



A Proper Perspective On Giving — Part Three
Center Your Life
 Colossians 3:5-6

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Objective Sentence: Everyone should tithe and give to the Lord because the principles associated with giving prepare the way for supernatural living.

Introduction; Pastor Dan: One of our big problems is that we attempt to center God around our lives instead of centering our lives around God. *January 3rd Just A Thought: Ravi Zacharias:* I think the reason we sometimes have the false sense that God is so far away is because that is where we have put him. We have kept him at a distance, and then when we are in need and call on him ... we wonder where He is and He is exactly where we left him.”

Put on your helmet and head to your bomb shelter; I want to drop a Scriptural Bomb on you today. **Colossians 3:5-6 NKJV** So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. ***Don't be greedy—for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.*** ⁶ Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming on the children of disobedience. (Luke 12:15 1 Timothy 6:10 Ephesians 5:3-5)

Mark 12:30 John 15:4-5, 7 Romans 8:5 Colossians 3:1-3

#1. Center Your Life Around God (*Matthew 6:33 LB* In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success)

A. Pastor Dan: Tithing and giving is one of the ways we learn to center our lives around God. The purpose of tithing is to teach you and me to always put God first in our lives. Tithing and giving isn't about God needing our money; it is about Him needing, wanting and desiring to be first place

in our lives. William Booth: The greatness of an individual's power is the measure of his surrender.

1. **Put God First** (*Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the Lord with the first fruits of your substance and your barns will be filled with plenty. Eerdmans: The metaphor of the harvest implies that the more generous the gift the richer the return; withholding more than is necessary leads to poverty.*)
 - a. *Richard J. Foster; Money, Sex and Power:* Giving with glad and generous hearts has a way of **routing out the tough old miser within us**. Even the poor need to know that they can give. Just the very act of letting go of money, or some other treasure, does something within us. It destroys the demon of greed.
 - b. *Pastor Dan; Numbers 2:1-34* The Tabernacle in the wilderness and the way the tribes camped around it exemplified a lesson of life that is important for us as followers of the Lord to emulate. Our lives are to be centered around God. After Moses built the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, he was given very specific instructions on how the people were to set up their tents around the tabernacle. The Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting was always set up at the center of the Camp of Israel. The tribe of Levi was assigned to care for it, and encamped around it. Moses, Aaron, and the priests camped on the east side next to the entrance. The three families of the tribe of Levi (Merari, Kohath, and Gershon), were to camp on the north, south and west side, respectively. The remaining twelve tribes were grouped into four camps around the Levites.
 - c. *Homiletics Online:* In **2 Corinthians 9:6** Paul declares, “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” Paul is using an agricultural image: relating to planting and harvest and he is right—it does not matter whether you are growing melons or mission projects—you cannot expect significant results without making a significant investment.
 - d. *Exodus 25:1-9* The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. ³ And this *is* the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; ⁴ blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and goats’ *hair*; ⁵ ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; ⁶ oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ⁷ onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. ⁸ And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. ⁹ According to all that I show you, *that is*, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make *it*)
 - e. *Source Unknown:* Tithing is an act of faith that shows I am committed to God and the work of His kingdom. How you spend your money tells the story of who’s first in your life and who you really worship. Too often God is nowhere to be found.

- #2. **The Tithe is our First fruits and comes first** (*Matthew 6:33 Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you.*)
 - A. *Source Unknown:* **God wants our first dollar, not necessarily our last dollar. Sometimes giving our last dollar may be likened unto giving God our scraps or leftovers. After all other needs are met, some people will then give to God, but He requires our first not our last; our best—not our second best.**

1. **Anything Less Than Your Best Is Sin** (*Luke 6:38-39* Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.)
- a. **Matthew 6:2** No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (money or material things). This means that God must come first. The tithe belongs to God and according in **Malachi 3:8** to use the tithe for ourselves would be the same as robbing God. By putting our tithe ahead of our own personal needs, we keep our priorities in proper perspective; therefore tithing is a safeguard against covetousness, greed and selfishness. Tithing is a constant reminder that all we possess belongs to God and is subject to Him.
 - b. **Mal. 1:8, 13-14** When you give blind animals as sacrifices, isn't that wrong? And isn't it wrong to offer animals that are crippled and diseased? Try giving gifts like that to your governor, and see how pleased he is!" ... You say, 'It's too hard to serve the LORD,' and you turn up your noses at my commands ... think of it! Animals that are stolen and crippled and sick are being presented as offerings! Should I accept from you such offerings as these?"
 - c. **Malachi 3:10** Bring the **whole tithe** into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test Me in this says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there won't be room enough to receive it.
 - d. **Pastor Dan:** One of the reasons our church—the church exists is for us to assume our share of responsibility for propagating the Gospel in all the world; if we fail to assume that responsibility there is no reason for us to exist as a church; **and there is certainly no reason why God favor and blessings should rest on our lives.**
 - e. **Matthew 28:18-20** **Jesus said:** All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.
 - f. **Source Unknown:** Seedtime and harvest promise a rich reward for being generous. Seeds always give more back than what is planted. Anyone can count the seeds in an apple but no one can count the apples in a seed.
 - g. **Pastor Wayne Friedt:** Jesus said to beware of covetousness (greed and selfishness). Money in itself is not good or evil. Money takes on the characteristic of its owner.
 - h. **Dr. Ed Cole:** There are only three reasons a follower of Jesus would not tithe (unbelief **Mark 16:14**), (fear **1 John 4:18**) (greed or covetousness **Ephesians 5:5**). The love of money is greed and selfishness.

Closing and Invitation: **1 Kings 17:9-16** “Go and live in the village of Zarephath, near the city of Sidon. I have instructed a widow there to feed you. ¹⁰So Elijah went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the gates of the village, he saw a widow gathering sticks, and he asked her, “Would you please bring me a little water in a cup?” ¹¹As she was going to get it, he called to her, “Bring me a bite of bread, too.” ¹²But she said, “I swear by the LORD your God that I don't have a single piece of bread in the house. And I have only a handful of flour left in the jar and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the jug. I was just gathering a few sticks to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die.” ¹³But Elijah said to her, “**Don't be afraid! Go ahead and do just what you've said, but make a little bread for me first.** Then use what's left to prepare a meal for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: There will always be flour and olive oil left in your containers until the time when the LORD sends rain and the crops grow again!” ¹⁵So she

did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her family continued to eat for many days. ¹⁶ There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the LORD had promised through Elijah.