

Becoming a Mature Christian – Part 2

(Adapted from Raymond Woodward's *Life Course 201*)

"... that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God"
(Colossians 4:12).

"That we henceforth be no more children, ... may grow up into him in all things ..."
(Ephesians 4:14-15).

Following in the footsteps of Jesus will cause us to develop certain habits . . . repeated practices that form a lifestyle. This lesson covers two more of these:

THE HABIT OF TITHING

"On the first day of each week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn" (1 Corinthians 16:2).

MY GIVING REVEALS MY SPIRITUAL MATURITY

"Just as you excel in everything else ... in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness ... see that you also excel in the grace of giving" (2 Corinthians 8:7).

DID YOU KNOW ... ?

- The Bible talks more about GIVING than it does about either HEAVEN or HELL?
- Over HALF of the parables Jesus told have to do with the subject of MONEY?
- There are more promises in the Bible related to GIVING than to any other subject?
- Your giving is VERY IMPORTANT to God – and to your SPIRITUAL LIFE?

KEY BIBLE WORDS			
Believe	Pray	Love	Give
used 272 times	used 371 times	used 714 times	used 2162 times

You can give without loving but you cannot love without giving!

WHY GOD WANTS ME TO GIVE (7 BENEFITS)

1. GIVING MAKES ME MORE LIKE THE LORD.

"God so loved the world that He gave his only Son" (John 3:16).

2. GIVING DRAWS ME CLOSER TO GOD.

"Where your treasure is, there your heart is also" (Matthew 6:21).

3. GIVING IS THE ANTIDOTE TO MATERIALISM.

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to be generous and willing to share. In this way they may take hold of the life that is truly Life" (1 Timothy 6:17-19).



We make a living by what we GET, but we make a life by what we GIVE.

4. GIVING STRENGTHENS MY FAITH.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding ... Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of your income, and he will fill your barns to overflowing" (Proverbs 3:5,9).

"Give and it will be given to you ... for with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38).

5. GIVING IS AN INVESTMENT FOR ETERNITY.

"... Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven - it is the only safe investment for eternity" (1 Timothy 6:18-19).

6. GIVING BLESSES ME IN RETURN.

"A generous man himself will be blessed" (Proverbs 22:9).

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed" (Proverbs 11:25).

"Good will come to him who is generous ..." (Psalm 112:5).

7. GIVING MAKES ME HAPPY.

"(Jesus said) ... There is more happiness in giving than in receiving" (Acts 20:35).

What Is Tithing?

☐ The word "tithe" means "a tenth part"

☐ A "tithe" is giving 10% of my income

☐ An "offering" is anything I give above my tithe

WHY I SHOULD TITHE (7 REASONS)

1. Because God commands it.

"A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy" (Leviticus 27:30).

2. Tithing shows that God has first place in my life.

"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God in first place in your life" (Deuteronomy 14:23).

3. Tithing reminds me that all I have is from God.

"Always remember that it is the Lord your God who gives you the ability to produce wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18).

4. It expresses my gratitude for what I have been given.

"How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" (Psalms 116:12).

"Each of you should bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you" (Deuteronomy 16:17).

5. Refusing to tithe is actually like stealing from God.

"God says 'Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!' But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' God says 'In tithes and offerings ... Bring your whole tithe to My house'" (Malachi 3:8-10).

6. Tithing gives God an opportunity to bless me.

"'Bring your whole tithe to My storehouse. Test me in this' says the Lord, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you won't have room enough for it! I will prevent pests from devouring your crops and the vines in your fields will be protected from plagues'" (Malachi 3:10).



Only in your TITHING does God say, "Test Me! Let Me bless you and prove Myself to you!"

7. Tithing proves that I really love God.

"(Jesus said) If you really love me, do what I command" (John 14:15).

"... I want you to be leaders also in the spirit of cheerful giving ... This is one way to prove that your love is real, that it goes beyond mere words" (2 Corinthians 8:7-8).

WHAT SHOULD I TITHE?

The first part of what I earn, not the left-overs.

"Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income" (Proverbs 3:9-10).

WHERE SHOULD I TITHE?

Where I worship and get fed spiritually.

"Bring your whole tithe to My Storehouse ..." (Malachi 3:10)

WHEN SHOULD I TITHE?

When I go to worship each week.

"On the first day of every week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn." (1 Corinthians 16:2)

HOW SHOULD I TITHE?

WILLINGLY

"Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under pressure ..." (2 Corinthians 9:7).

JOYFULLY

"... for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

GENEROUSLY

"They gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability" (2 Corinthians 8:3).

EXPECTANTLY

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and whoever sows generously will reap generously" (2 Cor. 9:6).

Tithing is not an equal AMOUNT from everyone, but an equal PROPORTION from everyone. God's system is absolutely fair!

THE HABIT OF FELLOWSHIP

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage each other" (Hebrews 10:25).

1. I need a church family to help me grow spiritually.

"You are a member of God's very own family ... and you belong in God's household with every other Christian" (Ephesians 2:19).

"So in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the other" (Romans 12:5).

2. I need encouragement to help me grow spiritually.

"Let us think of one another and how we can encourage each other to love and do good

deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).

"Two are better off than one ... If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it's just too bad, because there is no one to help him ... Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12).

3. I need accountability to help me grow spiritually.

"Every day ... keep encouraging one another so that none of you is hardened by the glamour of sin" (Hebrews 3:13).

"Brothers, if someone is trapped in some sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently ... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:1-2).

4. There is great spiritual power in unity.

"For wherever two or three have come together in my name, I am there, right among them" (Matthew 18:20).

"Whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven" (Matthew 18:19).

5. God has given me gifts to bless my church family.

"God has given you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other..." (1 Peter 4:10).

"... together you form the body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it" (1 Corinthians 12:27).

There are nearly 60 "one another" commands in the New Testament that you cannot obey unless you are faithful to a local church!

- ✓ Serve one another Galatians 5:13
- ✓ Accept one another Romans 15:7
- ✓ Forgive one another.....Colossians 3:13
- ✓ Greet one another Romans 16:16
- ✓ Bear one another's burdens Galatians 6:2
- ✓ Be devoted to one another..... Romans 12:10
- ✓ Honor one another Romans 12:10
- ✓ Teach one another Romans 15:14
- ✓ Submit to one another Ephesians 5:21
- ✓ Encourage one another 1 Thessalonians 5:11

"(They met) day after day, **in the Temple courts and from house to house.**" (Acts 5:42)

The main purpose of all of our services and groups is to **BUILD BRIDGES** to the unsaved of our

community. We firmly believe in having “church for the unchurched.”

“If any of you has a hundred sheep, and one of them gets lost, what will you do? Won’t you leave the ninety-nine in the field and go look for the lost sheep until you find it?” (Luke 15:4).

Study Questions

1. My _____ reveals my spiritual _____.
2. Given the following key Bible words, write in the blank the number of times each of these is used in God’s Word.
 Believe _____
 Pray _____
 Love _____
 Give _____
3. You can _____ without _____ but you cannot _____ without _____.
4. List and provide Scripture reference for the seven (7) benefits of giving studied in this lesson.
 1) _____
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____
 5) _____
 6) _____
 7) _____
5. Define “tithing.” Include at least three (3) things. _____

6. List (with Scripture reference) the seven (7) reasons why we should tithe.
 1) _____
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____
 5) _____
 6) _____
 7) _____
7. Answer (with Scripture reference) the following questions about tithing.

What should I tithe? _____

Where should I tithe? _____

When should I tithe? _____

8. List four (4) answers (with Scripture reference) to the question “How should I tithe?”

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

9. Tithing is not an equal _____ from everyone, but an equal _____ from everyone. God’s system is absolutely _____.

10. List (with Scripture reference) the five (5) reasons why we need the habit of fellowship.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

11. Given the following Scripture references, which “one another” command is mentioned in each?

- Ephesians 5:21 _____
- Romans 15:7 _____
- 1Thessalonians 5:11 _____
- Galatians 6:2 _____
- Romans 16:16 _____
- Galatians 5:13 _____
- Romans 15:14 _____
- Colossians 3:13 _____
- Romans 12:10 _____

12. The main purpose of all our services and groups is to build _____ to the _____ of our community.