

Module 05 – 45 Responsibility - New vs. Old – Provision 2

Session 45

- **Our old earthly ways need to be replaced with new heavenly ways**
- **Prayer, intercession, authority, spiritual warfare, ministry, revelation, provision etc.**
- **Everything must be established from a heavenly perspective before it can manifest on earth**

When we engage God intimately face to face it will expose many doctrines and theologies that we presumed to be true as distortions and misrepresentations of the truth

We are looking at God's provision from a new or renewed perspective

- Provision is more than just money
- Provision also includes Blessings, Prosperity, Resources and Wealth
- **Everything is relational not formulaic**
- **God's provision will be released through sonship but not from an orphan, slavery or poverty mentality**

Gen 1:28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule ...

God has built fruitfulness and multiplication into creation through the principles of sowing and reaping

We need to understand the nature of the seed and how to sow and reap

Matt 13:38 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom;

- If we are to be fruitful we need to first be seed, being living sacrifices by surrendering our lives to God
- When we ourselves are planted as sons being blessed to prosper we can then also sow seed to be fruitful and multiply

Matt 6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

- The key to entering into God's provision is to seek Him first as a priority

Matt 6:24 You can't serve God and money

If we are not seeking God's glory first we must be focusing on our own lives and then our only option is a DIY source of provision.

God is unveiling new revelation to bring us into freedom by challenging some of the wrong teaching regarding provision that we may have been operating under

The principles of giving and receiving are universal but some of the methodologies of giving are different in the old covenant than in the new covenant

- **In the New Covenant we are under grace not the law system of Israel**

Examine some teaching about provision under the lens of new revelation

- Tithes and Offerings
- *Terumah* - first fruits
- Trading

The focus in giving will be always on relationship not formulas

Are we operating under old covenant revelation that no longer applies to us?

If we are we might be giving in fear or under compulsion and not cheerfully

Are we giving joyfully or begrudgingly?

Perhaps we are giving sparingly or not at all because we fear we won't have enough left if we give to God first

- **If we are not operating according to God's economy we will have to meet our own needs by using DIY methods which are still under the curse**
- **That means working harder and longer by the sweat of self-effort or stealing from someone who is better off or from the system which is not really stealing is it, doing the lottery, gambling by trusting in luck etc.**

Giving or sowing as a precursor to receiving is a truth that is built into the fabric of the created order

Giving requires a relationship with God in which we trust in His love and desire to bless us

The bible reveals many truths but also many abuses in regards to giving

Cain and Abel reveals a key - heart motive

Malachi 3 reveals that we can actually rob God by not giving – is it old covenant only?

Jesus strongly challenged the religious leaders of His day who were fleecing the people with corrupt systems of offerings.

In the early church they had an attitude of all things in common so they even sold possession to give so that no one among them had any needs

Paul challenged various churches regarding offerings for those in need

Tithing or giving 10% of gross income is a very sacred cow to many movements and religious institutions not only the faith movement or prosperity teachers.

- Most western churches rely on the tithing system to keep their doors open and fund their ministries
- **This means that giving can be a highly emotive issue amongst church leaders – sorry this teaching will probably upset many**
- Because the tithe is the major source of income for most churches it is open to abuse and manipulation both ways
- There can be pressure from church leaders to give but there can also be pressure or control from large titheers (rich people) to influence leaders to keep them happy

- People can show their disapproval of the direction a church is going by withholding their money or their time and abilities that God might want them to give or use

There are many sincere Christians today who do tithe because they believe it is taught in scripture and that the mandate to tithe is still valid today.

If we give a 10% tithe to God in faith because He asks us to or we think He is asking us to, then it will please him.

However, if we give a 100% offering to God in unbelief, under compulsion or in fear, then it won't please him.

→ **What matters is not the percentage that we give, but rather the heart that we give it from.**

- The question isn't "is tithing for the new covenant church", but rather "what does God want us all to give?"
- Because he does want all of us to give so that we can all receive from Him

I saw tithing in the bible shared that with Deb and we faithfully started to tithe using that belief. Even though it was a struggle at first I can honestly say we have always had enough not because tithing was necessarily right but because of faith

Then we saw the principle of sowing and reaping and we started to sow above our tithe as God directed us what to do

I believe God has honoured our giving because we gave in faith and He is faithful but it was not a formula and we always lived within our means

We have been manipulated to give in highly pressured situations and even borrowed to give and God did not honour that

We also have testimony of when we gave in faith in response to a prophetic word to give for a breakthrough

We were at a camp 1996 and were encouraged to seek God what to give as an offering

Deb had been given some money and we both independently heard God say to sow that £1000 which was a lot for us at the time for moving house

When we felt it time to move a house right opposite owned by Christians came up for sale

Valued at £82,000 our house valued at £52,000 so we put it on at £82,000 and got that price

- God doesn't need a cash incentive to bless us, he blesses us because He loves us.
- But our giving does activate kingdom economics when our heart motives are right
- If we love God, we will give not just our cash but our lives and not just to receive

Tithe under the old covenant system was a tax on the tribes of Israel to support the Levites and Priests

→ **Tithing was a very specific doctrine for Israel it was never for the gentiles**

The Levites and priests had no inheritance of land on which to grow produce for provision so they were supported by the other tribes to provide the priestly service for them

According to the Rabbis, the laws of tithing only apply to the land of Israel, and farmers in the Diaspora (those living outside of Israel) had no obligation to give tithes

→ We are not under the law or rabbinical tradition and we don't live in Israel so tithing is not something we have to do

→ Tithing is something we can choose to do or God can ask us to do but it is not the law

Some Rabbinic sources make reference to a tithe of money as well as of produce, although this was seen as a voluntary contribution rather than an obligation.

Many observant Jews today do donate a tenth of their annual income to charity.

This is known as *maaser kesafim*, 'the money tithe' or 'wealth tax.'

This is not law but is a free will choice that I believe God will honour

The rest of the gentile world was never under the system of Hebrew laws

The tithe system has been attributed to Abraham who gave 10% to Melchizedek before the law therefore that has been applied to us as Abraham's seed

This teaching has been used to justify that tithing is a universal system.

Let's see if that is true

Gen 14:18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. 19 He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He (Abram) gave him a tenth of all

Gen 14:21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself." 22 Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the Lord God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, 23 that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, for fear you would say, 'I have made Abram rich.'

→ **Error one** what Abraham gave was not the produce of his land or herds but was the spoils of war so this was technically not a tithe

→ **Error two** Abraham gave away of the other 90% to the King of Sodom which is always ignored when being used to justifying tithing for Christians

So if we follow Abraham we will give 100% away

Heb 6:20 Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

- We are in Christ and this means that if He is of the order of Melchizedek, so are we
 - We are not in Abraham, tithing to God through Melchizedek; we are in Melchizedek so Abraham would have to tithe to us
 - We are in the Melchizedek priesthood with Jesus; we are not “Abraham the tither” in the story and we are not part of the Aaronic old covenant earthly priesthood under the law
- **Giving is built into creation but tithing was built into the law of Israel only**

The author Phil Drysdale humorously observes that Abraham gave 10% to Melchizedek and gave 90% to the King of Sodom. So if we are to follow his example, we should give 10% to the church and 90% to our local strip club, brothel, drug dealer or some other terrible institution.

Some elements of the tithe teaching were from the law and found in the bible and some were only from rabbinical tradition

Tithing was actually biblically limited to the seven agricultural products wheat, barley, and grapes in the form of wine, figs, and pomegranates, olives in the form of oil, and dates and only on what was grown in Israel

There were three different tithes plus lots of other offering rules

The tithe was part of ancient Israel’s taxation system, which also included the first fruits offering; a gift of thanksgiving to God and there was also an agricultural gift

- *Maaser Rishon*: A First Tithe for the Levites
- *Maaser Sheni*: A Second Tithe to yourself to save for celebrations or special occasions
- *Maaser Ani*: A Tithe to poor, homeless, widows, or orphans this was part of the second tithe given every third time they paid their second tithe
- *Bikkurim*: A First Fruits Offering to God
- *Terumah*: An agricultural offering that was presented to the Kohen or Priest

First Fruits is a religious offering of the first agricultural produce of the harvest. In classical Greek, Roman, Hebrew and Christian religions, the first fruits were given to priests to offer a deity.

Today we still have harvest festivals in some more traditional churches as a token Traditions of men became mixed with what Israel were instructed to do by the law and so became more and more complicated

Some people are trying to reintroduce the teaching of the *Terumah* to the church today, some along with tithing and some without tithing

- ***Terumah* and tithing were all part of the same system and neither is applicable for us today unless God tells us specifically**

There are some good biblical principles that can help us with our giving but they are not the law for us today

- There is the suggestion that as Terumah was a rabbinical tradition in Jesus' day where 1/40 of what was produced was given to the Rabbi they followed that we should adopt this today
- I don't believe we have any Rabbis in the Christian church today apart from Jesus who is the only mediator between God and man
- Neither Jesus nor any of the Apostles ever taught Terumah in what we have recorded

It seems that those who are seen as Rabbis are introducing or promoting Terumah offerings for today!

We have never taught this here so I can't comment on the motives of those who are promoting this!

→ **We are not Hebrews, not under the law, not living in Israel so are not under any legal obligation regarding any of these giving instructions**

Making giving a legal issue creates problems indicated by the abuses throughout the history of religion

In Christianity using fear particularly fear of hell and damnation to solicit giving to keep the church coffers full.

More recently the faith movement and prosperity teachers suggest that tithing opens a heavenly bank account for offerings to be multiplied so that has been used to keep people giving.

Trading buckets are the latest way being used to get people to give.

It seems that the same people teaching *Terumah* are teaching trading buckets!

There is nothing wrong with people trading if there is clarity on what is being done and it is not under any compulsion

- *Terumah* can prey on people's need for instant gratification so they try to take a DIY short cut - trading to buy revelation

Trading into something with a token that shows our desire to pursue truth for oneself if God inspires it is okay but you can't buy revelation

It takes commitment and desire to learn, to mature and develop revelation into a lifestyle so it becomes a testimony

The same motivations were popular within the charismatic movement with teaching on transferable anointing, seeking for prophecies etc. that fueled the conference circuits

Trading can be abused playing on people's desires or fears.

- **The heart motives are the real issue around finances as there is no doubt that giving is a principle within the kingdom**
- **Sowing and reaping is true trading and is one way that God has chosen to release resources to us.**

Phil 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

The context of this verse is important and it can't just be taken in isolation

Why could Paul say this?

He knew God and His faithfulness in His own life

He knew the Philippians had sown offerings

Phil 4:12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Phil 4:15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

Phil 4:18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

Phil 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

The context of supply is sowing and increasing in an account

Paul taught in 2 Cor 9:7 that each of us should give what we have decided in our hearts to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

- **This is a clear indicator that our giving does not have to be fixed either in proportion or amount but should be inspired by what God says**
- **What matters here is not the percentage that we give, but rather the heart of obedience and faith that we give it from.**
- **As we engage with God in intimacy our giving should be a topic of conversation so we can decide what to give inspired by that relationship and fellowship**

Here we stopped talking about tithes and offerings and giving a specific opportunity to give during meetings a few years ago

I wonder what has happened to our finances since.

Has the income increased or decreased?

Has the proportion of our giving that has come through local members of this Ekklesia increased or decreased?

Year	Local income	Non local Income
2013/14	89%	11%
2014/15	54%	46%
2015/16	39%	61%
2016/17	25%	75%

Guess when we stopped taking tithes and offerings? 2014!

2014 is also when we started the Engaging God Programme to bless and equip outwards

Our external income increases - our local income decreases not just by % by also amount

Why do you think that is?

- Perhaps we were previously only giving because we felt obliged or pressured
- Perhaps we are forgetful if not reminded
- Perhaps we think finances are just an individual not corporate issue
- Perhaps we don't think we have any responsibility to support God's blueprint here or help each other?
- Maybe we are not asking God how much or where He wants us to give
- Maybe we don't think we have enough to give
- Maybe we are eating all our seed and not sowing any of it
- Maybe we don't have faith for finances
- Maybe we are stingy or resent giving
- Maybe we have a poverty mentality
- Maybe we are angry with God and don't want to give
- Maybe we don't like the direction the church is going so we don't give to voice our disapproval
- Maybe we are not seeking first the kingdom of God
- Maybe we are living from the DIY tree in regards to our finances and not trusting God with our money and provision
- Maybe we don't believe God has a right to tell us what to give?
- Maybe we don't understand kingdom financial principles
- Maybe we don't know how to receive so we don't give because of past disappointments when we gave and did not receive?

I would suggest everyone needs to be willing to examine their own hearts in regards to giving, money, finances and ask God to reveal any fear, unbelief, doubt, disappointment, poverty mentality, control, dishonesty, bad attitudes, lies we are believing, blockages or curses personal or generationally that we might be operating in our lives.

- If those issues are not resolved and those blockages are not removed we will find it very difficult to receive the flow of resources from heaven to enable us to fulfil our destiny either individually or corporately
- Meditate in 2 Cor 9:7-10 for revelation
- Make a point of having a conversation with God about provision regularly

I would suggest doing a court case to ascertain if there are any financial accusations against you or any legal rights the enemy has to block your blessing

- Convene the court of accusation
- Stand under God's love, word and authority

- Call for the accusers which can include God
- Hear and accept the accusations
- Receive and use the not guilty verdict and change your approach to giving