

No Taxes, Please

Scripture Reading — Deuteronomy 14:22-29

Do not neglect the Levites living in your towns.
Deuteronomy 14:27

Few people eagerly pay their tax bills. Some fight the government's right to collect them. After all, the reasoning goes, it's our money, so we should decide what to do with it.

Moses had a different point of view. Tithing-giving a tenth of what Israel received from the land-was not a matter of giving the Lord a part of what Israel owned so they could do with the rest as they pleased. *All* of Israel's income belonged to the Lord, the land's owner. Whatever Israel received was God's gift to them.

The yearly tithe acknowledged this gift and the responsibility of helping people who could not give: non-citizens, the fatherless, widows, and the Levites. This way everyone could share in the Lord's bounty.

Tithing, or giving money to the church for its ministry, is not a tax to be paid to keep your membership. In the Old Testament, gifts for the tabernacle were voluntary (Exodus 35:20-21; 36:6-7), and the same was true for the church in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Yes, you can go to church for free, because God's forgiveness cannot be bought. But the question is, What is God's grace worth to you? If you believe God has provided you with nothing, live accordingly. But if you know that everything you have comes from God's hand, then give as you have received.

Prayer

"Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," O Lord. I have received so much from you, Lord; help me to give cheerfully in return. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Deuteronomy](#)

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