

# TRAINING

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# FORGUY'S

## What's all this about tithing?

Part 2



Last week we looked at the principles of giving - that it is part of our relationship with Jesus and should not be legalistic. We are saved through grace, not works. Nothing we do can initiate God's extra grace towards us - but He does love to see our response to His grace. The way we respond indicates the extent to which we have allowed His grace to impact us. It's about loving Him...and doing that extravagantly.

But, if we are to give to God, what does that mean about where our money will actually go to? How does God receive it? We can get some principles from the Old Testament - even though we live under the New Covenant.

Firstly, if you read through the writings of Moses in Exodus, Deuteronomy and so forth you will see that the tribe of Levi, from whom the priests and those who worked in the Tabernacle (later the Temple) came did not inherit land or possessions in Israel. Instead, their 'portion was the Lord' and that meant the other tribes had to bring their tithes to the temple to feed those who ministered there. In the New Testament, in 1 Corinthians 9, we read *13 Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? 14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.*

So, I would suggest, that the first place our money should go is to those who feed us. As God pours out His teaching, grace and blessings upon us (see scarecrow!) so we give to the channels we receive it through. It is tragic how many church leaders and ministers live in financial difficulty even as they pastor a church full of

relatively well off people.

There may be others who contribute to us in this way too, not just from our church. Make sure that those who preach the Gospel receive their living from it.

But what else counts as giving to God?

Again, we note in the Old Testament that the people of Israel were commanded to look after the orphans and widows in their land. In the New Testament this was an important principle established early on in the Church - to look after the needy of the Church.

In Acts 6 they appointed a team of deacons to administer this. Are there needy people in your fellowship?

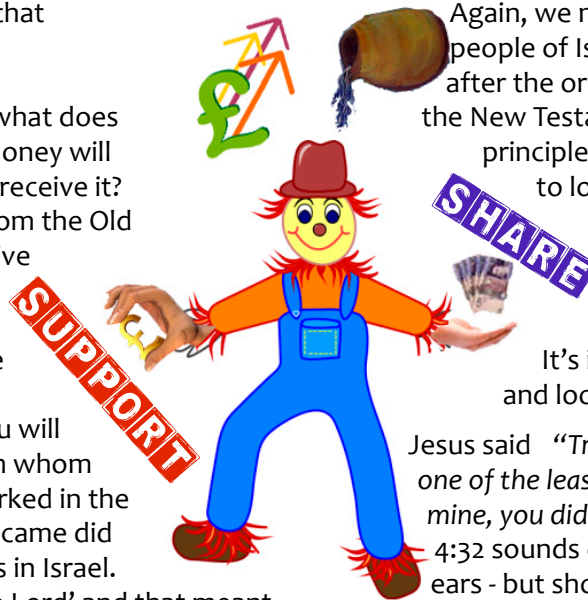
It's important we share what we have and look after our brothers and sisters.

Jesus said *"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."* (Matthew 25:40). Acts 4:32 sounds extreme to our modern possessive ears - but should it be? *All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.*

So, as we give up to those who minister to us, so we also hold out an open hand to share with brothers and sisters who have less than us {equally, to be prepared to receive from those who have more if we are in need ourselves.}

Finally, I would suggest that we are giving to God when we get involved with His work. 2 Corinthians 5:19 says *that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.* God's work is to bring people back into fellowship

with Himself. All Christians are called to be part of that work, of course, but some do it instead of a



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paid job. Evangelists and preachers who travel round this country, missionaries who take the message abroad, ministries such as perhaps *Fusion* or *UCCF* who speak to students or radio stations such as *CrossRhythms City* which impacts Stoke on Trent and beyond. There is such a large variety of people and agencies specifically aiming to reconcile the world and it's people with the God that loves them; get involved with one or two that excite or interest you and give to God by supporting them.

I think those are the three areas that counts as *giving to God* from a Biblical perspective. You will note that I haven't included disaster funds or famine relief, etc. Obviously I believe it's good to give to such things, and it surely pleases God when we do so. However, since it is the sort of charity giving that is done by non-believers as well as believers it is not something



This Sunday is **Palm Sunday**.

It's the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey - the day He proclaimed for the first time openly and publicly that He was the Messiah. In doing so, He sealed His fate for He knew the religious leaders would be forced to act against Him.

[Zechariah 9:9](#) [The coming of Zion's king] says: *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Jesus chose to fulfil this prophecy in order to declare who He was. It was a symbolic act, and divided those present into two camps: those who believed in Him and those who rejected Him.

Our purpose, as Christian men today, is to present Jesus clearly to our generation. This will cause division, into those who believe and those who do not. But we need to make the presentation clear, just as Jesus did when He got onto that donkey.

But that also means we need to be prepared, as He was, for the consequences.

Jesus knew where He was heading: Jerusalem. He knew what faced Him there: a

that flows directly from our Christian faith - it's more generally a human thing to do.

Be generous in this area too - but don't neglect the three ways of giving to God outlined above. Of course, as ever, I'd love a discussion to get going on this. What do you think - and have these two articles been helpful or just irritating?

Post your thoughts in the Facebook group ( [www.tfgministries.org.uk/facebook](http://www.tfgministries.org.uk/facebook) ) or email/PM me privately via that page or [geoff.lumley@tfministries.org.uk](mailto:geoff.lumley@tfministries.org.uk)

*And, to finish where we finished last week. This must not become religion, it's not rules, it's relationship. Do it as a response to God's love and your love for Him.*



trial, an unjust conviction, rough treatment and a cruel death penalty. But He went just the same, He didn't sneak in either. He went, proclaiming Himself to be the Messiah.

When we proclaim the Christian message, do we do it boldly or do we do it in a way that sort

of won't get noticed?

When others proclaim the message in a way that makes us uncomfortable, do we side with those who condemn them or do we seek to stand with them?

Some of the crowd who shouted *Hosanna* on Sunday were screaming *Crucify* by the end of the week. Not everything about the Gospel is 'nice'. Jesus was heading for sacrifice, He calls us to be living sacrifices too. And that has to be part of the message we have to give to a culture that is about 'Me-have-now'.

*Hosanna in the Highest, Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.*

### ***Bible Study Series***

**We continue our series on 1 Peter chapter 3 v 1- 8  
Wives and Husbands - live such godly lives that  
unbelievers will see Jesus in all you do**

Read the passage, and go to  
[www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts](http://www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts) and join in.