

Is tithing a modern way to prosper?

A great deception of another Gospel called “Prosperity” is being preached over Christians today. Millions of Christians and non-Christians are influenced by this doctrine and wrongly understood Christianity. Prosperity theology is most commonly found within the Charismatic and Pentecostal traditions of Christianity although it is not exclusive to these traditions. Churches and evangelists teach that those who give abundantly will be rewarded with generous financial success and that this prosperity will continue as long as one keeps giving. [1] Tithing ten percent, they implore, is not enough if someone really expects to get the financial blessing back from God. Testimonials from Christians who tout the success of this mega-tithing concept are paraded in front of congregations and on television programs. There is no question that this philosophy is making a substantial impact on the Christian community. [2] It is such a controversial topic that TIME placed it front and center on their cover of the September 18, 2006 issue. According to the feature article “Does God Want You to Be Rich?” in a TIME poll, 17% of Christians surveyed said they considered themselves part of such a movement, while a full 61% believed that God wants people to be prosperous. And 31%--a far higher percentage than there are Pentecostals in America agreed that if you give your money to God, God will bless you with more money.

The proliferation of the teaching and preaching of prosperity has highly impacted the third world countries too. Many understand this as a shortcut to multiply their wealth and eventually get disappointed. Ministers and ministries take advantage of this illusion and detain many into their favor and eventually lead them into confusion. Churches and ministries blow up individual’s experience of receiving many fold blessings by giving and force others to give. It is important that Christians should be aware of what Bible teaches concerning giving and tithing and not to heed these false promises. Understanding on the following aspects of giving will certainly bring more clarity and control over this issue.

1. God doesn’t require our offerings. He is the owner of everything. *Haggai 2:8 says, that ‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts.*
2. Our offerings are required to support the ministers who are involved full-time in ministry. *I Corinthians 9:14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.*
3. Our offerings are required for ministry to preach the Gospel and to establish His kingdom. *God has ordained for people to be saved by the preaching of the gospel (I Corinthians 1:21). How shall they hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:14).*
4. The Lord blesses those who give to the Lord. It is the will of God that we need to prosper in all that we do.
5. The blessings need not be of material in nature. They not necessarily make us prosper in this world.
6. There are people who give to the Lord and get rid of debt, the same time there are people who give to the Lord and continue to live in debt. Giving alone doesn’t guarantee debt free living.

7. Sowing the seed is often referred to giving. We often hear “Sow the seed expecting great return from God”. What kind of return? It is true that the seed multiplies and brings forth fruit in many folds. More than the material blessings, the seed results in souls getting added to the kingdom of God as a result of the ministry carried out with the seed. This is an eternal blessing, may not be realized in this earth.
8. Tithe is always a law for an unbeliever, but for a believer tithe or giving is not out of compulsion, it is out of love and good attitude.
9. The one who is giving are the one who always give. So forcing to give is not the right approach rather encouraging the one who is not a giver.
10. We don't need to bribe God by our giving in order to receive material blessings. Prayer is the only way to get any blessing from the Lord as Jesus said in *John 14:14, If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*
11. Sacrificial giving is always honored by God but that doesn't mean that we should borrow money and give.
12. Any sacrifice made or any amount that is given as tithe or offering by an individual who doesn't obey Romans 12:1 by presenting the bodies a living sacrifice is not acceptable to God. Jesus commanded not to offer a gift to God without reconciling with the brother, Matthew 5:23-24. How many preachers preach this before they call for offertory? Who is accountable for this?
13. Above all the attitude of giving is very important. Are we giving out of gratitude? Are we giving out of obedience? Are we giving out of love? Are we giving expecting at least one more soul to get added in His kingdom? Or Are we giving out of fear? Are we giving expecting the same amount multiplied and given back to us?

Considering all the above, I realize that there cannot be any short cut to prosper by giving money to God. God has done miracles to individuals in terms of material blessings to recognize their giving and to encourage them in their Christian walk. This experience of an individual cannot be used in pulpit to entice the one who is living in debt. Deuteronomy 28 clearly talks about how to stop borrowing and start lending. No modern prosperity teaching is found there. God says in Deut 28:1, *if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today.* Deut 28:12. *You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.* Why God could have said, your tithe and offerings will cause you to stop borrowing and start lending. No. God's purpose is always eternal. But it is the devil that adulterates these teachings and diverts people towards the temporal blessings of the world.

Today preachers preach on Malachi 3:9-11 ...*Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this, Says the LORD of hosts ...and* ask people to bring tithe and offerings to the church. Yes, it is true that God asks us to try Him in this matter. But do they ever say that follow Romans 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service,* Mathew 5:23-24 *Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.* and the commandments as said in Deut 28, before bringing in your tithe and offerings. If a preacher has the guts to say this

to the congregation, he saves their souls from the eternal curse. The second section of Deut 28 is very clear about the curses of disobedience. Tithe offered in disobedience results in curse. If so, where is prosperity? Those who were enticed to sow in disobedience wait for the windows of heaven to open, instead curse strikes them and they go away from the Lord. Is it not deception talking only about the blessing without letting the people know the condition with which it comes? Is it not like lender lending money without disclosing the hidden costs associated with the agreement? Who is accountable for this act of deception by the name of the Lord?

God always looks at the internal and the motive behind giving. Never forget the widow who puts the two mites into the treasury. Look at Jesus' statement, "*Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.*", Mark 12:40-44.

A model giver

[5]An example of the proper attitude in giving love for God, not money-is found in the life of C. T. Studd, a Christian world champion cricket player in the 1800s. When Studd's father died, Studd inherited 29,000 pounds, equal to about \$150,000 at that time. It would be a sizeable amount even by today's standards.

But not wanting to "clutter up" his life, Studd decided to invest his money with God. He sent 5,000 pounds to Hudson Taylor, who organized the China Inland Mission; 5,000 to William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army; and 5,000 to D. L. Moody to start a work in India. Although Moody didn't go to India, the money was used to start Moody Bible Institute.

After completing all of his giving, Studd had only 3,400 pounds left, which he gave to his wife on their wedding day. Her response: "The rich young ruler was asked to give his all." So they sent the remaining money to General Booth – anonymously.

10 solid arguments against tithing

There are Biblical reasons people argue with for not giving tithe. [3] Few of the below listed are verses to be understood in the proper context with the help of the Holy Spirit.

1. Abraham gave 10% of the spoils of war while Israel was required to give less from the spoils of war. (Hebrews 7:4; Numbers 31:28-30)
2. Of all the recorded events about giving in the New Testament Church, there is not a single one about tithing.
3. Are the children required to pay tribute? (Matthew 17:25; Galatians 4:5)
4. Jacob freely offered the tithe because he knew without a requirement; it was of freewill to give. (Genesis 28:20)
5. None of the Israelites tithed while outside of the Promised Land. (Deuteronomy 12:5)
6. Abraham was born under an Old Testament covenant that was established long before Moses. (Genesis 3; Hebrews 8:13)
7. The poor received the tithes and did not pay them. (Deuteronomy 26:12)

8. Giving is the only gift that has a minimum requirement before you learn to exercise it as a Spiritual gift.
9. There is no New Testament command to continue or even modify tithing according to the structure of the New Covenant.
10. Israelites who did not grow food or raise animals did not tithe. (Leviticus 27:30)

Ten reasons why I tithe

Bible also tells us why we should tithe. Given below is the essence of the tract published by Pentecostal publishing house. [4] The author says, why do people tithe to the church? The reasons are many. As I considered my own motivation, I discovered at least ten reasons why I give ten percent of my income to the church. A study of these reasons will help us to understand the great blessing of tithing and the Biblical responsibility to tithe.

To Honor the Creator.

"Render... unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21). God owns the entire world and its substance. *"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof"* (Psalm 24:1). *"Behold, all souls are mine"* (Ezekiel 18:4). *"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine"* (Haggai 2:8). It is God who gives people the power to obtain wealth (Psalm 75:6-7; Ecclesiastes 5:19). We are not to glory in what God has given us, but to glory in Him (Jeremiah 9:23-24).

To Acknowledge My Heritage.

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). Abraham was the first tithe payer of record (Genesis 14:20). Abraham's grandson, Jacob, paid tithes (Genesis 28:22). Scripture says that Levi, Abraham's descendant and the father of the tribe from which the priesthood came, paid tithes in Abraham (Hebrews 7:9). My heritage of paying a tithe precedes the law of Moses. As a child of Abraham and an heir of the promise of Abraham. I acknowledge my family relationship by paying tithes.

Jesus said to the Jews, *"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham"* (John 8:39). It would be strange to claim to be a child of Abraham and yet to neglect one of Abraham's most fundamental and noteworthy acts. I pay my tithes as a spiritual descendant of Abraham, the father of the faithful.

To Fulfill the Covenant.

"For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (II Corinthians 3:11). In every comparison of the law of Moses and the new covenant that came by Jesus Christ, the new covenant stands supreme. The characteristic word in the Book of Hebrews is better, and everything is better about the new covenant. If the law demanded tithes, then how much more should we who are under the "perfect law of liberty" give our tithes willingly. (See James 1:25). If the law is written in the fleshly tables of our hearts and we follow God's commands not from outward rules but because of our new nature, then how quickly and how easily we should give the tenth that belongs to the Lord" (II Corinthians 3:3-6).

To Show My Love.

"*Many waters cannot quench love*" (Song of Solomon 8:7). Love is the strongest motivation in the world. I have seen bumper stickers that say, "If you love Jesus, honk you horn!" Anyone can honk his horn. But David said, "*Neither will I offer...unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing*" (II Samuel 24:24). Someone should print a sticker that says, "If you love Jesus, pay your tithes!" For someone who genuinely loves the Lord, the tithe is only the beginning of his giving. He gives not only his tithe, but also offerings (plural), not grudgingly and not of necessity, but cheerfully with love.

To Fulfill an Obligation.

"*Ye pay tithe...: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone*" (Matthew 23:23). Jesus did not criticize the Pharisees for paying tithes. He commended them. He said it was something they "ought" to have done. The word ought express an obligation or duty. It is one of the strongest words in the English language. To pay tithes is something every Christian ought to do. The word ought have three meanings: (a) obligation or duty; as in, "He ought to pay his debts", (b) desirability; as in, "You ought to eat more slowly", (c) expectancy or probability; as in, "I ought to be through by Monday." Each one of these meanings puts an obligation upon the Christian. It is desirable for him to pay his tithes, he is expected to pay his tithes, and he has a duty to pay his tithes.

To Escape Condemnation.

"*Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me... in tithes and offerings*" (Malachi 3:8). How sad it is that people who are honest in business and who pay their debts to the bank, the store, and the government will not pay God what belongs to Him! Sometimes people quibble about whether they are "paying" or "giving" tithes, but both terms seem appropriate. The tithe is the Lord's and He expects us to pay it to Him; at the same time, He does not receive it until we give it to Him. He does not give us the authority to use His tithes for other purposes, but we have the power to spend it as long as it is in our hands. Nevertheless, a person is condemned if he spends God's money.

To Spread the Gospel.

"*So hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel*" (I Corinthians 9:14). God has ordained for people to be saved by the preaching of the gospel (I Corinthians 1:21). "*How shall they hear without a preacher?*" (Romans 10:14). Tithing is God's way of supporting the ministry. In the Old Testament, the Levites and the priests were God's minister to the nation of Israel, and they were supported by tithes. In the New Testament, God has called people to minister the gospel. These ministers can be more effective if they do not have to provide for their livelihood by working on a secular job but can devote themselves full time to the work of God. They need time to give themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.

It is not wrong for a man to labor with his hands, nor should a minister feel too good to engage in honest labor. Yet God's plan is for those who preach the gospel to live of the gospel. When God inspired Moses to write that the people should not put a muzzle on the box that labored, God was not as concerned with the ox as He was with the principle that

a laborer should receive his livelihood from his work. The application of this principle is that the minister of the gospel should earn his living from his ministry. (I Corinthians 9:9-14).

Some ministers have endured financial hardships and deprivation in order to proclaim the gospel in needy areas. If the tithing income insures that the minister can live in a good house, drive a good car, and buy sufficient clothes for his family, why should I begrudge providing these things to a man who would preach the gospel even if he had to work on a secular job to do it? It is a disgrace to a church if the pastor has to take a secular job to supply his family's needs when there should be sufficient tithing income available to allow him to do God's work on a full-time basis. My tithing can help to spread the gospel.

To Avoid a Curse.

"Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me" (Malachi 3:9). Someone has said, "You can't out give God, and you can't out squeeze Him either." Some people put their money into "a big with holes" (Haggai 1:6). They do not give God His tithe, but they eventually spend the money for automobile repairs, medical bills, and a thousand other things that they might have avoided if they had been faithful to God in their giving.

God said that the whole nation of Israel was cursed because they had not given God His due. God asked Israel to dedicate the gold of Jericho to Him, but Achan took a wedge of gold and hid it in a tent. It became a curse to him and his whole family. I do not want God to curse my blessings. I want to give Him His tithe.

To Enjoy God's Blessing.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse... 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). (See also Luke 6:38). God blesses the people who pay tithes. They do not always have the most money or the best clothes, but they are blessed.

However, I am wary of those who promise, "If you give God a dollar, He will give you back four." The expectation of a return should not be our motivation for giving. And His richest blessings are not necessarily monetary. But I do want God to notice me and remember me. He noticed that the window put money into the treasury at the Temple. He noticed what Cornelius was giving. He noticed what Israel was not giving. He knows what we give and He notices when we give. God has asked us to prove Him and see if He will not give us His blessings. I have trusted Him, tested Him, and tried Him, and I have concluded that it is better to give God what belongs to Him.

To Be Consistent.

"Be thou an example of the believers" (I Timothy 4:12). For most of my ministry I have lived on tithing income. How could I receive tithes and not pay tithes? I could not do so and be consistent. The Levites, who received tithes, also paid tithes on what they received (Nehemiah 10:38). Preachers who receive tithes should be most faithful to pay them. Paying tithes will not save a person-everyone must be born again to be saved. But paying

tithes will reap a blessing. Genuine Christians not only pay tithes, but they willingly pay tithes.

Where the tithe to be given?

[6] We should be looking to support those who are sincere and are in need of help in doing the Lords work. Those who are involved in full-time ministry are to be supported by the people they serve (1 Cor 9:7-14, 1 Tim 5:17-18), and those who do ministry and mission work need to be supported by those who are home with the goods. A careful review of New Testament giving reveals to us that our contributions should not only be to support our local church and ministries, but also meet the basic needs of our fellow Christians (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-37; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:1-13; 1 Tim. 6:17-19). There was organized giving within local assemblies to care for believing widows and orphans who had no other family to rely on (Acts 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 5:1-16).

There is NO example of the early Church (book of Acts) “tithing.” In Acts 4:32-37, there were many wealthy Christians who sold portions of their assets and put the money at the Apostles' feet. Was it for the apostles? No, but for the Christian community, those in need. The apostles distributed it. The only time we find a judgment having to do with money is in Acts 5:1-11. Ananias and Sapphira were condemned for lying, because they held back part of the proceeds from the sale of the land that they had promised along with everyone else. This had absolutely nothing to do with “tithing,” as much as it had to do with keeping their word, let your yes be yes, and no, no.

Proverbs 22:16 *“He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, And he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty.”* The prosperity teachers increases their wealth by giving unbiblical promises of becoming prosperous to the poor and those giving their money to them are doing what this Scripture says not to. The poor, the homeless, the fatherless, and the widow have always been the focus of God (Exodus 23:11; Deuteronomy 14:28-29, 24:17-22; Psalm 12:5, 72:4,11-12). Today they are neglected you can expect not to see those who teach tithing as an obligation to practice the third year tithe. Every third year the tithe was to be reserved as a festival tithe where they brought out all the tithe, and their produce where the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, the widow, the poor who were in their town, could come and eat and be content (Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 26:12-15). How much consideration we have for the poor and needy, is an indication of our spiritual condition (1 John 3:17, James 2:1-9). Seen any poor or needy invited to any big parties at the ministries expense lately? We should all support those we can in ministry, we should support the churches work, we should also look where God can use us to support those in need.

Was Jesus teaching prosperity?

[6] Prosperity teachers who promote tithing like to point out that Jesus commanded tithing. In the New Testament tithe and tithing are found eight times (Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; 18:12; Hebrews 7:5-6,8-9). All of these passages refer to the Old Testament usage under the law. Tithing was still practiced under the law when Jesus was on earth, however, the only time Jesus mentioned the tithe was a rebuke to the religious leaders “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass

by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. In Matthew 23:23 he explains they “have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith.” These you ought to have done” Here Jesus makes it clear that living the life of faith toward God included love toward man and was more necessary than what you give to God; and this was under the law, not grace. Think about what is Jesus addressing? Justice, the Pharisees were unfair in the in dealings with the people, they ripped them off in their sacrifices brought to the temple. Mercy, they had none, everyone had to be as religious (spiritual) as they were. They constantly looked down upon people, remember the story Jesus told of “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.” The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men-- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 'I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' “*I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted*” (Luke 18:10-14). So we see giving is not enough to make one justified before God, yet many have been convinced to rely on their obedience in this area to have God's blessings.

The Pharisees said they have faith but they were more interested in the money, in fact Jesus said: “**Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money**, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.” (so did Judas John 12:5-6). Then Jesus scolded them saying “what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God,” and He then summed it up by giving another parable--the rich man and Lazarus. The poor man entered where the faithful were, finding rest in Abraham's bosom but the rich man entered torment. The rich man was punished, not because he was rich but because he lived for self, he had no compassion for poor Lazarus whom he walked by and ignored each day as he sat by his gate.

Does tithing involve only money?

[6] Tithing for Israel is not the same as the tithe that we hear of today-- in fact tithing was rarely money. There were three tithes in the Old Covenant. More often tithes were the crops, the produce of the soil was to be tithed, grains, the fruit of the trees, every year new wine and oil, the firstborn of their herds and flocks (Leviticus 27:30-33). If the place the nation of Israel were to tithe and was too far away to carry their goods (such as Jerusalem), it could be exchanged for money. They were to use their money to buy anything the owner chose: cattle, sheep, wine (Deuteronomy 14:22-26). Every third year the tithe was to be reserved as a festival tithe where they brought out all the tithe, and their produce where the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, the widow, the poor who were in their town, could come and eat and be content (Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 26:12-15). You can expect not to see those who teach tithing as an obligation to practice the third year tithe.

No other Scripture has had greater mileage than Malachi 3:10 “*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,*” says the Lord of hosts, “*if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a*

blessing until it overflows.” Malachi 3 has been greatly misused for God's blessing to come to his people. A closer look of this verse in the context shows that it has nothing to do with wealth or material blessings. We first find this same term used by God back in Genesis 7:11 the windows of heaven were open and rain contributed to the flood, as the fountains of the deep were broken open. In Genesis 8:2 it says the windows of heaven were stopped and the rain from heaven was restrained. Isaiah 24:18 it also mentions the windows from on high; this phrase is consistently used for water. In Genesis it was a judgment. In Malachi 3 it was to be a blessing on their crops. The nation lived by their agriculture (Husbandry) and depended upon the rain. God's blessing had to do with his provision of water; no rain and they would starve. If they did not give God their tithes which was part of the blessing in the Mosaic covenant God would bring a curse on them, the ground would not yield food because he would not allow it to rain.

How much to tithe?

[6] Today we hear that we are to obey the tithe law. The tithes were not gifts, they were taxes, tithes were given in addition to other numerous offerings which ended up to be over 22% (not just 10%). Under the law if you were only giving 10 percent on your tithes you would still be robbing God.

The Apostle Paul also says in 1 Cor. 16:2, *“On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.* Again, it is not “tithing,” only giving as one has purposed in his heart and as one has prospered, you choose the amount. God does not pressure us, or manipulate us by guilt or hold a bonus out to us to motivate us to give. Have you ever noticed Jesus did not take any offerings! Love is to be our motivation, not compulsion or legalism (Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Mark 12:28-34; 1 Corin. 13:1-7). The more a person loves God the more he will want to give to see his work expand, and this not always mean money.

Quotes from Teachers of the Prosperity Doctrine

These are the quotes of well known televangelists, pastors and other bible teachers. Millions are so excited by these enticing words and pledge their money expecting multifold return. Very soon they get into confusion and disappointment and eventually turn away from God. We need to be aware of such false teachings and protect our people from being robbed.

"What do you need? Start creating it. Start speaking about it. Start speaking it into being. Speak to your billfold. Say, "You big, thick billfold full of money." Speak to your checkbook. Say, "You, checkbook, you. You've never been so prosperous since I owned you. You're just jammed full of money."

"Poverty is from the devil and that God wants all Christians prosperous."

"Say after me, all of you, everybody say it, 'The wealth of the wicked is mine.' [The audience repeats.] One more time, (The audience repeats) One more time. (The audience repeats it again)"

"The Lord giveth and NEVER taketh away. And just because [Job] said, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord,' don't mean that he's right. When he said, 'Blessed be the name,' he was just being religious."

I'm sick and tired of hearing about streets of gold. I don't need gold in Heaven, I gotta have it now. I mean, when I get to glory, all my bills will be paid, brother. I won't have bills in glory. I gotta have it here. You say, 'Well, isn't it wonderful to have streets of gold i heaven?' Well, of course, but if I hear the thing one more time of how it will be and how it was, I'm gonna kick somebody"

"Your miracle is attached to what's in your pocket right now! You're trying to hold on to it, but God sent me to tell you to, 'Let it go! Let it go!'"

"God said, 'Pick up the phone right now!' He said, '1,000 persons, you are going to sow the \$1,000 seed.' You got to! You got to tonight! There is a miracle on it! I know what I'm talking about! He brought me in here to tell you that!"

"Somebody right here in television land, God said, '\$1,000.' You're sitting there saying, 'You know what? All I got is \$1,000.' If that's all you got, oh Jesus! Then you got the miracle seed in your hand!"

"You need to send a thousand dollars. If you can't send a thousand, send five hundred...if all you have is a nickel, wrap it in tissue and put it in an envelope. If all you have is your clothes, send them."

"If all you have is \$79.36, I double-dare you to empty your bank account. Close your account."

"If you want the power, you have to sow the seed."

"You've got three days to get that into your mailbox. I'm not afraid to say this. I am walking in my authority...if you don't postmark it by the tenth, we will not accept it. God says you have three days to get your thousand-dollar seed in the mail."

"You cannot violate the principle. You have to give. If you don't have any money then you'd better get a penny in your hand or something."

"The Lord told me to give you these socks...In your time of prayer, you are to wear them, and you will walk in authority. Be careful what you say, because what you say will come to pass."

"Some of ya'll sitting there holding your wallet...God said, 'Give it to me! Give it to me! Give it to me! Show me how much you love me! Give it to me! I want to know if you're mine! If you're really mine. How come you can't hear me say, write the check?'"

"Some of you watching and you might be saying, 'Let me pray about it and see if God is talking to me.' You don't have to see if God is talking to you if you got a \$77.00 seed offering in any bank account or pocket. He is talking to you. You need to pick up the phone because I'm telling you, tonight there is an anointing in this studio with your name on it. You need to get a seed into the network tonight."

"I'm going to get my seed in the ground because what I make happen for somebody else, God is going to make happen for me. Pick up the phone! I don't care if the lines are busy for half the night. Keep on trying! Put it on redial! Put it on redial! Tell the Devil that, 'I got an emergency! I need something! I need something from God and God needs something from me!'"

"Pick up the phone! It may be your last \$77.00 seed offering. But you pick up the phone and you make that pledge. Because God is ready to turn some things around for you!"

"If you're one of those three people that the Lord spoke through me moments ago about a million dollar gift. Whether you're that professional athlete, whether you're that successful businessman or whether you're that woman that has been blessed. You do what the Lord is telling you to do. Because, when God speaks about a significant seed, He has a significant miracle on His mind. God doesn't play games! And that's serious business when you start talking about levels like that. That's because God has a significant miracle on His mind."

"in ten months" there will be a revival, and "souls will be saved", but "in the midst of this there will be an economic revival".

He will pastor a church "That has to be, has to be, poverty free". This "has to happen". He added.. Because of the 'anointing', (His Emphasis). "I am not supposed to be pastoring poor people". (He did add that God will send poor people to him but only so they get a release from poverty).

Our goal is as simple as it is strategic: To create wealth! And empower our people to steward that wealth for the purposes of the kingdom, the strengthening of their communities and for the economic well being of their children's children! (Emphasis in red on their official web site)

"Give \$10 and receive \$1000; Give \$1000 and receive \$100,000 ... give one house and receive one hundred houses or a house worth one hundred times as much. Give one airplane and receive one hundred times the value of the airplane. ... In short, Mark 10:30 is a very good deal"

"Being poor is a sin, when God promises prosperity. New house? New car? That's chicken feed. That's nothing compared to what God wants to do for you"

"I do believe you know wealth in a sense is like energy you can't destroy it, its just transferred, and I believe in a great economic collapse. The wealth of the world will not

destroyed it will be transferred, and I believe a lot of it will be transferred to the believers."

"I'm talking about your money. You know one of the greatest things that is going to happen in the year 2,000 were about to see the church rise up with a revelation that only this generation has ever been given of God's word concerning high finances in the kingdom of God. And we are just about to see the greatest transfer of wealth out of the hand of the wicked into the hand of the just."

"Well, you need to hear about money, because you aren't gonna have no love and joy and peace until you get some money!"

Prosperity Gospel Danger Signs

[8] Following is a list of teaching that we may hear quite often and if we are comfortable listening these danger signs, our faith has already been twisted and we are listening to prosperity gospel.

1. If you love God you will 'tithe'

God does not measure your love for him by how much money you give to your local church institution. That statement is just a way to manipulate people and get them to feel guilty, since most Christians do want to prove their love for God. Christians should be generous of their own free will and not be manipulated into trying to keep an Old Testament Law. A better indication of how much you love God is reflected in how you treat other people. Do you yourself do what Christ commanded believers to do or do you just give your 'tithe' to the church? Jesus taught us to take care of those in need.

In Matt 25:34-36 and Matt 25:40, Jesus talks about feeding the hungry, clothing the helpless, visiting those in prison, etc. God is not after your money, but instead he wants all of your heart. Giving to churches and seemingly 'good' ministries does not fulfill our requirement to do the things outlined above. As normal healthy Christians, we should be doing the work ourselves and not just getting comfortable giving money to some minister that gets us excited about giving. Also notice that money is not a major issue in the above scriptures.

2. God wants all Christians to prosper

Sometimes Bible preachers say that God wants all believers to be rich so they can give more to help spread the gospel. That is also ridiculous. The person that is teaching you that is the person who wants to get your money. That is the bottom line. They want your money to flow into their pockets. Unfortunately many believers are impressed with the hundreds and maybe even thousands that get help through these ministries because these ministries can boast that they in turn give a 'tithe' of the money that comes in. You are using the wrong measuring rod. It should be thousands and tens of thousands helped or saved as a result of the generosity of believers.

Teaching that God wants all believers to be financially rich is wrong. Many Christians have been taught incorrectly that the following scripture is proof that God wants

Christians to be rich. *3 John 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.* This is NOT an indication of God's wish for all Christians to be financially prosperous. The Bible contains many warnings about the dangers of riches. Following are just a few of them:

Matt 19:23-26 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

1 Tim 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Verse 9 above is a warning for anyone that desires to be rich - saints and sinners both. **If you have accepted the 'prosperity gospel' then you believe that you are supposed to be financially rich and desire to be rich - then this warning is especially for you.**

3. The Bible says '.. the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just ..'

The Bible sure does say that. But, as usual, the verse is taken out of context and twisted to get people excited about getting something as a result of their giving. Unfortunately, it follows the 'prosperity gospel' formula of teaching people to 'give-to-get'. Let's see what the verse says. *Prov 13:22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.*

There is nothing wrong with what the Bible is saying, the problem is with the interpretation. This portion of a verse is used to get people excited and looking forward to getting '..the sinner's wealth..'. Stop a moment and think. If this were true the way it is usually taught, then a sinner's wealth would always flow to the righteous. Without trying too hard, you should be able to come up with some names of sinners whose fortunes did not and does not flow to the righteous. Nevertheless, this portion of a verse is used to get people excited and ready to receive this great flow of money that supposedly will come to the righteous real soon. This teaching is usually followed by heavy pressure to give to a church or ministry with the promise that God will bless you. A greedy person taught you to be greedy and God doesn't promise blessings to greedy folks. Greedy folks can convince a lot of people with itching ears to give them money but just because the speaker is wealthy does not mean it is a result of God's blessings.

Using this portion of scripture as an excuse it seems, some very notable ministries have supposedly accepted sums of money from various organizations that seek to compromise the gospel of Jesus Christ and substitute it with a gospel of wealth and comfort. These ministries did not plunder the wicked. Instead they sold out and have become subject to a different gospel.

So then, as a result of this popular teaching, we have Christians lusting after the riches of sinners. There's is something wrong with that. We are warned in the book of Proverbs: *Prov 12:12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, But the root of the righteous yields fruit.* You may be a Christian but the Bible clearly teaches us that it is wicked to desire the riches of evil men. There is no exception. If you have been taught to lust after the riches of the evil, then you have been listening to the 'prosperity gospel' which is often very far from the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

4. The Bible says 'God will increase my store of seed and that I will be made rich ..'

The Bible does say something like that but it is not a promise for everybody just because they are a Christian. *2 Corinthians 9:10-11 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.* It is incorrect to teach that the verse quoted above is somehow a promise for everyone. It is not. What is happening here is that the writer is continuing to explain the benefits of being generous. It seems it is often taught incorrectly that after God blesses with great riches that you that you can be generous. That is incorrect. You can be generous while having very little as demonstrated

2 Corinthians 8:1-2 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. Generosity is not something that is reserved for the rich. The Macedonian church was noted for their 'extreme poverty' but yet they wanted to share in the '... service to the saints ...' Generosity is something that everyone can have right now and not wait for some overwhelming blessing from God before being generous. This is certainly true for Christians that are generous like the Macedonian church. Their generosity was a result of what was in them and NOT as a result of some preacher promising what they could get in return.

5. I was told to bring my W2 form to church!!?

WAKE UP!! Shake yourself free from the clutches of some preacher that your itching ears have allowed yourself to get attached to!! Preachers can request and even demand this because you have been convinced that you need to 'tithe' to please God, you don't read the Bible for yourself or if you do, you really don't understand it and you are not thinking for yourself. No religious leader walked out to your farm to count the cows or sheep or whatever herds you had to tell you how many were supposed to go to the synagogue in order to obey the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law did not instruct religious leaders to come around at harvest time to make sure that Israelites tithed the correct amount. Your church requesting your W2 form is just another way the original Old Testament scriptures have been reinterpreted to supposedly 'fit' these modern times. Tithing was never money. It was always produce or animals.

6. You have to give seed money to build your faith!!!!?

You don't need to give anyone money to build your faith in God. Hebrews Chapter 11 contains a list of people that were commended because of their faith in God. None of

them had to give money to have their faith built. You don't have to give 'seed money' to build your faith in God either. The way to have your faith built is to do the same as the people mentioned in Hebrews 11 - trust God. Believe God. *Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.* Are you seeking him or are you seeking earthly rewards? Are you giving money because or what you can get out of it? Do you think you can force God to bless you even though you give for selfish reasons? God doesn't bless selfishness no matter how convincing the presenter was.

Conclusion

Following are the conclusions drawn based on what is discussed above.

1. Giving & Tithing alone do not result in prosperity.
2. Prosperity is not always material blessing.
3. Prosperity is a result of obedience to the word of God.
4. It doesn't matter how much we give, the motivation behind our giving matters.
5. Certainly the givers are rewarded in this world.
6. Giving results in eternal blessing as more ministry is done and more souls are added to His kingdom.
7. Giving and expecting the return in many folds is not scriptural.
8. Never gets enticed by the false promises about giving.
9. Tithe doesn't involve only money, tithe in all that we possess including our time.
10. Our tithes and offerings are needed to support ministers, ministries and those who are in need, the poor, the hungry, the widows and the orphans.

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