

God's economics: Principle 5: Giving enables us to have the deep satisfaction of advancing God's kingdom.

10. What are tithes and offerings to be used for? Numbers 18:21

Note: The tithe was to support the Levites, those who were employed in full-time ministry for the Lord. And so it is today that the inheritance of the tithe is for pastors to support their families who serve in full time ministry. In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, tithes are sent to the local conference then it is sent to the world headquarters, which is in Silver Springs, MD. Once the tithe is sent there the money filters down to the various world-wide gospel outreach programs and also to pay conference employees (school teachers, conference officials, pastors, etc...). The tithe is not directly given to pay the pastor like some churches do. Pastors are paid by the local conference. Each Sabbath all monies are counted by at least two deacons, put in a safe, then the treasury department records it (year-end charitable contributions for tax purposes) and then sends it off to the local conference. Offerings are used to pay church building expenses and various departments of the local church such as evangelism, community service, audio visual, etc...

11. Wasn't the tithe only an Old Testament ordinance to support the Jewish priests that served in the tabernacle? 1Corinthians 9:13-14; Luke 11:42

Note: Jesus as well as Paul commends the returning of tithe. This is considered as a New Testament endorsement of the tithing system.

God's economics: Principle 6: Where your heart is there will be your money also & Live within your means.

12. Can I really afford to return a faithful tithe and offering? Matthew 6:33; Psalm 37:25

Note: Perhaps that is asking the wrong question. Maybe a better question is can I afford to live without God's blessing? God promises to provide for our needs while we are faithful to Him. In God's economic system, 90% is greater than 100%. God can make 90% of our income stretch if we trust in Him.

MY CHOICE: I want to be a good a steward of my: time, talents, and money.

Journey With Jesus



Lesson #24 A Financial Secret You Need to Know

There are two ways of living: one way is trying to make as much money as you can and grasp for everything you want to make yourself happy. Then there is another way of life: to say, "God, You have created me. You sustain me. You have sent Jesus Christ to die on the cross for me. And God, everything I have, all my material possessions, are yours, and I acknowledge that, weekly or monthly, by returning to You a small portion of what you have given to me. And God, I want You to know that my heart's affections are with You."

We are going to look at a financial secret you have to know about. Let's look at six principles of God's economic plan for our life.

God's economics: Principle 1: Everything in the earth belongs to God.

1. How much in the earth really belongs to us? Psalm 24:1, 50:10

Note: The title deed to your home might have your name on it, your bank account might have your name on it, but everything really belongs to God. We are stewards of His property. What is a steward?

Steward: n. A person entrusted with the management of another's property. The Concise Oxford Dictionary. Oxford University Press.

2. What did God make Adam to be? Genesis 1:27-28

Note: From the beginning, God meant for Adam to manage or care for the affairs of the world. Adam was simply a steward of God's property. We pick up where Adam left off. Now, if everything we have belongs to God, then rather than being owners of our lives and property we are mere stewards.

3. What does Paul say we should present ourselves to God as?

Romans 12:1; 1Corinthians 4:7

Note: A "living sacrifice" means unreserved commitment to Jesus in our lives. Why is it so "reasonable," because everything I have comes from God. We are stewards of time, talents, and money that God gives us. Are we living for ourselves and padding our pockets or are we living for God and His cause?

God's economics: Principle 2: God is our supreme provider.

4. What does God give us power to get? Deuteronomy 8:18

Note: Why should we remember God, because He provides at every step in our lives. He provides an education for us. Then He opens up doors of opportunity for us to find jobs. He gives us the ability to learn, interpret, and implement our education so that we can make a living. God is good to us!

5. What is the tithe? Deuteronomy 14:22

Note: Tithe means tenth, and is a tenth of our "increase." This is very simple, if we make \$100 then we return \$10 to the Lord.

6. Is paying tithe important to God? Leviticus 27:30

Note: Just like the Sabbath is holy time that belongs to the Lord, the tithe is also holy and belongs to the Lord. Some might say that tithing is not so important because it is not directly mentioned in God's law, but in a way that's not true. The 8th commandment says, "You shall not steal" (Ex 20:15).

7. If we withhold our tithes and offerings from God what does He call that? Malachi 3:8-9

Note: It is a serious error to withhold the tithe. It is robbing God. And if we knowingly and willingly rob God, He cannot bless us like He wants to and we will reap what we sow. Now, if we as stewards of God's resources are told that 10% of our increase is holy unto the Lord, then it seems to me that paying tithe does not make me benevolent, it does not make me charitable, it does not make me generous, at best, it simply means I'm being honest. Notice that this verse includes both tithes and offerings. Tithe = 10%, but an offering is just that, an offering (suggested 3-5%). So according to this verse, if we only give an offering, but do not return tithes (vice versa) we rob God.

God's economics: Principle 3: Giving with the right motive opens our hearts to be blessed materially and spiritually by God.

8. If we are faithful in returning tithes and offerings what does God promise to do for us? Malachi 3:10-12

Note: To be technical, we do not pay tithe, we return it. It is not a matter of generosity, but a simple matter of honesty and integrity. Will we be honest with God's claims on His resources, or will we rob our Creator and seek to live independently of Him, but if we return what is God's He promises to bless us both spiritually and financially. When it comes to our God, every act of obedience to His commands brings with it abundant blessings that make any risk or sacrifice more than worth it in the end (see also 2Cor 9:7).

God's economics: Principle 4: Sacrificing for God's cause teaches us deeper lessons of trust in Him.

9. Should we give God what is left over after all our bills and taxes are paid? Proverbs 3:9-10

Note: There are a few ways you can return tithe. The easiest way is to return tithes and offerings from your gross income each paycheck. Another way is to return tithes and offerings from the net income and then make up the difference when you get your year-end W-2. We recommend the first way because it relieves the temptation to withhold from the Lord at tax time.