A Lifestyle That Gives

Giving: Let's Be Clear From The Outset

John 3:16

1. The reason that many people have **arguments** built up in their minds is because Satan knows that if you become a **giver**, it will **help** and **change** your life.

   - The Bible gives us about **500** verses on **prayer**.
   - About **500** verses on **faith**.
   - The Bible has over **2000** verses on **money** and **possessions**.

     - Jesus told 38 parables – **16** were about **money**

Our focus of today: "God must be **first** in **every** area of our life.

Exodus 13:1-2

   - It is mine – the **firstborn** belongs to God.

Exodus 13:12-13

Let me show you three things about God being first.

A. The firstborn must be **sacrificed** or **redeemed**.

2. Relating to finances, the **tithe** belongs to God just like the **firstborn** belongs to Him.

The scripture explained:

- If you have an animal that is a **clean** animal,
- That **clean** animal that has a **firstborn**, you have to **sacrifice** the firstborn animal to God.

  If it is an **unclean** animal, you have to sacrifice a **clean** animal for the unclean animal to **redeem** the unclean animal.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Here it is:

3. Anything **unclean** had to be redeemed by the sacrifice of a **clean** animal.

4. Every one of us in this room were born **unclean** or in **sin**, and Jesus was born **clean** being the firstborn, spotless Lamb of God and He had to be **sacrificed** for the **unclean**.

   Let me settle something:

   - In Exodus 13, it is talking to us about **tithing**.

     Even in a deeper truth, it is talking about giving the **first** to God.

Jesus was God's **tithe**.

5. Jesus was the **firstborn** and He was **clean** and He was sacrificed for the **unclean**.

   * God gave Jesus for us while we were yet **sinners**, Christ died for **us**.

     God gave Jesus in a hope that we would **come** to Him and **accept** Him – God gave Jesus **first**.

6. Tithing is you give it first **before** you see the **blessing** or not.

    In the same way, God gave Jesus first and He **redeems** through Christ.

    An example: when the death angel came over Egypt, Israel had sacrificed the **firstborn** clean animal and put the blood on their doorposts - The **whole** of Israel was redeemed.

    Question: Why did God have the right to take the firstborn?

    Because of what we just read – "the **first** belongs to God"

    God did this – before we ever **believed** and **received**.

    Again – it is the **same** way we give our **tithe**.

    It's giving the **first** one.

    God doesn't say – once your sheep has **ten**, then you give Me **one**

    He says, give me the firstborn because it is **mine**.

7. You give God or return the tithe to Him, you redeem the other **nine** or **90%** if you give the first one.

    - Also it's not **10%** that brings the Blessing

        - It's the **principle** of putting God **first** and having **faith** in God that brings the Blessing on your finances.

Here is the second thing:

B. The first fruit must be **offered**.

- The firstborn must be **sacrificed**.
- The first fruits must be **offered**.

Exodus 23:19a
¹⁹ The <u>first</u> of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God…

Proverbs 3:9-10

It says: honor the Lord with your first **possessions** and with the firstfruits of all your **increase**.

What did God say about Jericho?

Answer: God said, bring Me all the silver and the gold from Jericho and put in the **temple**.

But God, it's not **ten** percent.

Church – it's the **first**.

God said – If you give me the first **city**, I will bless the rest.

Achan takes it and Joshua 7 calls it **cursed**.

8. God calls it **consecrated** to Him and the temple, and if you touch it, it becomes **cursed**.

Question: Why did God accept Abel's offering and not Cain's?

Answer: Reminder – the firstborn and firstfruits belong to **God**.

Genesis 4:3-5

Abel – gave the **firstborn**, **firstfruits** of his labor.

Cain – process of time – after he made sure he had **enough** (never says he gave **firstfruits**)

9. Legally God cannot accept **second** place.

Here is the third:

C. The tithe must be **first**.

Leviticus 27:30

- The **firstborn** belongs to God.
- The **firstfruits** belong to God.
- The **tithe** belongs to God and the tithe is **first**.

People throw tithes out because it was under the **law**.

- You cannot throw something out because it was under the **law**.
- You can't say it was **good** under the law, but **bad** now in the new covenant.
- You can't say some things that were **bad** under the law, now it's **good**!

Listen closely: You can't throw principles out that were established before and after the law.

- 500 years **before** the law, Abraham tithed to Melchizadek.
- Cain and Abel is 2500 years **before** the law.

Why: it is a principle of **God**.

10. You have to realize every time you are paid or receive blessings, God is **testing** you.

11. A tither says, I trust you, I believe you and I am so **grateful**; the 90% You give me will go **farther** than the 100%.

12. The first is the **redemptive** one so the other is blessed – redeems the other.

    You give God the first one; He says I will bless or redeem **the rest**.

    It's about the **heart**, not **legalism**. I **want** to tithe.

    Again – it's the **first** portion that has the **redemptive** power.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

- As you prosper, **set aside** the percentage, and give every first day – **Sunday**.

13. God's system of tithing can take care of everything in **Kingdom**-ministry and even the **poor**.

    God's plan is **set**.

Exodus 13:14a
14 So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What *is* this?' …

   What is this? Answer – the **sacrifice**

Exodus 13:14b
14 … that you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Exodus 13:15

- Here is the answer: Dad used to be a slave and had nothing, but God with a mighty hand **delivered** me – that's **why** I give.

  I was a slave in bondage and had nothing and now, I trust Him with **everything**.

Is God first?

God **must** be first.