

GIVING

NOV 23
Dec 28

Title: Why Should We Give?

Text: Hebrews 7:1-10

#6

For the past few weeks we have been in a series of messages concerning: WHAT GOD WANTS US TO DO. What is it that God really wants us to do as Christians.

Well, we have looked at many different areas. Such as :forgiveness, being a peacemaker, worship, service, practicing the basic essentials – Bible study, fellowship, communion, prayer. God wants us to demonstrate our unity, he wants us to witness, and he wants us to pray.

Today I want to come to the issue of tithing. The Bible teaches that God wants his people to tithe. And I want to show you why. Take your Bibles, please, and turn to the book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews chapter 7, beginning with Vs 1.

Please stand for the reading of God's Word
(Read Hebrews 7:1-10)

(Prayer)

This 7th chapter of Hebrews deals with the mystery of Melchizedek. And in this story of Melchizedek we find God's answer to this whole issue of tithing.

Now, who was this man, Melchizedek? The Bible teaches that he was a real historical person. He really lived. He was both King and Priest in the ancient city of Jerusalem. In those days it was called Salem. And that he, by way of history, represents in type Jesus Christ. It is very important that you remember that fact.

Melchizedek represents in type Jesus Christ. { *Did you get it*

There is no genealogy recorded about this man. Meaning: we don't know who his mother or father was. There is no record of his life or record of his priesthood. Except a prophetic statement that occurs in Psalm 110. There we read that the Messiah would be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now, the issue in ^{the} ~~the~~ passage is: SHOULD WE TITHE OUR INCOME? And we will understand this issue when we understand the GREATNESS OF JESUS. Dear friends that is what I want you to see this morning. If you don't ^{see the greatness of} see Jesus, you miss the whole point. Because that will effect your giving, your life, and everything else. We need to consider how great Jesus is. That is the point of Vs 4. [The phrase, "now observe" is the word used of a spectator seating in a stadium. And he is gazing intently at all the events as they pass before his eyes. And the Bible says: "I want you to gaze at this great man, Melchizedek, who represents Christ by way of type. See, how great he was. And then learn how great Jesus is. That is what we need to see and learn in this passage. THE GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST. So, let's look at it.


(1A) First of all, the greatness of Jesus is illustrated in the proof dealing with the greatness of this man, Melchizedek. Why is he so great? Three lines of proof.

(1B) Number one, look at the last phrase of Vs 4, as to the recognition of Abraham to this man, Melchizedek. It proves that he was great. After all, Abraham was the father of the Hebrew nation. Abraham, from the stand point of God's Word, was one of the biggies. He was the man God choose to give his covenant to. Remember Gen. 12?

God said he would bless Abraham and make his name great. And through him the ^{whole} world would be blessed.

WOW!! How great can you get? Tremendous! And the point is: Abraham recognized a man in history who was greater than he was.

Now, there are two things about this recognition that I want you to see.

(1 ) Number one, the nature of what Abraham gave. Vs. 4 says that he gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. Now, what is a tenth of the choicest spoils?

Ancient history tells us a lot about this custom of giving a tenth of the spoils.

When a person conquered an enemy, he took all of the goods and materials that you conquered and you would place it in one big pile.

However, you took the things that were the most valuable, such as gold, silver, or whatever, and you placed it on the top of the pile. The reason is that the general, or the leader, would receive the top portion of all the spoils. The leader would receive, in other words, the most valuable part of the conquered spoils.

So, like all customs of that day, when Abraham went out to battle, this battle is recorded in Gen. 14, he went to battle and conquered his enemy, he received the top portion of all the spoils of war. He received the choicest portion of the captured loot. And the Bible says, literally, that Abraham gave a tenth of the top of the pile. That is the meaning of the phrase: "choicest spoils."

The reason I point this out is that in giving a tenth, Abraham gave a tenth of the most valuable portion of the conquered possessions. And often times the leader's portion of the conquered material was worth more than all the rest of the material combined. ^{And the point is} Abraham recognized the greatness of this PRIEST-KING, Melchizedek. And he honored his greatness by giving him a tenth of the choicest

spoils. Likewise, we honor ^{- 4 - when we give an offering} the greatness of ^{Jesus} God by giving him a tenth of our income. *We honor the greatness of Christ*

(2) The second thing that I would like you to notice is that Abraham gave voluntarily. He was not forced to give. He was not taxed by Melchizedek.

Melchizedek came out and gave him food and drink and blessed him and the Bible says that Abraham then gave him a tenth of the spoils. It was a volunteer act based upon Abraham's recognition of the greatness of this man, Melchizedek.

So, what is this teaching us about the motivation of our giving? Two things as I see it. One, we ought to give our best to God. Two, we ought to give voluntarily.

(3) This brings us to the second line of proof dealing with the greatness of this man,

Melchizedek. This involves an understanding of the responsibilities of the

Leviticus Priest. Vs 5 says: "And those indeed of the son's of Levi who received the priest's office have commandment in the law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham."

Now, in looking at the responsibilities of these Priests under the law, I want you to see three things about their responsibilities.

(1) Number one, it is based upon their receiving the office of the Priest. The authority was not in themselves. They received the office of the Priesthood. ~~It was based upon the one who selected them and appointed them. Therefore, it was God's choice, not theirs.~~ The Levical priest, in comparison to Melchizedek, did not have authority in himself. The authority was based upon a priesthood that was given through a line. The fact that he was born into a line did not make him great.

I hope you understand.

(20) Secondly, ~~this~~ ^{their} responsibility of the Priest to receive tithes was based UPON ~~there~~ responding to a commandment given to them in the Law. The authority, therefore, was not their authority in asking for the tithe.... NO...it was the authority of God's law. The law given to Moses. Take tithes of the people. That is law. So, the authority behind the Levite was not himself but the law. *present*

However, the authority behind the Melchizedek priesthood was not the law because the law wasn't given until 430 years later.

Therefore, the point that I want you to understand is: CONSIDER HOW GREAT MELCHIZEDEK IS that he would even receive a tithe. Because there was no commandment to give a tithe. So, why did Abraham give one? BECAUSE OF THE GREATNESS OF MELCHIZEDEK. ~~Why should we tithe? Because of the greatness of Jesus~~ *Why should we tithe? Because of the greatness of Jesus*

(30) Third, this responsibility is based upon their relationship to their own people. Notice, it says at the end of Vs 5 "From their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham."

The point being: that the Levitical priest, were brethren with the rest of the people. They were not superior, because they were all descendents of Abraham. So, the Priest of Levi were not greater than ~~Abraham~~ ^{others}. They were all equal. *They were all descendents of abrah*

Again the point is clear: CONSIDER MELECHIZEDEK. Because he is obviously greater than Abraham because He received a tithe from Abraham and He blessed ^{them} Abraham.

Now, where is the authority? There is no commandment for receiving the tithe. Abraham did not have to give the tithe. Obviously the authority is in, and of, himself. Therefore, the motivation behind giving is based upon ~~who he is~~ ^{who Jesus Christ is}. Not upon a commandment or a law. VERY IMPORTANT ~~CONCEPT~~ ^{Principle}....

Like ~~Like~~ likewise, the motivation to give on the part of a christian is not based upon a commandment or a law concerning a required tith. Our motivation should be based entirely upon who Jesus Christ is...THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST. He is God. He is our Lord. He is our Saviour. Consider Jesus Christ and what he has done for you....Consider his death....For sin....Consider his *presence - Has resurrect* presence....

I have experienced, not only in my life, but in the testimonies of other Christians, that when a person really gets a whole of who Jesus is, they are not content to give only 10% of their income.. WHY?.. Because their motive is based upon the greatness of Jesus Christ and who He is. Not upon a law or a requirement.

But upon the greatness of Jesus. Very important. You get a whole of the people. The growing in this church will increase and I will never have to preach on this subject again.

(3) The third line of proof, Vs 6 and 7, has to do with receiving a blessing. The receiving of a blessing on the part of Abraham from this man, Melchizedek, proves that Melchizedek was greater than he was.

(Read Vs 6-7)

First, a point of clarification. Many of us bless God. The Bible tells us so. "Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul. And all that is within me forget not all of his benefits."

So, one meaning of the word "blessing" is "that I praise God." I am not actually bestowing a blessing upon God. I am simply praising His name.

But, when Melchizedek blessed Abraham, it was an entirely different situation. It was the same thing as when God blesses you. It is an official act of a Priest. Recognizing that God had made a covenant or given a promise to ~~that~~ ^{Abraham} man. Therefore, ~~he~~ ^{Melchizedek} extends the blessing.

The interesting thing, here, according to Vs 6 is that this man, Melchizedek who was not a descendent of Abraham nor of the covenant, received a tithe from Abraham and then bestowed a blessing upon him. And the Bible teaches that the ^{vs 7} less, ^{vs 7} always, receives the blessing from the greater. AGAIN THE POINT: CONSIDER HOW GREAT IS MELCHIZEDEK. His place in scripture is to teach ^{vs 7} the GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST

Also, notice the last phrase of Vs 6.."and blessed the one who had the promise." When I read this, it hit a note in my mind. WHY? Because the promise to Abraham was given by whom?....ANYONE....WHO GAVE THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM?.... GOD!...RIGHT!...WHO BLESSED ABRAHAM IN THE FIRST PLACE?.....GOD!...

~~Also, notice the little phrase "the one who had the promises" is the key.~~

So The authority behind Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham is God, himself. GOD!

Melchizedek was performing the function of a priest on behalf of Almighty God, who had already blessed Abraham.

And so Melezedek blessed Abraham in recognition of that Fact. He knew that Abraham was chosen by God. The covenant was given to him; and he was to be the Father of many nations. So, in recognition of this Melchizedek blessed Abraham under the authority of God..WHY?..Vs 7 tells us why.."the lesser is blessed by the greater."

and This brings us right back to Vs 4 and the main proposition: CONSIDER THE GREATNESS OF THIS MAN"...WHY?..So that we will understand the greatness of Jesus Christ. For His greatness is the only true reason for giving our tithes and our offerings and our service for that matter.

(2A CONCLUSION (3B) *What is it? Application*)

Right now, you might be thinking: "Pastor, you are sure spending a lot of time and words in making a point that I already know. I believe that Jesus is God; and that He is a type of the Melchizedek priesthood. I believe in the greatness of Jesus. So, why spend so much time on this point?

But, dear friends, do we really see and believe in the greatness of Jesus as illustrated here in this story of Melchizedek? For if we do ^{That is the issue} than our whole motivation in giving will change. *And the proof of that change will be an increase in our giving*

The question is not should I give 10% of my income. That is not the question. The question is HAVE YOU CONSIDERED JESUS AND WHO HE IS? (12/8/11)

You see, we need to get our priorities right. The whole issue in this passage is the GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST.

And when we consider what He has done for us, he has saved us and he has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. This, then, becomes our motivation in all areas of our life..including our giving and tithing.. *and our service*

So, what is your motiative in Giving? Unfortunately, many Christians give , based entirely on there likes or dislikes of the Pastor, or, the church program, or when ever they hear some tear crying sermon. AND THAT IS SO SAD.

That is so childist

You see, one of the greatest needs in our lives is to leave the elementary doctrines of the faith and to press on to maturity. A mature Christian gives out of love because he realizes the greatness of Jesus Christ. And he realizes just who Jesus is. ~~Man~~ He is God. *And I owe my service to God.*

Now, it is technical possible, and I might add true of ^{many} ~~some~~ of you, to give far more than a tenth. ~~Far more.~~ ^{But} And there is only one way to do that... You do so when you express to God his ownership and soverenty over your life. And that you really cannot out give one who in truth owns all things. And we are just stewards of the whole ball game.

For me, it is a wonderful thing to realize that in Christ all things are made new. Old things pass away and all things become new. And it is great to know that their is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

So, it is not a matter of 10% or 20% or 30%. The motivation in giving is to consider the GREATEST OF JEUS IN YOUR LIFE. If He is first place, you will give out off love for Him. *...and you will give*

Now, if Christ is not first place in your life, then that is your problem. *and* You will always have problems with sermons on tithing and giving.

The answer: As a christian you need to put Christ back on ^{the} ~~th~~ throne of your life. Make Him number one. Top priority.

If you are not a christian, then, let the love of Christ draw you to the foot of the cross.....(Quote John 3:16-17). It is at the cross where you will receive forgiveness and love and salvation and peace. It is looking upon the cross ^{then} ~~where~~ you come to understand the greatness of Christ. It is at the cross where God will change you to be the person He wants you to be...That ^{charac} involves your giving ..your service...your life.

SHALL WE CLOE IN PRAYER