

MOTIVES OF THE HEART

Sabbath School Bible Studies

Five Questions for Life Change

**Study Texts: 2 Chronicles 31:4-10; Malachi 3:10
1 Corinthians 9:13 & 14; 2 Corinthians 11:8**

The Impact of Tithing

Open

*"In today's cultures, the majority of Christians give relatively little to fund the mission of God. If every Christian gave (returned – Ed) an honest tithe, the result would be almost unimaginable, simply astonishing, nearly beyond comprehension." (Christian Smith and Michael O. Emerson. *Passing the Plate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). P.27).*

If every member in our territory (Union/Conference/Mission) returned a faithful tithe, how many more pastors do you think could be employed full-time? Do you know of some districts currently without a pastor?

Dig

1. Read *Malachi 3:10* and focus on the line, *"Bring the full tithes into the storehouse"*. The context of the passage reveals Israel to be in a, *'we'll do it our way'* mood on tithe matters. What is the effect on mission if members only return a 'part-tithe'?
2. Read *2 Chronicles 31:4-10* to discover how Israel in times past followed God's command. Note in particular, *"And they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything (31:5),* to support the work of the Levites for services at the temple. Examine the alternative words for 'storehouse', to see if they help understand the biblical principle: depot, warehouse, repository, armoury, barn, silo, storage space.
3. The Old Testament passages considered so far, command support for the temple and priests. Read *1 Corinthians 9:13-14* to find out how the principle of the 'storehouse', connects with the work of the gospel. How do you react to this thought: *'Our challenge is far greater than when the people and the Levites said to Nehemiah, * "We will not neglect the house of our God?" (Nehemiah 10:39).*
**(Adult Sabbath School Study Guide, p. 65).*
4. Paul makes a point in *2 Corinthians 11:8* that gives further insight into the storehouse principle. He needs to remind the rich Corinthian church that through his ministry they live off the generosity of the poor Macedonian church. How does this connect with the way in which tithe is collected and dispersed in our church today?

Reflect

What is your relationship with returning tithe to the Lord?

Are you a full-tither?

A reluctant tither?

A tithe diverter?

A non-tither?

A part-tither?

Whichever of the above describes you, continue to talk with the Lord about the matter.

To get the most out of this inductive Bible study:

Read the study text together (taken from the adult Sabbath School Lesson study).

Use question 1, as the icebreaker, an introduction to the discussion.

Use questions 2, 3, and 4, to dig as deep into scripture as your group wishes to go.

Question 5 is for reflection/application.

Surround the study with prayer.