

1. This morning we are going to finish talking about an aspect of this year of jubilee where the Lord longs to bring restoration and renewal. And that is the area of finances.
2. I truly believe God's desire is to bring financial blessing to those who need it, as they obey the word of God.
3. In week one we talked about the Importance of being a good steward.
4. Last week we studied the book of Malachi 3:8-10 and the title of the message was The truth about the Tithe.
5. Let me read for you verse 8 because it set the tone for the message last week. **Malachi 3:8** "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.
6. We began the message by talking about how personal it is when somebody steals from you or robs you.
7. We said very few things have the ability to shake your world like being robbed.
8. Being robbed is in your face. It violates your space. It makes you question your security. Being robbed just makes you feel violated.
9. But even worse than being robbed by a stranger is being robbed by, or having something stolen by someone that you know. Someone you have a relationship with.
10. God, through the prophet Malachi, compared how the nation of Israel was handling their tithes and offerings to robbing God.
11. God says you are robbing me. How are you robbing me? In tithes and offerings.
12. God is basically saying to the nation of Israel, for centuries I have watched over you, I have protected you, I have provided for you, I have guided you, I have blessed you over and over again. The very least you could do is obey me when it comes to your finances.
13. Because the nation of Israel was unwilling to do the very least they could do by being obedient in their finances, God felt as though he was being robbed.
14. Naturally, the fact that God felt like he was being robbed was affecting the relationship between Israel and God.
15. Remember we said that when the bible talks about money there is a much deeper issue than just finances. Obeying God in our finances has less to do with money, and a whole lot more to do with relationship.

16. The first thing we did was to ask a question. What is the tithe? Tithe is a word meaning tenth. Therefore, a tithe of something is the tenth part or 10% of something.
17. In this case that something is our income. So, when we talk about the tithe, we are talking about giving 10% of our income back to God.
18. That means if I make \$100 income = \$10 tithe.
19. That means if I make \$1,000 income = \$100 tithe.
20. That means if I make \$10,000 income = \$1,000 tithe.
21. That means if I make \$400 income = \$40 tithe.
22. The first thing that was damaging the relationship between the nation of Israel and God was the fact that the people were not giving their tithe to God.
23. The second thing that was damaging the relationship between God and Israel is the fact that they were not bringing the whole tithe.
24. We said that many people view the tithe like a tax and try to pay the least amount of tithe possible.
25. Some want to pay on net income rather than gross income. Others pay tithe on what is left at the end of the month, if there is any left.
26. Remember, our purpose for tithing is not to pay the least amount possible.
27. And our purpose for tithing is not because God needs our money. We tithe because we want to be obedient to God. Because when we are obedient to God it deepens our relationship with Him. Our relationship with God is dependent on obedience.
28. The third thing that was damaging the relationship between God and Israel was the issue of where to bring their tithe.
29. Israel was not bringing their tithe to the local store house, in this case the temple, as God had commanded, they were giving their tithe in several pagan temples and to foreign Gods.
30. We said that just like in bible times, people have many options on where they can bring or pay their tithe. There are many wonderful ministries that would love to have your tithe and my tithe.
31. There is not one thing wrong with supporting a ministry of some type, but we must understand that according to the word of God we should only support that ministry after we have given our tithe to the local storehouse, the place where we worship on a regular basis.

32. The next question we asked was how does the tithe affect my everyday life?
33. The answer is simple. Obedience to the tithe brings blessing, but disobedience to the tithe brings cursing.
34. God said to Israel in **Malachi 3:8-9** You are under a curse-the whole nation of you-because you are robbing me. **10** Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.
35. You see not paying my tithe is an offense to God that only serves to remove my family and I from the flow of God's blessing that he has for our lives.
36. I have heard people say over the years, "I can't afford to pay my tithe"; I believe the truth is, you and I can't afford not to pay our tithe.
37. Today I want to share with you the last message in this series.

**TEXT:** **2 Corinthians 9:6-8** Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. **7** Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **8** And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

**TITLE:** **Enough is Enough**

**INTRO:**

1. In the book of 2 Corinthians chapter 9, the apostle Paul takes a moment to remind the Corinthian believers about a promise they had made to send an offering to the churches in Macedonia.
2. The purpose for this offering was to strengthen the work there in Macedonia and to help the churches there share the message of Jesus Christ in the hopes that many would accept Jesus as their savior and begin a relationship with Him.
3. So, Paul writes to remind them of their promise, and he tells them in verse three that he is going to send some brothers to come and pick up the offering to take back to Macedonia, and then his final purpose is to give them some instruction on the manner in which they are to give this special offering.
4. If you have a bible that has reference notes out to the side, you will notice that verse 7 has a reference back to the book of **Exodus 25: 1-3**

The LORD said to Moses, **2** "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. **3** These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; The passage then goes on to mention several other things the people could bring as an offering to God.

5. So, what we see here is the third aspect of our finances in which God desires to bless us. Keeping in mind that the foundation upon which we build our thoughts concerning our finances is the fact that it is God's greatest desire in the world to bless us.
6. The first aspect of obedience to God in our finances is stewardship. Doing with God's money what God says.
7. The second aspect of obedience to God in our finances is the tithe. Being faithful to give 10% of our gross income to the local storehouse or place where we worship.
- 8. The third aspect of obedience to God in our finances is in offerings. Giving special offerings above and beyond our tithe.**
9. I remember when I was a teenager, and I first began to learn these principles about our finances. I accepted pretty well the idea of stewardship, I also didn't buck too bad at the idea of paying my tithe, but I didn't make a whole lot of money and when I was told that God wanted me to give offerings above and beyond my tithe, I just felt like screaming, "enough is enough".
10. I sulked around for a few days rebelling at the thought of giving offerings above and beyond my tithe. And then all of the sudden one day this thought entered my mind.
11. What if God said enough is enough? What if God just up and decided one day "I have blessed Jeff Cox all I'm going to bless him? I have had enough of blessing him and his family. I have just had enough."
12. Can I tell you something today? The enemy, the devil, did not want me to grasp a hold of this life-changing principle, and I can tell you he doesn't want you to get a hold of it either.
13. Because this idea of offerings has the ability to transform our finances. It has the ability to begin a multiplication process in our finances that will literally boggle our minds.
14. How many would say by raising their hand I would like God to multiply my finances.

15. To clarify, I don't mean add to your finances, (100+100=200) but multiply my finances. (100x100=10,000)
16. I believe the secret to multiplication is in the giving of offerings.
17. I want us to look this morning at how we should give offerings and then at God's process of blessing our offerings.

### How to give an offering.

1. The first thing we need to understand is that offerings are separate and distinct from our tithe.
2. **Malachi 3:8** "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.
3. God made a distinction between these two acts of giving because they are separate and different.
4. An offering is something I give above and beyond my tithe. My tithe comes first, offerings come second.
5. Malachi 3:9 described Israel as being under a curse because they had been unfaithful in tithes and offerings.
6. An offering is something that follows the giving of the tithe.
7. How much offering should I give? **2 Corinthians 9:7** says... Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give... **Exodus 25:2** says... You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.
8. When it comes to offerings there is no set amount as there is with the tithe. It is between you and God.
9. For example, maybe we have a missionary guest and God speaks to your heart an amount of money he wants you to give in the offering.
10. While there is no set amount Paul does give us some guidelines concerning the giving of offerings.
  - a. **Cheerfully.** **2 Cor. 9:7**... not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. If God speaks to you to give an offering of a certain amount to a certain thing and you do it with a bad attitude, you might just be cancelling out the blessing and the benefits of the offering.
  - b. **Generously.** **2 Corinthians 9:6** Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Why would I want to give generous offerings? Because of the principle of sowing and reaping. Paul says if you sow sparingly, you reap sparingly, but if you sow generously you reap generously. You wouldn't till up a large

garden space and then plant one solitary tomato plant and then wonder why the whole space wasn't filled with plants.

- c. I believe this little saying sums up perfectly the idea of the offering. **The tithe is what I owe; the offering is what I sow.**
11. How do I give my offerings?
- After I have given my tithe.
  - According to what God lays on my heart.
  - Cheerfully.
  - Generously.
- 12 Now that we have looked at the technical aspect of the offering I want to get into the exciting part. How does God bless our offerings? God blesses our offerings through...

## **Multiplication**

- To help the Corinthian church understand better the power of giving offerings Paul uses an example that they can easily understand. Look with me again at **2 Corinthians 9:6** Remember this: **Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.**
- Again, the principle here is of sowing and reaping. But to understand the principle of sowing and reaping, we have to understand the multiplication factor that takes place as a result of sowing.
- The law of sowing and reaping tells us that when you sow a seed you reap a harvest or a multiplication of that seed.
- In Matthew chapter 13, Jesus tells a parable about a mustard seed, and the tree that grows as a result of sowing that one seed.
- Matthew 13:31-32** He told them another parable: **"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. 32 Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."**
- Let's unpack this illustration so we can grasp the magnitude of what Jesus has said.
- This is a mustard seed. (show single seed)
- The mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds there is on planet earth. And yet, in spite of its tiny size, when this one single seed is planted or sown, something amazing happens.
- When this one single seed is planted or sown in the ground, it grows not into a plant, but it grows into as tree.

10. Certain (not all) mustard trees can grow to be 20 feet wide, and as high as 20 feet tall. (illustrate with Michael)
11. This one seed grows into a tree that size.
12. The mustard plant or tree grows very quickly. It can reach full maturity in 90-95 days.
13. It also produces seeds very quickly as well. Usually in about 6 weeks.
14. Now here is the crazy part. One single mustard tree of 20 feet tall can produce tens of thousands of mustard seeds. (show the seeds)
15. And those tens of thousands of mustard seeds can then be planted or sown the next year and produce tens of thousands of new trees.
16. As you can see, what you sow is multiplied greatly to the point that what is reaped can barely be compared to what was sown.
17. Paul was reminding the Corinthian church that by giving an offering, they were sowing a seed into the work of Macedonia that would reap a harvest of souls for the kingdom of God.
18. By supporting the church in Macedonia with an offering the Corinthian church was empowering their brothers in Christ to touch hearts for the glory of God.
19. That same thing happens when we give an offering. There is multiplication. When we give an offering to missions, we are planting a seed that will result in lives being saved for the glory of God. Those lives will touch other lives, and before long there is a multiplication in which thousands of people are impacted by the good news of Jesus.
20. There is multiplication when we sow through offerings.
21. The second way in which God blesses our offerings is through.

## Provision

1. Read with me again **2 Corinthians 9:8** And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.
2. Not only does God bless and multiply our offerings in order to build his kingdom, but God also supplies an abundant provision for those who are willing to give offerings.
3. Paul says and God is able to make all grace abound. That word grace has been described as the freely given, unmerited favor and love of God.

4. Another definition calls **grace** the influence or spirit of God operating in humans to regenerate or strengthen them. That word **abound** means to be abundant or plentiful.
5. In other words, Paul says God will give you abundant favor, love and strength that will serve to regenerate or renew you in every way.
6. What is the purpose for this abundant power and love and strength? **So that in all things**. Not some things. Not in a few things but in all things.
7. In all things **at all times**. Not sometimes, not part of the time, not just on Tuesday & Thursday and every other Saturday but at all times.
8. **Having all you need**. Sufficient. Enough. Adequate. Abundant.
9. **You will abound in every good work**. In other words, you will be successful in the good works that you do.
10. You want to talk about provision. That's provision.
11. When I think of the word **abound**, I kind of get the idea of a gazelle leaping, gliding, and prancing along. Light and feathery.
12. That is the kind of life that God wants for you and me.
13. And as that thought filled my mind, I had to remind myself what was the catalyst of all that wonderful life-giving power. An offering.
14. An offering? How can that be? Because when the word of God talks about money it's about a whole lot more than money. Money is just the tip of the iceberg.

#### Conclusion:

1. At the root of the issue is relationship. When I trust Jesus enough to make him the lord of my life. When I trust Jesus enough to let him be the master while I am the steward. When I trust Jesus enough to obey him in my tithes and offerings, I am saying to him there is no other relationship on the face of the earth that is as important as my relationship with you.
2. When I withhold my life and my talents, and my tithe and my offerings from him I am sending the message that everything on the face of the earth is more important than he is.
3. When I evaluate my relationship with God and compare what he brings to the relationship verses what I bring to the relationship, I realize that God is getting the short end of the stick every time. But yet He is content as long as we are obedient to Him.

4. What are you sowing? Remember whatever you are sowing you are going to reap. And whatever you reap it will be multiplied.
5. Are you sowing, and building and investing in a relationship with God? (salvation) (spiritual growth)
6. Are you regularly sowing into the kingdom of God by being a good steward of all the resources he has given you, including money?
7. Are you sowing into the lives of others by giving, serving, and loving?
8. God's desire is abundant multiplication of blessing and provision, but that only happens as we obediently sow what, when, and where God shows us.
9. Pastor, I want to go to the next level in my giving and my receiving. I want to reap the multiplication and the provision that God has available to my family and me.
10. Would you pray for one another? Form small circles. Pray for.
  - a. Godly stewardship.
  - b. Obedience to tithe.
  - c. Willingness to sow offerings.