

# BEFORE YOU SAVE, SPEND, OR STORE

*Leviticus 27:26-34; Matthew 6:24-34 / Malachi 3:1-8*

## *I. God Owns Everything*

A. All human reality belongs to God. “A Psalm of David. *The earth is the LORD’S*, and the fulness thereof; *the world, and they that dwell therein.*” (PSALM 24:1)

B. By any measure, the world and everything in it are subordinate to God and subject to His terms of use. “Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for *all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and *thou art exalted as head above all.*” (1 CHRONICLES 29:11)

C. Since the fall, nothing has come easily to people and there is no reason to expect that to change; *Easy Street* is a figment of the rebellious imagination. “Unto the woman he said, *I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception*; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*” (GENESIS 3:16-19)

D. Job summarized life’s great truth; you can’t take it with you. “And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: *the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away*; blessed be the name of the LORD.” (JOB 1:21)

## *II. God’s Ownership Must Be Respected*

A. God claims a tithe of each person’s increase; God’s tithe has no inherent connection with charity. “And all *the tithe* of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land, *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is the LORD’S: it is holy unto the LORD.* And *if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.*” (LEVITICUS 27:30-31) *Charitable gifts do not count toward fulfilling this obligation.*

B. Abraham, the father of the faithful, practiced tithing long before God revealed the law of Sinai to Moses. “And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And *he gave him tithes of all.*” (GENESIS 14:20)

C. Failure to tithe cheats God; landlords do not view rent as a voluntary act of charity. “*Will a man rob God?* Yet *ye have robbed me.* But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? *In tithes and offerings.*” (MALACHI 3:8)

D. God curses an entire culture when it fails to tithe; the matter is not entirely personal. “*Ye are cursed* with a curse: *for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*” (MALACHI 3:9) *Secular cultures beg for financial crises and God gives them what they demand.*

E. Every problem traces back to sin; there no way to beat God. “*Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough*; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and *he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.*” (HAGGAI 1:6)

### ***III. Consider the Up Side of Tithing***

**A. God promises to bless people who give Him what is His.** “*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and **prove me** now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, **if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.**” (MALACHI 3:10)*

**B. Disaster will keep its distance from Heaven’s people; no secular or pagan society can keep such a promise.** “*And **I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,** and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.” (MALACHI 3:11)*

**C. Neglecting God’s revelation tries His patience; do not call God a liar.** “*Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken *so much* against thee? **Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.**” (MALACHI 3:13-15)*

**D. Jesus makes tithing much more personal.** “*Therefore I say unto you, **Take no thought for your life,** what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. **Is not the life more than meat,** and the body than raiment? **Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?**” (MATTHEW 6:25-26)*

**E. What good can come from worrying?** “*Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?” (MATTHEW 6:27)*

**F. God takes care of His own people; pay more attention to the God Who loves you than to pagan panic and private night terrors.** “*And **why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field,** how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, **if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?**” (MATTHEW 6:28-30)*

**G. Let tomorrow handle tomorrow’s own problems.** “*Therefore take no thought, saying, **What shall we eat?** or, **What shall we drink?** or, **Wherewithal shall we be clothed?** (*For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:*) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But **seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;** and all these things shall be added unto you. **Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.**” (MATTHEW 6:31-34)*