

David Brown: Tithes & Offerings (16/2/19)

Introduction:

Have you ever been dared to do something? Maybe when you were in school some of your friends might have dared you to do something mischievous or devious. Unfortunately a dare often comes in the form of a challenge to do something that you shouldn't do.

But a dare doesn't have to be a negative thing. Sometimes a dare could be just the challenge that you need to take your life to the next step!

When I was young I wasn't a particularly daring individual. I was quite content to be on two feet on the ground! Then one day our primary school held what they called 'bike week.' This meant that for a whole week there were enough bikes for every age, size and ability brought to our school, along with the staff who were to train us to ride (there particular focus was on road safety).

For a little bit of context as to why that would have anything to do with being 'daring,' let me explain to you my history with push bikes. I had tried to go from my training wheels to riding without them when I was still quite young and fallen off. 'Well dah,' you might be saying, 'every kid falls off when they first move on from training wheels.' But apparently I was one of those kinds of kids that liked to be sure of everything before I even started it ;) Mum tells me I didn't even start walking until I had sufficiently calculated my ability against the risk. So it was with riding a bike. I stopped trying after my falls when I was quite young and was content to ride around on my scooter and other toys instead. The problem came when - years later - at 'bike week' I was unable to ride a bike. But, with the dare of one of my friends as all the motivation I needed, I pushed off into the unknown and learned to ride that bike within minutes. For me, that was just the challenge that I needed in order to take that next step in learning how to ride a bike.

It is in that way that God 'dares' us to take a step out in faith with our money.

Yes, that's right, today we will be talking about money.

Key ideas:

1. Ownership
2. Tithe
3. Offering
4. God's Currency

This journey will be communicated through the channel of the book of Malachi.

Malachi is an interesting book. It can be summarised by saying that it is like an argument with a rebellious teenager. There are six (or seven - depending on who you ask), disputes that make up the framework of the book.

The Book of Malachi:

Dispute #1: God says "I love you!" Israel responds "*How have you shown us your love?*" God responds "I chose you to carry the covenant promises."

Dispute #2: God says "Where is my honour? You pollute my name & my temple!" Israel responds "*How are we violating you?*" God responds "You're content with lame sacrifices."

Dispute #3: God says "You've dealt treacherously with your wives & turned against me & them!" Israel responds "*How?*" God says "You haven't been faithful to your wives."

Dispute #4: Israel says "You have neglected us! *Where is the God of justice?*" God responds "I will send my messenger to prepare the way before me & I will bring justice!"

Dispute #5: God says "You've gone away from my ordinances. Return to me!" Israel responds "*How shall we return to you?*" God responds "Start returning the tithe again!"

Dispute #6: God says "You have misrepresented me!" Israel responds "*How?*" God responds "You have said 'It is pointless to serve God! The wicked prosper, etc'"

As you can see, God was thoroughly frustrated with these people! And rightfully so. They were incorrigible!

1) Ownership:

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." **Psalm 24:1**

Everything that we have is God's!

- **Psalm 24:1** - The earth is the Lords...
- **Psalm 50:10-12** - God owns the cattle on a thousand hills...
- **Haggai 2:8** - The silver and the gold belongs to Him...
- **1 Chronicles 29:11,12** - Wealth and honour come from Him...
- **Leviticus 25:23** - The land is mine... you are but tenants...

From the book of Malachi:

"A son honours *his* father, And a servant *his* master. If then I am the Father, Where *is* My honour. And if I *am* a Master, Where *is* My reverence? Says the Lord of hosts. To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?' "You offer defiled food on My altar. But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' "By saying, 'The table of the Lord is contemptible.' And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, *Is it* not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, *Is it* not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you?" Would he accept you favourably?" Says the Lord of hosts." **Malachi 1:6-8**

"You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." **1 Corinthians 6:20**

"It is for our own interest that we secure heavenly riches. God is not benefited by our benevolence... But in using the gifts that He has entrusted to our care for the salvation of souls, we transfer our wealth to the treasury of heaven." **Ellen White, Our High Calling pg 195**

2) Tithe:

- **Genesis 14:20 (Hebrews 7:1,2)** - Abram gave a tenth part of all...
- **Genesis 28:22** - Of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you...
- **Leviticus 27:30-32** - Every tithe of the land and of the herds is holy to the Lord...
- **Numbers 18:24-28** - The tithe I have given to the Levites for an inheritance...
- **Deuteronomy 14:22,23** - The purpose of the tithe is to teach you to put God first in your lives.

From the book of Malachi:

"From the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you said, 'In what way shall we return?' Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the Lord of hosts; "And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the Lord of hosts." **Malachi 3:7-12**

- What is a "tithe?"
 - **Genesis 14:20 (Hebrews 7:1,2)** - Abram gave a tenth part of all...
 - **Genesis 28:22** - Of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you...
- Why should I return tithe?
 - "Honour the Lord by giving Him the first part of all your income." **Proverbs 3:9**
 - **Deuteronomy 14:22,23** - The purpose of the tithe is to teach you to put God first in your lives.
 - *"I would never have been able to tithe the first million dollars I made if I had not tithed my first salary - which was \$1.50 per week."* John Rockefeller
- Where? How? to Whom?
 - **Numbers 18:24-28** - The tithe I have given to the Levites for an inheritance...
 - For info about where your tithe goes and how your offering is allocated please visit: <https://disciple.org.au/resources/tithes-offerings-go/>
 - If you would like to return your tithe electronically please visit: hinklerchurch.com.au/giving
 - *"Let us not be unfaithful ourselves because of the unfaithfulness of others."* James Rafferty

3) Offering:

"Give to the Lord the glory *due* His name; bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!" **1 Chronicles 16:29**

"Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you, Says the Lord of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from your hands. For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the Lord of hosts. But you profane it, In that you say, 'The table of the Lord is defiled; and its fruit, its food, is contemptible." **Malachi 1:12**

"Ceremonies without substance are useless." David Asscherick

"But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work." **2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

"Give as you love, and measure your love by your gift." Charles Spurgeon

Hinkler SDA Church has an annual budget of \$13,500 (approx) to sustain our current activities. There are 24 Local Church Budget Offerings throughout the course of the year (as of 2019). Meaning that for us to get there we would have a giving goal of approximately \$562.50. With a membership of a little over 100 people (plus regular visitors) that target should be comfortably met. But it has not always been. Let's invest in our local church!

4) God's Currency:

"And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." Luke 21:1-4

- The currency that heaven operates on is self-sacrifice.
- The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven!
- The angels of glory find their joy in giving!
- Everything that God created, except our hearts that have turned selfish, lives to give!

"The giving that is the fruit of self-denial is a wonderful help to the giver. It imparts an education that enables us more fully to comprehend the work of Him who went about doing good, relieving the suffering, and supplying the needs of the destitute. Constant, self-denying benevolence is God's remedy for the canker sins of selfishness and covetousness. God has arranged systematic benevolence to sustain His cause and relieve the necessities of the suffering and needy. He has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death." **Ellen White, Adventist Home, pg 370**

"If there's no sacrifice in your sacrifice its not a sacrifice." David Asscherick

From the book of Malachi:

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the Lord of hosts; "And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the Lord of hosts." **Malachi 3:10-12**

Will you take God's dare? Will you engage in the currency of heaven and make it a habit to give a rich give from your heart?