

## Lesson 18 Supplement

### Christian Giving

1. What are some reasons why people don't like it when the topic of money is brought up in the church or when the pastor talks about giving money to the church in one of his sermons?
2. What does Pastor David Vallesky have to say about talking about money and offerings in church?
3. Which Old Testament prophet is very candid about the subject of offerings?

#### **The Israelites and Some Bad Examples of Their Offerings**

**Leviticus 5:14-16** The LORD said to Moses: <sup>15</sup>“When a person commits a violation and sins unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD’s holy things, he is to bring to the LORD as a penalty *a ram* from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel. It is a guilt offering. <sup>16</sup>He must *make restitution* for what he has failed to do in regard to the holy things, *add a fifth of the value to that* and give it all to the priest, who will make atonement for him with the ram as a guilt offering, and he will be forgiven.

1. According to the italicized portions of this passage, what did a person have to give in the guilt offering?
2. Why would God require such a steep price?

**Malachi 1:6-14** “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?” says the LORD Almighty. “It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name.

“But you ask, ‘How have we shown contempt for your name?’

<sup>7</sup> “*You place defiled food on my altar.*

“But you ask, ‘How have we defiled you?’

“By saying that the LORD’s table is contemptible. <sup>8</sup> *When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?*” says the LORD Almighty.

<sup>9</sup> “Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?”—says the LORD Almighty.

<sup>10</sup> “Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you,” says the LORD Almighty, “and I will accept no offering from your hands. <sup>11</sup> My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the LORD Almighty.

<sup>12</sup> “But you profane it by saying of the Lord’s table, ‘It is defiled,’ and of its food, ‘It is contemptible.’ <sup>13</sup> And you say, ‘What a burden!’ and you sniff at it contemptuously,” says the LORD Almighty.

“When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?” says the LORD. <sup>14</sup> “*Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,*” says the LORD Almighty, “and my name is to be feared among the nations.

3. How would define Israel’s sin in Malachi 1:6-14?

4. How might some of our offerings be considered ‘lame and crippled’?

**Malachi 3:6-12** “I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

<sup>7</sup> Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty.

“But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’

<sup>8</sup> “Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me.

“But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’

“*In tithes and offerings.* <sup>9</sup> You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. <sup>10</sup> Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. <sup>11</sup> I will

prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,” says the LORD Almighty. <sup>12</sup> “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.

5. How were the Israelites robbing God in Malachi 3:6-12?
  
6. The Israelites were commanded to offer a tithe to the Lord. Are we required to do the same?
  
7. What can we learn from the tithe and how can it serve us today?
  
8. If the Israelites were commanded to give 10%, what do you think is the average percentage of a person’s income that is given by members in the WELS?

**Haggai 1:1-6** In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest:

<sup>2</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come for the LORD’s house to be built.’ ”

<sup>3</sup> Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: <sup>4</sup> “Is it a time for you yourselves *to be living in your paneled houses*, while this house remains a ruin?”

<sup>5</sup> Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways. <sup>6</sup> *You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”*

9. What were the Israelites more concerned with in Haggai 1:1-6?

10. According to the underlined portion of this section, what did the Lord do to their efforts to become prosperous? And what economic term do we use when the prices of commodities are rising faster than our income?

### **Motivation in Christian Giving**

1. What are some basic ways humans motivate other humans?

**II Corinthians 8:9** For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, *so that you* through his poverty *might become rich*.

1. When II Corinthians 8:9 says that Jesus ‘was rich’, what period of time was this talking about?

2. If this is when Jesus was rich, when did he become poor?

3. According to the italicized portion of this passage, why did Jesus do this?

### **Biblical Examples of Generous Giving**

**I Chronicles 22:14** I have taken great pains to provide for the temple of the LORD a hundred thousand talents of gold, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. And you may add to them.

What is the modern-day book value of the gold David donated for the temple construction?

**II Corinthians 8:1-4** And now, brothers, we want you to know about the *grace* that God has given the Macedonian churches. <sup>2</sup> Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup> For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and **even beyond their ability**. Entirely on their own, <sup>4</sup> they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

1. According to the italicized portion of this passage, what motivated the Macedonian Christians to give?

2. According to the underlined portions of this passage, what was their financial situation like? What could this have led them to do when Paul told them about this special offering for the church in Jerusalem?

3. According to the bold portion of this passage, how much did the Macedonians give?

### Concluding Remarks

What is the question that Christian Giving starts with?