

# GOD'S FORMULA FOR FINANCIAL BLESSINGS

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Before Jesus returned to the Father He promised to return again for His people. John 14:1-3. He also gave a parable to illustrate what was expected of His people while He was gone. Matthew 25:14-30. He has set each of us as His stewards to watch over His goods, and will one day return and say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Luke 16:2. Until that day it is important that we remember that "it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Corinthians 4:2.

From the very beginning God has set us as stewards over His entire creation. Genesis 1:28; 2:15. Everything on this earth belongs to God by right of His creation. The animals are all His. Psalms 50:10-12. All of the gold, silver, and precious metals are His. Haggai 2:8. Everything is His even including each of us. Psalms 24:1. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" 1 Corinthians 4:7.

We are His not only by right of creation, but also of redemption; for we "are bought with a price." 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. That price was the precious blood of the Son of God. Everyone of us will one day hear Jesus say either "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," or "Thou wicked and slothful servant." Matthew 25:21, 26. One will enter the kingdom of God, the other the lake of fire.

Heaven's goods are entrusted to us: therefore, faithfulness is required of us. As faithful stewards we need to make the best possible use of what has been entrusted to us; not for ourselves, but for God. We are to seek "first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" then all the other things we need will be taken care of. Matthew 6:33.

Our greatest problem is that we tend to put other things before God. Jesus gave a parable to warn of the dangers of covetousness and trusting in the things which we possess. Luke 12:15-21. The foolish man in this parable was concerned about material wealth and sought to lay up treasure on earth. In response the Lord said "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:21.

The age-old question still has great importance today. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matthew 16:26. "Therefore lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:20, 21.

If we are having financial problems, to where it seems we are putting our money "into a bag with holes" God says stop and "consider your ways." Haggai 1:6, 7. We must get first things first (Matthew 6:33) and remember that it is God that gives us the ability to even earn money. Deuteronomy 8:18.

The Bible tells us that the "tithe", or tenth of all we have is holy and belongs to God. Leviticus 27:30. It was to be used for the support of the ministry in the Old Testament (Numbers 18:21) and the apostle Paul tells us this same principle is carried over into the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14. The "Lord ordained" that it be so. It is His own plan.

The Bible is clear that ten percent of our income is holy and belongs to God; but we often fail to remember that it is the first part that is His. Proverbs 3:9, 10. We must always keep Him first and not attempt to give Him what might be left over.

Jesus upheld the Bible doctrine of tithing (Matthew 23:23) and has told us that anyone

unfaithful in returning the tithe and offering are guilty of theft: and the one we rob is none other than God Himself. Malachi 3:8-10. He asks us to "prove", or test Him and see if He doesn't bless our faithfulness. He assures us that God will provide for all our needs (Matthew 6:26-32) and His promise is "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." Luke 6:38.

The Bible is clear that the tithe is 10%, but many wonder how much the offering should be. "But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7. If we are willing to trust Him in this He promises that we will always have "all sufficiency in all things." Verse 8.

Have you been robbing God? Do you trust Him? Are you willing to prove Him? He has given you everything; life, the ability to make a living, the very air you breathe and water you drink. Yes, He has given you everything, even Himself. Will you selfishly withhold from Him that which is His, that which is holy? Will you rob God? Will you hear Him say "well done, thou good and faithful servant", or "depart from me, ye cursed"? Matthew 25:21, 41.

### *Study Helps*

- Psalm 50:10-12 ----- What belongs to God?
- Haggai 2:8 ----- What else is His?
- Psalm 24:1 ----- What besides this earth is His?
- 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 ----- Aside from creation why are we His ?
- 1 Corinthians 4:2 ----- What is required of a steward?
- Leviticus 27:30 ----- What will a faithful steward always remember?
- Numbers 18:21 ----- What was this tenth to be used for?
- 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14 ----- What is it used for today?
- Proverbs 3:9 ----- Which tenth is God's?
- Matthew 23:23 ----- What did Jesus say about tithing?
- Malachi 3:8, 9 ----- What do we do if we withhold tithe and offering?
- Malachi 3:10 ----- What does God want us to "prove" Him about?
- Matthew 6:26-32 ----- Does He promise to care for us?
- Matthew 6:33 ----- What should be placed first in our lives?
- 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7 ---- How much above tithe should an offering be?
- Matthew 25:21 ----- Don't you want to hear Jesus say this to you?