

Question: "What does the Bible say about Christian tithing?"

Answer from GotQuestions.org: Many Christians struggle with the issue of tithing. In some churches tithing is over-emphasized. At the same time, many Christians refuse to submit to the biblical exhortations about making offerings to the Lord. Tithing/giving is intended to be a joy and a blessing. Sadly, that is sometimes not the case in the church today.

Tithing is an Old Testament concept. The tithe was a requirement of the law in which all Israelites were to give 10 percent of everything they earned and grew to the Tabernacle/Temple (Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:26; Deuteronomy 14:24; 2 Chronicles 31:5). In fact, the Old Testament Law required multiple tithes which would have pushed the total to around 23.3 percent, not the 10 percent which is generally considered the tithe amount today. Some understand the Old Testament tithe as a method of taxation to provide for the needs of the priests and Levites in the sacrificial system. The New Testament nowhere commands, or even recommends, that Christians submit to a legalistic tithe system. Paul states that believers should set aside a portion of their income in order to support the church (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

The New Testament nowhere designates a percentage of income a person should set aside, but only says it is to be "in keeping with income" (1 Corinthians 16:2). Some in the Christian church have taken the 10 percent figure from the Old Testament tithe and applied it as a "recommended minimum" for Christians in their giving. The New Testament talks about the importance and benefits of giving. We are to give as we are able. Sometimes that means giving more than 10 percent; sometimes that may mean giving less. It all depends on the ability of the Christian and the needs of the church. Every Christian should diligently pray and seek God's wisdom in the matter of participating in tithing and/or how much to give (James 1:5). Above all, all tithes and offerings should be given with pure motives and an attitude of worship to God and service to the body of Christ. "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Question: "Does our tithe all have to go to our church or can part of it go to a Christian ministry?"

Answer from GotQuestions.org: This is a difficult issue to discern biblically because the Bible does not mention "special offerings" for Christian causes or parachurch Christian ministries. The Bible simply tells us to give to the Lord (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7). Yes, most definitely, we should be giving to the church we attend, serve at, and worship in! If a Christian believes the Lord is leading him to give 10%, does that entire 10% have to go to the church, or can it be split between the church and other Christian purposes? Sadly, the answer to this question usually breaks down based on who is responding. Churches / pastors will usually teach that the full 10% should go to the

church, and any other Christian giving should be above and beyond the 10%. Christian ministries and causes usually teach that the 10% figure for giving can be divided between churches and ministries according to the Lord's leading.

So, which view is correct? Even as a parachurch ministry, GotQuestions.org holds that a believer's primary giving should be to his/her local church with any "additional offerings" to other Christian causes. We do not believe, though, that a believer is legalistically required to give 10% or any other set amount (see [Christian Tithing](#)). The Bible instructs believers in Christ to give generously, to give cheerfully, and to give regularly. There is no biblical formula for how to split a tithe between a church and another Christian organization. If a Christian believes the tithe is binding on believers today, the 10% should go to the church (based on the storehouse principle of [Malachi 3:10](#)).

Further, if a believer prayerfully decides to give 10% in offerings, we believe he/she can give as the Spirit leads him/her; i.e., 8% to their church and 2% to other Christian causes. What matters is that believers make sacrificial financial offerings to God's work, wherever and in whatever way He leads. Believers should pray for wisdom in regard to how much and to whom God would have them make their offerings.

Question: "What should be done if a husband and wife disagree on tithing / how much to give?"

Answer from GotQuestions.org: When a husband and wife disagree on "tithing" or on how much to give to the local church and other ministries, much conflict can arise. First, it is important to understand that Christians under the New Covenant are under no obligation to tithe 10% of their income. God instituted tithing to Israel in the Old Testament economy. The tithe was a practice even before the law was given ([Genesis 14:20](#)), and [Leviticus 27:30](#) says that the people were to tithe of the land, seed or fruit of the trees for it all belongs to the Lord. In [Deuteronomy 14:22](#), Moses relates to the people that God says, "Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year." The people of Israel were to bring a tenth of all of their increase and give it back to the Lord. The tithe supported the tabernacle and later the temple as well as the priesthood.

Today, our tithes and offerings are a love offering we give to God in thanksgiving for the blessings that we receive as His children. We are not under the law of the Old Testament economy but in the age of grace. Our tithes and offerings are a way to support God's work in our local churches as well as missionary endeavors. The principle is that we cannot out-give God, and He does bless us full measure, pressed down and running over. In other words, when we give from the right spiritual mindset, the blessings returned to us are in good measure ([Luke 6:38](#)). However, we cannot walk in disobedience and expect our offerings to make up for that lack. For if we are walking in disobedience, any blessing that would come from giving to the Lord is negated by the wrong heart motive of the giver when the gift is given, and that is the principle behind the failure of the Pharisees.

When we give to the Lord, we are to give out of a cheerful heart. "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Giving out of necessity or giving in order to make up for something lacking will not profit us spiritually, nor will it bring blessing to the household. Believing wives are under the authority of God, and their submission to the Word is doubly important because of the possible inaction of their husbands. Obedience and faithfulness in doing what they know is pleasing to God will be a testimony to their husbands.

In God's order, the husband and the wife are one (Mark 10:8). If there is a disagreement about giving any offering to God, the wife cannot usurp her husband's authority and give in his place. In so doing, the wife takes the headship authority (Ephesians 5:22-33) upon herself, and that is outside of God's order. Wives are to walk in obedience to God's command and submit as unto Him (Ephesians 5:22). That obedience will bring a blessing and the grace to stand in faith. God has a way of getting things done, and we can confidently stand still and watch without taking it upon ourselves to right what we see as wrong. In 1 Samuel we find this eternal principle: "But Samuel replied, 'Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams'" (1 Samuel 15:22).

Question: "Should a Christian tithe off miscellaneous income, e.g. inheritance, gifts, winnings, tax refunds, legal settlements, etc.?"

For an general understanding of the issue of tithing for Christians, please see our article on Christian tithing.

Answer from GotQuestions.org: Whether or not a Christian should give a percentage of an inheritance—or for that matter any source of income—to the church or other Christian ministry is the subject of debate within the Christian community. There is also the question of whether or not an inheritance can even be considered income. As for the amount of our giving, some in the Christian church have taken the 10 percent figure from the Old Testament tithe and applied it as a “recommended minimum” for Christians in their giving. Some say give on what you make before taxes (gross income), and others say give on what is left over after taxes and deductions (net income). Much debate and argument on the details of tithing and giving have needlessly occurred, sometimes even splitting churches and dividing Christians from one another.

It should be remembered that the tithe was a requirement of the Mosaic Law in which all Israelites were to give 10 percent of everything they earned and grew to the Tabernacle/Temple (Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:26; Deuteronomy 14:24; 2 Chronicles 31:5). In fact, the Old Testament Law required multiple tithes which would have pushed the total to around 23.3 percent, not the 10 percent which is generally considered the tithe

amount today. But the Bible is clear that tithing was part of the Mosaic Law for the nation of Israel, not for all mankind. Just as Christians are not required to sacrifice animals or observe the ceremonial laws regarding washing and other rituals, neither are we required to give a set percentage of our income, regardless of how it is acquired.

The New Testament references giving in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, and there we find the principle for giving for Christians. Paul exhorts the Corinthian church to set money aside “for God’s people,” to do it on the first day of the week, and to save it and set it aside in keeping with the income of the giver. “Income” is not defined, except that in the King James Version, the word is translated “as God has prospered him.” From this we can say that inheritance, gifts, winnings, tax refunds, legal settlements, etc., are part of being prospered by God and should be included in income. But, again, the amount of the inheritance to be offered is not defined. Another principle for offerings is found in 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 where Paul again exhorts the Corinthian believers to give generously from their hearts, each one deciding before God what to give. Paul explains that it is not the amount or the percentage or the source of the income, but the attitude of the heart that is important to God. Each should give “cheerfully,” not as one under the compulsion of a legalistic mindset or the requirements set down by others. We should never give to get, never give to be noticed, and never give to be spiritually rewarded. If we are in fellowship with God and at peace with our giving, then all is well. As with all things, wisdom should be sought from God, who has promised to give it generously (James 1:5), just as we are to generously and cheerfully give back to Him.

Recommended Resource: [Giving and Tithing by Larry Burkett.](#)