

## STEWARDSHIP



When Christ began His ministry in Jerusalem, one of the first things He did was to drive the money changers out of the temple. Three and a half years later, as He neared the end of His ministry, the money changers had returned to the temple.

Notice what the Word Says Christ did:

**"And Jesus went into the temple of God and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, overthrew the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." Matthew 21:12, 13.**

Not long ago a newspaper reported that a large church found itself short of operating funds. The church devised a most ingenious scheme to raise the needed funds. It had printed raffle tickets and sold chances on a case of liquor. One member, after having been taught how to gamble by the church, became the proud possessor of a case of liquor, by which he could become intoxicated. Some defend such practices, reasoning that they are necessary in order to finance the preaching of the gospel. It would not be necessary to stoop to such practices if, once again, we would study the Bible and follow God's plan for giving to the gospel.



## WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT STEWARDSHIP

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”

Matthew 6:33.

As you study, be thinking about the Life Quest questions.

- What does this topic tell me about God?
- What difference does this topic make to my daily life?
- How does this topic help me in my relationship with Jesus?

### HIS WORD SAYS

1. Over what does God, rightly claim ownership? Psalm 24:1; Psalm 50:10-12.

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*All things belong to God alone, for He made them. This includes us and all that we possess.*

2. Who gives us the ability to earn a living? Deuteronomy 8:18.

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*In addition to God owning us and all our possessions, He also is the one who bestows upon us gifts and abilities by which we can gain wealth and prosper. Even our very abilities belong to Him.*



3. What should be our response to the Lord for all that He has entrusted to us?  
Proverbs 3:9, 10.

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*We show our gratitude to God by returning part of what He has given us back to Him. For doing this God promises to provide for our basic needs. However, caution is needed here, God does not intend to make us all supremely rich and wealthy in worldly treasure. God knows that for many riches would be a snare to distract us from God. We must always remember Jesus' counsel that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God (Mat 19:24). We must learn to be content with what God has seen fit in His wisdom to give us.*

4. What is God's plan for providing for His work? Malachi 3:10.

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*It is through our returning of tithe that God intended for the Gospel to go to the world.*



5. To whom does the tithe belong and what is it described as being? Leviticus 27:30-32.

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*Tithe is the tenth of our increase. It is holy and it belongs to God.*

6. How did Abraham show that he was acquainted with the tithing system?  
Genesis 14:18-20.

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*Hebrews 7:1-2 also tells us that Abraham gave a tenth part of all. The tithe being a tenth of his increase.*



7. What portion of his income did Jacob promise God for blessings received? Genesis 28:20-22. \_\_\_\_\_

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*Like Abraham, Jacob had a clear understanding of God's entitlement to the tenth of his increase. Today many feel that tithe was only an instruction for Israel for the support of the Levites, yet we have a very clear picture of God's faithful people returning their tithe long before Israel existed as a nation. This*

*has always been part of God's plan for the spreading of the gospel.*

8. For what purpose was the tithe to be used during the days of ancient Israel? Numbers 18: 21, 24.

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*The Levites were chosen to be the priesthood, so had no way of earning an income. The tithe was given by all the other tribes to support them. Today the tithe is also for the ministers of the Gospel, so that the truth can be taken to all the world.*

9. How did Jesus give His approval of the Bible tithing plan? Matthew 23:23.

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*Jesus tells us that we ought to faithfully give our tithe to God, while He was also instructing the Pharisees not to neglect the weightier matters of judgement, mercy and faith.*

10. How does Paul say the Christian minister is to be supported? 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14.

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*The things of the temple come as a result of tithe which was faithfully returned to God. Paul was maintaining the reality that ministers of the Gospel are supported through tithe.*

11. What does a man do when he withholds tithe and offerings from God? Malachi 3:8, 9.

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*Tithe already belongs to God, even before we give it back to Him. So if we should withhold it, we are robbing Him.*

12. What blessings does God promise to those who will be faithful in recognizing His ownership of tithes and offerings? Malachi 3:10.

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*The windows of heaven may not necessarily relate to temporal treasures, there are many other ways in which God blesses us, the most important of these being spiritual blessings and our restoration to His perfect image.*

13. When are we to think of God and our obligation to Him? Matthew 6:33.

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14. How will God reward the liberal giver? Luke 6:38.

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*The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ's sake sacrifice their life in this world, will keep it unto life eternal.*

15. Where does Jesus advise us to store our treasures? Matthew 6:19-21.

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*Thousands of stories could be told about those who have tried God's plan of tithing who have discovered that God's promises are sure. A farmer had always been faithful in returning to God a tithe of his income. One day he saw a dark cloud of locusts in the sky and knew that it was headed toward his farm. If the locusts ate his crop he faced financial ruin. With his family gathered about him that evening, he reminded God of the promise in Malachi 3:10, 11. The family went to bed that night and slept secure in the knowledge that their heavenly Father never sleeps, but watches over His own. The next morning the farmer arose to examine his fields. He discovered that the locusts had eaten everything up to his fences on every side. Not a green stem was left on the other side, but God had kept His promise and had rewarded the farmer's faith by protecting his crop from the locusts. God never leaves a faithful giver destitute.*



"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts."

Haggai 2:8

"...of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Genesis 28:22

### LIFE QUEST:

Have you thoughtfully reviewed these Questions?

- What does this topic tell me about God?
- What difference does this topic make to my daily life?
- How does this topic help me in my relationship with Jesus?

### YOUR TURN

Check the statements that most closely reflect your response to this study.

I still have some unanswered questions regarding stewardship. I need more study.

I choose to form a partnership with God concerning all aspects of my life.

I have decided to return to God on a regular basis the tithe and offerings from the income He provides for me.

Other \_\_\_\_\_