

Gold. Mine.

Financial Faithfulness  The Ministry of Money

STEWARDSHIP



"It is possible to give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving" - Richard Braunstein

STANDPOINTS · BY INGO SORKE, PHD

"There are three conversions: the heart, the mind, and finally the purse."

Stewardship - the doctrinal stepchild?! 💰 + 🙏?! · **Experience:** Tithe 📈 Offerings 📉 Spirituality → ⊕

Lutheran "offering": "sacrifice"

Growing up my dad had a monthly budget meeting with me. For years! In · Out · Balance · Account-ability!

"There are givers in this world, and takers. You just experienced the takers" (an elder after my first board meeting)

IN THE BEGINNING



God is a Giver · His Presence = His Presents




Living Depends on Giving

Creation: anti-atheistic to the core - *Matter Means a Maker!* → **Existence:** Place · People · Possessions · Purpose
Stewardship (Gen 1:28) Food (1:29) · Sabbath (2:1-3) · Gold (2:12) · Purpose (2:15) · Companion (2:22) · Covering (3:21) · Protection (4:15)

 **Eden:** "to tend and keep it" (Gen 2:15). "tend" עָבַד: serve · "keep" שָׁמַר: law! (Ex 20:6) **What you keep, keeps you!**

 **Sin caused a cost of living adjustment** - "The LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them" (Gen 3:21).

"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine" (Haggai 2:8) · Choice of Corruption: Creation-Creator Confusion

   "Gold, silver, and precious stones existed in abundance" (PP 90). "Flood" 🌊 → Wind 🌬️ → 🌫️

"By the same means the silver and gold, the choice wood and precious stones, which had enriched and adorned the world before the Flood, and which the inhabitants had idolized, were concealed from the sight and search of men, the violent action of the waters piling earth and rocks upon these treasures, and in some cases even forming mountains above them. **God saw that the more He enriched and prospered sinful men, the more they would corrupt their ways before Him. The treasures that should have led them to glorify the bountiful Giver had been worshiped, while God had been dishonored and despised**" (PP 107.4).

Ezek 7:19 "They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity."

James 5:3 "Our gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire 🔥. **You have heaped up treasure in the last days** ⌚."

Giving for a Living



"To defraud God is the greatest crime of which man can be guilty. Yet this sin is deep and widespread" (CS 86).

Principle

Gen 14:20 Deliverance! "Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe of all" (→ Heb 7:4).

Gen 28:22 Jacob: "of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Ex 20:17: 7x "Thou shalt not covet!" 👁️

Lev 27:30 "And all the tithe of the land [seed of land or fruit of tree], is the LORD'S. It is holy to the LORD."

Num 18:21 tithes = inheritance for work → "those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel" (1Cor 9:14).

Deut 8:10, 18 "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. ... And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth ..."

1 Chron 29:14 "All things come from You, And of Your own we have given You."

Prov 3:9-10 "Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase" → full barns & vats

Prov 28:27 "He who gives to the poor will not lack, but he who hides his eyes will have many curses."

Haggai 1:3-11 Return from Exile after 70 years: 🏠 > 🏛️ → God's local presence → Israel's global presence! Mission!

Matthew 6 Charitable Trust: The Secret Service 📧 📈 📊 Note: the others could return to fishing; not Matthew!

Mt 23:23 Jesus: WOE! Majoring in minors at expense of "justice, mercy, faith"

The Irony of the Widow's Mite:
how much she kept > how much she gave

Mt 25: 3 final parables all stewardship-centric! 👤 💰 📦 🧑

Acts 3:6 "Silver & gold have I none, but I will give what I have: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

Acts 5 Ananias & Sapphira ⚡ "Do not mess with MY baby church!" *Are you honest to the core?!*

1 Tim 6:10 "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" → greediness = faith → "many sorrows"

"Many spend money lavishly in self-gratification. Men and women consult their pleasure and gratify their taste, while they bring to God, almost unwillingly, a stinted offering. They forget that God will one day demand a strict account of how His goods have been used, and that He will no more accept the pittance they hand into the treasury than He accepted the offering of Ananias and Sapphira" (AA 75).

Romans 15:26-27 Macedonians & Achaians: "pleased . . . pleased . . . spiritual → material things"

1 Cor 6:19,20 "Know ye not that ... ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." *Salvation-Stewardship!*

1 Cor 16:2 "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by himself [πὰρ ἑαυτοῦ] in store, as God has prospered him"

2 Cor 8:3-5 "beyond their ability, they were freely willing ... they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us"

2 Cor 8:12 "If there is first a willing mind, it is accepted based on having, not based on not having."

2 Cor 9:6-7 "sows sparingly - reap sparingly" → 🍏 → "God loves a cheerful giver!"

Laodicea: "Because you say: I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing"—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich" (Rev 3:17-18).

MALACHI 3:8-12

Tithe - מַעְשָׂר (ma'ās'er) - "Wipe off this curse as fast as possible" (2T 59.1)

PRACTICE

- 1:1-5 God's Love
- 1:6-2:9 Offerings & Priests
- 2:10-16 Marriage
- 2:17-3:5 Judgment
- **3:6-12 Tithes & Offerings**
- 3:13-4:3 Rewards & Punishment
- 4:4-6 End-time Conclusion

- 3:1-3 "I am coming soon" → **1844!**
- 3:7 "I want to come to you now!"
- 3:8 Thieves in God's Temple!
- 3:9 Curse!
- 3:10 Tithing: Curse Reversal!** 🔄
- 3:11-12 Blessing
- 4:1 "I am coming soon"

"Ten" Heb. עֶשֶׂר → Arabic 10 *ashr*^{un}; *ashara*: "to form a community, a group;" *ashirat*^{un} "tribe," and *ma'shar*^{un} "assembly" - 10 fingers = "collection, union." 10 in Ugaritic *šr*!; Akkadian *ešru*; Aramaic *ās'ar* (TWOT).

10: Minimal #! Gen 18:32; 24:55; 31:7; Num 14:22; Neh 4:12; Job 19:3; Dan 1:12; 7:7; Am 5:3; 6:9; Zech 8:23; Rev 2:10

"The purest joy is not found in riches nor where covetousness is always craving, but where contentment reigns and where self-sacrificing love is the ruling principle" (3T382).

QUOTES

1844! "Christ had come, not to the earth, as they expected, but, as foreshadowed in the type, to the most holy place of the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming at this time to the Ancient of Days: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came"—not to the earth, but—"to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him" Dan 7:13. (GC 424).

This coming is foretold also by the prophet Malachi" (3:1 quoted!).

Tithing is directly tied to the Advent Movement!

"All that is withheld of that which God claims, the tenth of the increase, is recorded in the books of heaven against the withholders, as robbery. **Such defraud their Creator;** and when this sin of neglect is brought before them, it is not enough for them to change their course and begin to work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures made in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them in trust to be returned to the Lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required" (3T 394.3).

"God gives man nine tenths, while He claims one tenth for sacred purposes, as He has given man six days for his own work and has reserved and set apart the seventh day to Himself. **For, like the Sabbath, a tenth of the increase is sacred;** God has reserved it for Himself. He will carry forward His work upon the earth with the increase of the means that He has entrusted to man" (3T 395.2).

Sabbath & Tithe on the same level of sacredness!

"There are even more urgent necessities upon the Israel of God in these last days than were upon ancient Israel. There is a great and important work to be accomplished in a very short time. **God never designed that the law of the tithing system should be of no account among His people;** but, instead of this, He designed that the spirit of sacrifice should widen and deepen for the closing work" (3T 396.1).

"It is part of the minister's work to teach those who accept the truth through his efforts, to bring the tithe to the storehouse, as an acknowledgment of their dependence upon God. The new converts should be fully enlightened as to their duty to return to the Lord His own. **The command to pay tithe is so plain that there is no semblance of excuse for disregarding it. He who neglects to give instruction on this point, leaves undone a most important part of his work"** (GW 370.1).

"I speak of the tithing system, yet how meager it looks to my mind! How small the estimate! How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! **Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance,** shameful recompense for that which cost so much! From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unconditional surrender" (4T 119).

Tithing is inseparably linked to the Cross!

"**Tithes and offerings for God are an acknowledgment of His claim on us by creation, and they are also an acknowledgment of His claim by redemption.** Because all our power is derived from Christ, these offerings are to flow from us to God. They are to keep ever before us the claim of redemption, the greatest of all claims, and the one that involves every other. The realization of the sacrifice made in our behalf is ever to be fresh in our minds and is ever to exert an influence on our thoughts and plans. Christ is to be indeed as one crucified among us" (6T 479.1).

Tithe: Creation + Redemption

"God has given special direction as to the use of the tithe. He does not design that His work shall be crippled for want of means. . . . **Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe to use according to their own judgment.** They are not to use it for themselves in an emergency, **nor to apply it as they see fit, even in what they may regard as the Lord's work"** (9T 247).

"You who have been withholding your means from the cause of God, read the book of Malachi, and see what is spoken there in regard to tithes and offerings. **Cannot you see that it is not best under any circumstances to withhold your tithes and offerings because you are not in harmony with everything your brethren do?** The tithes and offerings are not the property of any man, but are to be used in doing a certain work for God. Unworthy ministers may receive some of the means thus raised, but dare any one, because of this, withhold from the treasury, and brave the curse of God? I dare not. I pay my tithes gladly and freely, saying, as did David, "Of thine own have we given thee" (Special Testimonies, Series A, No. 1, 27 (Aug. 10, 1890).

"Many have long neglected to deal honestly with their Maker. Failing to lay aside the tithe **weekly,** they have let it accumulate, until it amounts to a large sum, and now they are very reluctant to make the matter right. This back tithe they keep, using it as their own. But it is God's property, which they have refused to put into His treasury" (CS 96.2). ***Stewardship must be systematic!***

"We may give to the poor, and harm them, by teaching them to be dependent. Real charity helps men to help themselves" (WM 199).

ADVENTIST HISTORY

📖 *Must Reads: Counsels on Stewardship · Welfare Ministry* 📖

SYSTEMATIC BENEVOLENCE

JN Andrews - 1857 a winter's service in MI; 3 10-pound cakes of maple sugar; a peck of beans; 1 ham; 1/2 hog 🐷; \$4 in cash; "somewhat discouraged as to finances" (1859) - left the ministry! Whites: buffalo-skin overcoat (\$10), \$10!

"Sister Betsy" 📌 5-25 cents/week 📌 2-10 cents · not systematic compulsion (3T 396)

DM Canright: tithe is the Lord's (1876); we don't "pay" tithe; voted at 1878 GC.

Life's 3 Phases (Ed Reid, GC)
Learning · Earning · Returning

My Testimonies: '93 Honda Civic 🚗 · San Antonio - German 🇩🇪 · Glacier View 🏡 · Paris 🇫🇷 · College Scholarship 🎓

"The Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:10).