been divinely ordained."[1]. Thus we see the unanimity of opinion there was among the ancient fathers of the Church of Christ. Their testimony is valuable in establishing the practice of the earliest Christian centuries. For this practice there must have been apostolic precedent or apostolic command, for the apostles were their immediate teachers.

In the council held in Seville, 590 A. D., a canon was made for the kingdom of Spain, from which we take the following extract: "Let every husbandman and every artisan make a just tithing from his business. For as the Lord has given everything, so from everything He demands the tithe, whether from the fruit or field." "If any one, however, does not tithe everything, he is a robber of God and a thief, and let the curses which God inflicted on Cain be heaped upon him."[2]

It is very evident that these early church fathers had the proper conception of stewardship. They saw that God had seen fit to make the advancement of His cause dependent upon money, or the tithe. It is not so in the kingdom of nature. The lily blooms quite independently of the different as to whether there is or is not a gold mine beneath it. Animals increase quite

1. John G. Alber, The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe, pp. 31-32.
2. John W. Duncan, Our Christian Stewardship, pp. 65-66.

state of funds or the conditions of trade. But when you stop the flow of money you arrest the progress of the Kingdom of God.

Three and a half decades ago Stanley, the African traveler, challenged English Christians to send several missionaries to Uganda. Members and friends of the society put their hands in their pockets and sent the missionaries, and as a result there, in Uganda, are more than thirty thousand followers of Jesus Christ. If those Christians had not furnished the money, the thirty thousand Christians would still be savages. If the money contributed by our own and other groups should be suddenly cut off, what fearful results would follow in all the mission fields of the world!

It has been proved that the tithe was far exceeded in the days of the apostles, and the first centuries of the early church. Due to discrepencies entering in, the church failed to render to God its due portion. It is our task to call God's people back to this sacred obligation, for it is that which is ordained of the Lord.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

THE PLACE OF THE TITHE IN NEW TESTAMENT STEWARDSHIP

Our efforts up to this time have been to show that tithing is the divinely established financial plan of the Kingdom of God on earth, and to exhort all men to "render unto God the things that are God's. We have arrived at this conclusion after a study of the facts with relation to this subject.

In the beginning of this thesis we recognized the fact that God has complete ownership of the earth. He is the owner, and man is the steward. In the meaning of stewardship we have shown that man has been intrusted with the keeping of the Church of the Living God on earth. To fulfill this stewardship he must exert the capacities of his stewardship, which includes full exercise of service, time, energy, ability, and material resources. Stewardship is too big and broad to become a techincal thing; it will plan for the whole man, whether at work or school or play. It is an attitude toward all of life, rather than a formula of conduct.

Then, we set forth the principles of God from the beginning, that, even though dispensations may change certain forms of legislation, those principles of one-seventh of time, one-tenth of the increase, adultery,

and murder do not, and never will change. The tithe, as the Sabbath, was clearly attested by ancient history from the earliest times. Following this evidence, we traced the tithe through the Old Testament, showing its place and purpose, and proving that the tithe did not begin nor end with the Mosaic law. We, then, showed the tithe to be a part of the teachings of Jesus, and his apostles, as well as of the early church. One chapter, on covetousness, was devoted to the purpose of showing the mis-use of this act of worship.

Now the question arises: "What is the place of the tithe in New Testament Stewardship?" We are prepared to say that while some are wont to treat the subject on a material basis, it is an extremely spiritual subject. Tithing is an act of worship, and is therefore spiritual. If tithing is a divine command it is a moral obligation, binding upon the whole human race, for God is no respector of persons. Therefore, the incentive to obedience to the law of the tithe is not the material need of the cause of God, or the individual tither, nor in response to legalism of "this do," but faith in and obedience to a divine command; this brings us face to face with the question of sin and righteousness.

The above statement being true, the material result

of tithing, whether related to the cause of Christ or the individual, is a secondary matter. In the third chapter of Malachi, Jehovah pleads with the people to bring their tithe into the storehouse to the end that He may open unto them the windows of heaven and pour them out such a blessing that there would not be room enough to receive it. The bringing in of the tithe was a means to this great end. Or, in other words, the active faith that prompted the surrendering of the human will to the divine, brings the souls of men into an attitude to receive the richest of blessings. Tithing is as much of a test of faith as the pentitent believer has faith in baptism. It is not the water that cleanses the person, but it is his faith in a God that is able to save. In like manner, it is not the money given, but the faith of the believer in a God who is able to pour forth the richest blessings from heaven by his giving through faith. It not only tests our faith, weekly, or when the division is made, but it brings us into a perpetual and divine partnership with God: thus our Creator enters into and has a portion in every act of labor, whether it be manual or mental. The perpetual faith and obedience not only open the widows of heaven, but keeps them open. Thus, instead of the material support of the Church being a dead weight, it becomes in the greatest sense a means of spiritual power and growth.

With the ideal of faith in our minds, it is now easy to obtain the proper conception of the place of the tithe in New Testament Stewardship. Stewardship simply means that God is owner, and we are individual stewards or administrators of the Lord's estates. Every thing that we administer belongs to Him, and we work for Him. Thus, the tithe is the Lord's, and we give it that place in New Testament Stewardship. In what place or program is the tithe to be used?

In all dispensations the tithe has been the Lord's, and has been used for the purpose of these dispensations. Under the Mosaic law God required the tithe to be brought into the treasury: "Unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and there shalt thou come, and there shall ye bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and heave offerings of your hand and your vows and your free-will offerings and the firstlings of your herds and your flocks. Ye shall not do after the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever seemeth right in his own eyes. Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heaven offering of your hand and all your choice

vows which ye vow unto the Lord. Only thy holy things which thou shalt take and go into the place which the Lord shall choose. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it." (Deuteronomy 12:5, 6, 8, 11, 26, 32).

That God required the tithe to be brought into the treasury under the Mosaic law, no one with the foregoing Scriptures before him can doubt, and if that law is binding today and if there is a treasury and an organization to receive and distribute the tithe, that the organized Church is commissioned with the great task, no one will question. There is no reason to depart from this task, and the Church cannot scripturally accept another method.

The law of self-propagation that extends through all the realms of created life also obtains in the propagation of the gospel.[1] The Apostle Paul tells in First Corinthians 9:14, that "The Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." Therefore, any Church that resorts to any means for its support other than the ordained plan laid down it gospel itself, is out of harmony with the word of God and cannot ultimately prosper. We learn in the Scriptures that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John 5:4). And again, "Without faith it

1. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 47.

is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6). Again, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23). So faith is the great trestle work connecting the needy and dependent Church with the infinite resources of God. We do not mean to say that obedience to the law of the tithe is the only condition of success, but we do believe that this is the one great thing lacking. In other words, we believe the Church is standing where the rich, young ruler stood when Jesus said unto him, "One thing thou lackest." It was a sad day for the Church when it turned away sorrowful because it had great possessions.

The place and program of the tithe in the Old Testament was for the support of the spiritual workers for the service of God. Under the New Testament the tithe has the same place, that of the support of the Church and the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The blame for the present condition of the Church lies first at the door of the ministry.[1] God says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." (Hosea 4:6). And again He said, "For the leaders of this people caused them to err and they that are led of them are destroyed." (Isaiah 9:16).

The next requisite to success is, after the people know the truth, to have sufficient faith in God to do what he says. When these two conditions are met, the tithe will have its proper place again, and the Church

1. Walter Nash, The Law and Gospel of the Tithe, p. 48.

will have at its command all the material riches of the earth and the spiritual blessings of heaven. The whole world would be one great tithing Church.

To whom shall the tithe be paid? There can be but one true answer to this question, and that is, the tithe belong to God, and should be paid to Him. We cannot give directly to God, but through his Church. Why not? It is the proper place. God has intrusted the Church with the salvation the world, and if the world is to be evangelized in this generation, or any generation, it is to be done through the agency and instrumentality of the Church of our Lord. Our individual stewardship ceases when the tithe is paid, and the Church becomes the steward of God with respect to proper distribution of the tithes paid into the treasury. Very little of the money brought into the Church under the present systems is a spontaneous result of faith in God, and cannot be accompanied with and attested by the Spirit of God. For this reason, the spiritual resources of the Church are cut off.

Why has the tithe failed to have its proper place in our New Testament Stewardship? To answer let us notice some of the substitutes for faith which the Church of today is resorting to. In the first place, a great portion of church finance is raised by means of

pleading pastors, secretaries, and official boards. All such agencies get between the Church and God. They forsake God's plan and substitute their own schemes and plans. The people recognizing the absence of divine authority, have made it an arbitrary matter. Thus the entire subject is divorced from faith and obedience to God. If they would spend the time in preaching the law of the tithe, then the Church would render unto God the things that are His.

There are many other motives that enter into the support of the Church. Some neglect the place of the tithe because they are simply influenced by the moral and refining influence the Church has upon society. Other lend their support because a good Church enhances the value of real estate. Some support the Church for business reasons. Then there are some who would not pay a cent but for their desire to retain the respect of the community. Some of these motives are worthy from a business point of view, but they would be just as consistent for infidels as for Christians. As to their relation to God, and place in New Testament Stewardship, they are devoid of faith, love, and obedience, and for that reason cannot be attested by or rewarded. Their influence upon the character is lost so far as the giver is concerned. Then, when we take into account the amount raised by a thousand kinds of merchandise, socials, and

lectures, and other schemes, all of which are devoid of faith, we can begin to reconcile the promises and infinite resources of God and the spiritual dearth of the Church today.

The Church has failed to have the proper conception of the tithe with respect toward saving the heathen world. They have substituted sentiment and humanitarianism for faith and obedience. The authorities of the Church, and missionary societies, and returned missionaries come to us with a story of heathen darkness; a story of helplessness and despair. They tell of poverty and depression, sin and suffering. The story, all of which is true, is well prepared and told with such a sympathetic strain that the congregation is moved with tears of sympathy, and they lay their meager offerings upon the altar. After it is all done, what is it? It is the measure of their sympathy, and not of their faith! On the other hand, the tithe would solve this problem, as well as every financial problem of the Church.

The tithe is, and has always been, the norm of exacting from the steward the tax that is due God. It is not for the purpose of adding riches to God, but for carrying on God's program throughout the world. There is the moral side of the question of whether we will support God in this which has existed through

every age. We may conclude the thesis in recognizing the moral issue involved, that being the place of the tithe in the individual's conception of stewardship.

There are three things that should be involved: First, a recognized obligation of stewardship, without a program, is not intelligent. No man can give as he pleases, or when an offering is taken. There must be a definite program to fulfill the moral obligation, as well as in answering the demand of faith.

Second, a narrow, local, or provincial program will frustrate its own purpose. We fully recognize that no man will administer his possessions in behalf of others unless there is a positive human need. Stewardship cannot exist without the human motive, for it is opposed to selfishness. The law of love is "to love thy neighbor as thyself." Because a man has shown peculiar skill in accumulating money it by no means follows that he will show skill in the expenditure of it. Thus a man may have a narrow program, and defeat his purpose.

All of which, summed, leads to the third point, that one should have an intelligent program including and understanding the modern problems, and realizing the opportunities of the Kingdom of God.

The tithe has a place in the New Testament Stewardship, because money is power. When power is committed into the hands of evil men there can follow

none other than the works of evil. But power in the hands of righteous men multiplies the work of righteousness. If evil men seek after power, by how much more ought righteous men to covet it! And herein lies the miracle of money. Value came from God, and money, the measure of it and the receptacle for it, fashions it in the hands of righteous men until it fits God's purpose in the world; for life itself has value but in this, that it may fit God's wider circling plans.

The place of the tithe in stewardship is to recognize it as God's, and that we are servants on his estate. When we fail to preach baptism, and the Lord's Supper, we fail in preaching the truth, but the minister fails also when he does preach the truth on this ordinance of stewardship. To recognize the spiritual content of money, and to rescue it from sordidness and greed, this shall be the saving evangel for our generation. The king-sin of our day is presumption, and its chiefest god is gold. Men greet each other at the club, they talk of money; they drive a touring car on Sunday afternoon, the talk is money; politics grows stale, and art and even war, but never money. Money comepls attention; truth may wait. Let no man wonder that folly swells, and that boldness grows big with presumption, for money is all but omnipotent upon the earth.

Money is power and power means mastery, and mastery is the native habit of a man.[1] It is therefore less than intelligent to cry down the race for riches; and, because it is unintelligent, men will not heed the preaching that warns them of their wealth. If a saving gospel shall find the rich men of today, or reach the men who shall be rich tomorrow, it must recognize material values as they actually exist, and then exalt those values into spiritual potency. It must be the preacher, and not the promoter, who calls men to be rich. The subtle currents that lift and depress value must be recognized as spiritual forces. Money must not be left a sordid thing in the alleys of avarice; it must be enthroned among the spiritual gifts which good men covet.

Finally, when the spiritual content of money is discerned, the tithe shall have its proper place as belonging to God, and stewardship shall understand its high calling of partnership. Poll the manhood of our generation, and call out the men who dare range forward. Poll the men who acknowledge God's ownership of the world, whose tithe of value is rendered in honor and loyalty, that his worship shall be intelligent upon the earth. Shall we pencil upon the margin of the page the income of average Americans, and reckon the stu-

1. Harvey R. Calkins, A Man and His Money, p. 350.

pendous total that honor would render ever year, if the whole tithe were brought into the storehouse? The exhibit would startle men who are accustomed to the puny offerings of the churches; and yet partnership would say, "It is an acknowledgment, but it is only the beginning of my stewardship." A business partnership is for profit, and what of a spiritual partnership with God. Think of the vast profit we could reap by restoring the tithe to the church!

A Christian and his money! The money is sent forth as the tithe to work new miracles in the earth. But what of the man? Surely he has rendered an exalted service. Surely his stewardship has risen into high partnership, and surely that partnership shall abide. It is even so. The knowledge of it shall thrill him with a noble joy. And yet for him there shall remain a felicity more perfect than any loyal service, a higher joy than any exalted partnership; there shall remain for him the pure, sweet joy of worship as it was in the beginning, before the stress of sin began. The rendering of the tithe, and the stewardship of ever value shall remain for him a token of one unchanging word: God is Soverign Lord.

All men should tithe. It is the minimum standard of giving to the church. Its place and purpose is in the church to be used in the preaching of the Gospel,

it is the Lord's. If we deny the tenth as a minimum of Christian giving, then we admit that Moses is greater than Christ in this respect; that a Christian may be more selfish than a Jew and not be punished; that a sheep under the law of Moses was a greater sacrifice than the spilled blood of Jesus; that Sinai is stronger than Calvary as Sinai received the tenth; and furthermore, if we cannot win the world for Christ and the Gospel, we will go back to the Old Testament, and win the world for Moses and the law, for the Jews as they prayed and paid. We should thank God for the plan of salvation, and also for the place of the tithe in stewardship, the plan that God gave to spread that salvation to the ends of the world.

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