

Choosing Life Despite Money

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Some have noted that the important thing to learn about money matters is that it really does. The “Almighty Dollar” is a huge source of sorrow and death in America. Worship of Mammon moves medical death dealers to “make a killing” in legalized abortion. Well over twenty percent of abortions kill babies whose mothers are inflation-driven to a bloody balance of the family budget.¹ Inflated medical costs will soon dictate rationed medical care (a pain pill?) for those who are infirm and/or elderly.

Truly, those plagued by “the love of money . . . have erred from the faith,” inflicting their families with death and sorrow (I Timothy 6:10). So, is money an evil to be avoided as an unmitigated evil? Are God’s people called to take a vow of poverty? Definitely not! One does not abandon the use of fire because some do not take proper care in cooking and heating. Our fathers in the Faith, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were successful businessmen. Indeed, even Christ in parable directs us to use money as we “occupy [trade]” in our several callings that not infrequently require use of capital (Luke 19:13).

Rather, God’s people historically have found the discipline of the Lord’s Tithe to be an effective remedy for idolatrous avarice. Further, the Tithe righteously administered sustains welfare, education and worship ministries not addressed in the market place. In Israel, the Tithe was given to the Levites (Numbers 18:20-21) who were charged with these ministries. Christ insisted that all of God’s law be observed including the command to Tithe. In his condemnation of Pharisees for omission of “weightier of the law, judgment, mercy and faith” Jesus nevertheless commended them for tithing their spices (Matthew 23:23).

God’s people have repeatedly neglected the giving of the Tithe. After all there was no Israel Revenue Service to collect them. Such a halt to tithing is tantamount to robbing God as Malachi pointedly puts it (Malachi 3:8). The penalty Israel experienced for their *robbery* was religious and economic decline. Revivals have repeatedly come when God’s people read His word and repent of their refusal to tithe. When Hezekiah reopened the Temple before Judah’s great Passover celebration, he commanded resumption of tithing (II Chronicles 31:4) to sustain the Priests and Levites in their essential ministries. The people’s very generous response was overwhelming necessitating more storerooms (31:5-13). Similarly, the tithe was instrumental in sustaining Judah’s revival that was jump-started by public reading of “the book of the law of Moses” after they had returned from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon (Nehemiah 8:1; 10:37f).

God’s people are once again disposed not to tithe of their income to support the ministries of education, welfare and worship. They demand explicit reaffirmation in the New Testament of the Lord’s commandment to tithe. They reject any suggestion of tithing in Paul’s command that everyone “lay by him in store, [on Sunday] as God hath prospered him” (I Corinthians 16:2). This clearly proportional offering was to be sent as “relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea” in midst of a famine (Acts 11:28-29). Likewise, Will Durant reports in Caesar and Christ that Christians, largely slaves, rescued exposed Roman infants from infanticide and raised them as Christians “with the aid of the community fund” (1971:598), doubtless maintained by tithe-like, proportional giving.

Widespread abandonment of the Tithe, has shriveled numerous pro-life ministries such as homes for unwed mothers. Goodbye “adoption option!” Church ministries to the poor have been largely replaced by costly government welfare programs since politicians discovered this gold mine of votes. And, public schools feature curricula that commonly foster implicit atheism.

Faithful giving and oversight of the Tithe still offers God’s people a viable option to deliver those “drawn unto death . . . ready to be slain” (Proverbs 24:11) whether on campus prowled by perverts, in public housing filled with deadly drug deals or in a local Planned Parenthood abortuary. Robbing God has fearsome consequences. Let us repent of our hard-hearted, stingy refusal to Choose Life in generous

giving and life-affirming investment of the Lord's Tithes.

1. http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5511a1.htm?s_cid=ss5511a1_e%2%A0