

TITLE: HOW TO GIVE WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVE

TEXT: HEBREWS 7:4-10

Would you take your Bibles and turn to Hebrews chapter 7 and we will begin reading at Vs 4. Our subject this morning and the subject of this passage is: HOW TO GIVE WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVE.

This chapter begins with the mystery of Melchizedek. Who was this man Melchizedek? I believe the Word of God teaches that he was a historical person. He actually lived. He was both a King and a Priest in the ancient city of Jerusalem. And that he, by way of history, represents a type of Jesus Christ. There is no genealogy recorded of this man. We don't know who his mother or father was. There is no record of his priesthood. Except a prophetic statement that occurs in the 110 chapter of Psalms, Vs 4. The prophetic statement is that Christ would be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. *So that is the background for our Scripture*

Also, Melchizedek's priesthood comes before the Levitical priesthood. That is the priesthood set up by the Mosaic law and the covenant. The question is: IS THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD CONTINUED THROUGH ANY KNOWN LINE?

Answer: NO.....There is no known record of an person except the Messiah who is after the order of Melchizedek. No record of any other Melchizedek priest Except the Messiah. And that priesthood will be forever because Christ is forever.

Now, the teaching in our passage this morning is to cause us to realize how great Jesus Christ is. We are constantly bringing him down to a level that God never intended. His greatness in this book is being taught as being over all the Angels. Jesus is not merely an exalted angel. He is over the angels. He is God manifested in the flesh.

So, the Bible teaches the greatness of Jesus Christ in the book of Hebrews over angels. Also, over Moses the great law giver. We discussed this in chapters 3 and 4. Then in chapter 5 we learned that Jesus Christ is our High Priest. The whole levitical priesthood finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He is our High Priest.

(Read Hebrews 7:4-10)

Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the greatest issue here, as it relates to practical christian living, is: SHOULD WE TITHE OUR INCOME? The issue of this passage is tithing. Should we tithe? Should we give a 10th of our income to God?

*That is the Question*

There is no question that in the O.T. under the Mosaic law the Levites who were Priest were commanded by God to receive tithesssss...I said it in the Plural because that is exactly what the O.T. taught...Receiwing Tithes...

First of all, what is a tithe? The word "tithe" is simply the word "tenth". It is 1/10 of a persons income. Now, in the O.T. there were three different tithes. Three different tithes that the priest was required to receive from the people.

Also, the O.T. tithe was not a voluntary offering. It was commanded by the law and the people had to give the tithe. And no one was left out. It was required of all people. Also, there were free will offerings in addition to the tithe.

O.K....how much did those O.T. people actual give to God under the Law? Well, the amount is debateable because the tithe differred. For example, there was a tithe of all your land possessions relating to cattle and other livestock. There was, also, the tithe of corn, oil, and wine. So, there is a difference among scholars as to the value of grain as compared to aattle. It was a little different than what we are accomust to. We receive a salary. And it is easy for us to think of 10% of our paycheck.

*That*

But, there was also a third tithe in addition to those other two. This third tithe was given once every third year. And this tithe was for the support of poor widows, the orphans, and the stranger that was within their gates, and the Levities who had no possessions or property holdings of their own. They received their support from the other folks....

So, if they were all equal...to which we have no way of knowing...but, if they were all equal and you break up the three year tithe to a percentage each year....the people were actualy giving by law 23 and 1/3 % of there income....

O.K....if you believe in tithing according to the O.T. systme and you are giving only 10%, you are a little behind what the O.T. says....23 and 1/3 % is what was really requirad. In addition to this there were free will offerings.

Now, if this bothers you, will, don't be brothered greatly, because the Bible teaches that you don't own anything anyway. It all belongs to God. And it is just a question of useage. So, all of your money, and all of your pocessions, and your ability to work, and everything else, Paul wrote in I Cor. 4:7 all comes from the Lord....We have received it from Him. So, don't let that 23 and 1/3 % bother you.....

Now, that was the O.T. system. But when did that system start? Well, it started at the time of Moses. When Moses gave the law. That is when it started. As a matter of fact, what you should remember as we study this passage is that Levi, himself, never received any kind of tithe from anyone. Yet, the passage says that Levi received tithes. But that can't be because Levie who was a son of Jacob lived 430 years before the Mosaic covenant was given. It is only his sons and ancesters who ~~ever~~ received the tithe under the Mosaic law.

But, the teaching here in Hebrews 7 centers around what Abraham did. There are two examples of tithing before the Mosaic law. One, refers to Abraham giving a tenth to Melchizedek. The other refers to Jacob giving a tithe to the Lord. In light of this, let's look at this passage from Hebrews.

<sup>So,</sup>  
(2D) As we look at the issue of paying tithes, (1E) I want you to notice, first of all, the main proposition of this whole section. What is the main theme? What is the main subject? What is it that God really wants us to do?

Well, dear friends, this passage is not simple about giving the tithe. The main proposition of this whole passage is, TO CONSIDER HOW GREAT JESUS IS. And if you don't see that, you miss the whole point. Because, my friends, that will effect your giving, your life, and everything. CONDISER HOW GREAT JESUS IS...THAT IS THE POINT OF VS4.....

The phrase "now observe" or "consider" is the word used of a spectator seating in an area. And he is gazing intently at all the events as they pass before his eyes. And the Bible says "I want you to gaze at this great man, Melchizedek, who represents Christ by way of type. See how great he was...

And learn how great Jesus is.....That is what we need to see in this passage.

THE GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST..... *PAUL SAYS in Heb 12:2 - Fix Your Eyes Upon Jesus, the Author and perfecter of the faith.*

(2E) Secondly, I want you to see the proof <sup>in</sup> behind this passage dealing with the greatness of this man, Melchizedek as he represents Jesus Christ.

And there are ~~four~~ <sup>three</sup> lines of proof.

(1F) ~~First of all~~ <sup>Number one</sup> look at the last phrase of Vs 4 as to the recognition OF Abraham to this man. It certainly proves that he was great. After all,

Abraham was the father of the Hebrew nation. Abraham, from the stand point of God's Word, was one of the greatest. He was the man God choose to give his covenant to. A tremendous statment in Gen 12 where God said he would bless Abraham and make his name great and he would be a blessing and all nations of the world would be a blessing through him. HOW GREAT CAN YOU GET?

~~That is~~ Tremendous. AND THE POINT IS: ABRAHAM RECOGNIZED A MAN IN HISTORY WHO WAS GREATER THAN HE WAS.... Please notice two things <sup>of importance</sup> about this recognition

(1G( One, ) the nature of what Abraham gave. Vs 4 says that he gave the tenth of the choicest spoils. [Now, what is the tenth of the spoils?

Ancient history tells us a lot about this custom of giving a  tenth of the spoils. When a person conquered an enemy, he took all of the goods and material that you conquered and you placed it in one big pile....

However, you took the things that were most valueable, such as gold, silver, or whatever, and you placed it on the top of the pile. The reason is that the General or leader would receive the top portion of all the spoils. The general would receive, then, the most valuable part of the conquered material.

So, like all customs of that day, when Abraham went out to battle.... this battle is recorded in Gen 14....He went to battle and conquered his enemy, he received the top portion off all the spoils of war.

And the Bible says, literally, "that Abraham gave a tenth of the top of the pile." That is the meaning of the word "spoils."

~~This~~ <sup>The</sup> reason I point this out is that in giving a tenth, Abraham gave a tenth of the most valuable portion of the conquered possessions. And often times the general's portion of the conquered material was worth more than all the rest of the material. Abraham recognized the greatness of this Priest-King, Melchizedek. And he honored his greatness by giving him a tenth of the choicest spoils.....

(2G) The second thing that I would like you to notice is that Abraham gave Voluntarily .....He was not forced to give. He was not taxed by Melchizedek. Melchizedek came out and gave him food and drink and blessed him and the Bible says that Abraham then gave him a tenth of the spoils. It was a voluntar act <sup>passed</sup> upon Abraham's recognition of the greatness of this man.....

So, what is this teaching us about the motivation of our giving? Two things: One, we ought to give our best to God; and two, we ought to give voluntarily.....

(22F) The second line of proof dealing with the greatness of this man involves an understanding of the responsibilities of the Levitical Priest. Vs 5: "And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham."

Now, in looking at the responsibility of these Priest under the law, I want you to see three things about this responsibility. It is based upon three things.

(1G) Number one, it is based upon their receiving the office of the Priest. The authority was not in themselves. They received the office of the Priesthood. It was based upon the one who selected them and appointed them. Therefore, it was God's choice, not theirs. The Levical priest, in comparison to Melchizedek, did not have authority in himself. The authority was based upon a priesthood that was given through a line. The fact that, he was born into a line did not make him great.... *Do you see the point?*

(2G) Secondly, this responsibility of the Priest to receive tithes was based UPON there responding to a commandment given to them in the Law. The authority, therefore, was not their authority in asking for the tithe.... NO...it was the authority of God's law. The law given to Moses. Take tithes of the people. That is law. So, the authority behind the Levite was not himself but the law.

However, the authority behind the Melchizedek priesthood was not the law Because the law wasn't given until 430 years later.

Therefore, the point that I want you to understand is: CONSIDER HOW GREAT MELCHIZEDEK IS that he would even receive a tithe. Because there was no commandment to give a tithe. So, why did Abraham give one? BECAUSE OF THE GREATNESS OF MELCHIZEDEK. *Why should we Tithe? Because of who Jesus is*

(3G) Third, this responsibility is based upon their relationship to their own people. Notice, it says at the end of Vs 5 "From their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham."

The point being: that the Levitical priest were brethren with the rest of the people. They were not superior because they were all descendents of Abraham. So, the Priest of Levi were not greater than Abraham. They were all equal.

Again the point is clear: CONSIDER MELECHIZEDEK. Because he is obviously greater than Abraham because He received a tithe from Abraham and He blessed Abraham.

Now, where is the authority? There is no commandment for receiving the tithe. Abraham did not have to give the tithe. Obviously the authority is in, and of, himself. Therefore, the motivation behind giving is based upon who he is. Not upon a commandment or a law. VERY IMPORTANT CONCEPT....

Likewise, the motivation to give on the part of a christian is not based upon a commandment or a law concerning a required tith. Our motivation should be based entirely upon who Jesus Christ is...THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST. He is God. He is our Lord. He is our Saviour. Consider Jesus Christ and what he has done for you....Consider his death....For sin....Consider his presence....

I have experience, not only in my life, but in the testimony of other Christians, that when a person really gets ahold of who Jesus is, they are not content to give only 10% of their income...WHY?...Because their motive is based upon the greatness of Jesus Christ and who He is. Not upon a law or a requirement....

(3F) The third line of proof, Vs 6 and 7, has to do with receiving a blessing  
The receiving of a blessing on the part of Abraham from this man, Melchizedek proves that that man was greater than ~~he~~ was.

(Read Vs 6-7)

First a point of clarification. Many of us bless God. The Bible tells us so. Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul. And all that is within me forget not all of his benefits."

So, the meaning of blessing, <sup>in this sense</sup> ~~here~~, is "that I praise God." I am not actually bestowing a blessing upon God. I am simply praising His name.

But when Melchizedek blessed Abraham, it was an entirely different situation. It was the same thing as when God blesses a man. It is an official act of a Priest. Recognizing that God had made a covenant or given a promise to that man. Therefore, he extends the blessing.

*cont* The same thing is true of the blessing that came down through a given line. Like the blessing that Father put on <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ children. It was a recognition of God working through that line. It wasn't praising them as in worship. It was a blessing bestowed on them ~~because~~ because of certain promises that God had already made.

The interesting thing, ~~therefore~~, according to Vs 6 is that this man, Melchizedek, who was not a descendent of Abraham nor of the covenant, received a tithe from Abraham and then bestowed a blessing upon him. And the Bible teaches that the less, always, receives the blessing from the greater. Again the point: CONSIDER HOW GREAT IS MELCHIZEDEK. His place in scripture is to teach the greatness of Jesus Christ

Also, notice the last phrase of Vs 6: "and blessed the one who had the promise." When I <sup>read</sup> this, it hit a note in my mind. ~~Why?~~ Because the promise to Abraham <sup>was</sup> given by whom.....ANYONE...WHO GAVE THE PROMISE TO ABRHAM? 'GOD'.....RIGHT....WHO BLESSED ABRAHAM IN THE FIRST PLACE.....GOD....

So, the little phrase "the one who had the promises" is the key. The authority behind Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham is God, himself.....GOD.. <sup>Melchizedek</sup> was performing the function of a priest on behalf of ~~the~~ Almighty God who had already blessed Abraham. And he blessed Abraham in recognition of that fact. He knew that Abraham was chosen of God. The covenant was given to him; and he was to be the Father of many nations.

So, in recognition of this, <sup>Melchizedek</sup> he blessed Abraham under the authority of God....Why/.....Vs 7 tells us why..."the lesser is blessed by the greater. This brings us right back to Vs 4 and the main proposition: CONSIDER THE GREATNESS OF THIS MAN".....WHY?.....So, that we will understand the greatness of Jesus Christ. For his greatness is the only true reason for giving our tithes and offerings.....*and our "selvs" for that matter*

CONCLUSION

Right now, you might be thinking: "Pastor, you are sure spending a lot of time and words in making a point that I already know. I believe that Jesus Christ is God and that he is greater than the angels and Moses and the law. I know we are under Grace and not under law. So, why spend so much time on this point?"

But, <sup>dear friend</sup> do we really see and believe in the greatness of Jesus Christ as illustrated here in ~~this~~ this story of Melchizedek? For if we do than our whole motivation in giving will change. *I will cause you to even sign a pledge Card and make a Commitment*

The question is not should I give 10% of my income?....That is ~~the~~ not the question: The question is HAVE YOU CONSIDERED JESUS CHRIST AND WHO HE IS?

You see, we need to get our priorities right. The whole issue in the <sup>Giving</sup> book of Hebrews is the GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST.

And when we consider what He has done for us, he has saved us and he has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. This, then, becomes our motivation in all areas of our life..especial in the area of money....



*Christ and his church*

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WHAT IS YOUR MOTIATIVE IN GIVING ~~OF~~ YOUR MONEY TO ~~THIS CHURCH?~~

Unfortunately, many christian give, based enitirely on thier likes or dislikes of the Pastor.....or the church program. And this is sad.

For most of us, Pastors are no different from the rest of the membership. Now, that might come as a shock to some of you. But, I am a sinner saved by the grace of God just like everybody else. I have my weaknesses and my personality travts and my problems are just like yours( at least I think they are).....

I wander how long it will be before we leave the elementary doctrines of the faith and we press on to maturity. A mature christian gives out of love because he realizees the greatness of Jesus Christ and just ~~who~~ who ~~he~~ is....

And it is technical possible, and I might add true of some of you, to give far more than a tenth. Far more.....WHY....Because you are expressing to God his ownership and soverinty over your life. And that you really cannot out give one who in truth owns all things. And we are just stewards of the whole business.

And for me, it is a wonderful thing to realize that in Christ all things are made new. And that their is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

So, it is not a matter of 10% or 23 and 1/3%. The motivation in giving ~~is~~ is to consider the Greateness of Jesus Christ in your life.... If he is first place, you will give out off love for him....

Shall we pray

*And if he is not, then, that is your problem - As a christian you need to put christ back on the throne of your life - Remember if you are not a christian, then you need to receive him as your savior and Lord -*