

Two spotlights on stands are positioned on the left side of the page. The top spotlight is mounted on a tall, thin stand, and the bottom spotlight is mounted on a shorter, wider stand. Both spotlights are angled towards the right.

LIVING EPISTLES MINISTRIES

**TITHES &
ALMS DEEDS**
(The Difference)

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Living Epistles Ministries

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~ Judeo-Christian Spiritual Philosophy ~

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DEFINITIONS

There is no male or female in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28). Accordingly, all textual references to Male and female point to spiritual principles principles, and the words man and men, as well as the pronouns, he, his and him, include, woman, women, she and her.

Christ Jesus is the only spiritual male. Accordingly, all powers and principalities other than Christ Jesus are identified as female in relation to him.

The powers and principalities which have incarnated this falled world (2 Cor. 4:4) are male in relation to fallen mankind, and female in relation to Christ Jesus.

John 7:17-18

¹⁷ If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

¹⁸ He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. KJV

Pastor Vitale's Testimony

Fifteen years ago when I preached this message, I was caught up in the false teaching that the Church was to pay alms deeds rather than tithes. The Lord subsequently taught me that the ability to pay alms deeds is an aspect of the nature of Christ Jesus, which must be developed in the individual.

Shortly after I switched from tithing to paying alms deeds I found myself praying over every paycheck to ask the Lord how much money I should give to the Church. I became very frustrated early on because the Lord was not answering me, and I simply didn't know what to do. Finally, one day, as I prayed in desperation, the Lord spoke to me, saying, "10% sounds pretty good to me." I was completely confused at this response, so I began to seek the Lord about the difference between alms deeds and tithes.

I found out that alms deeds is a level of spiritual maturity which causes one to respond to financial issues in the same way that Christ Jesus would respond. I found out that anyone who is truly ascended into the spiritual level of alms deeds gives much more than 10% of their gross income, because alms deeds is an attitude of the heart. It is the response of Christ within us to any call for help, which very few in the Church attain to. The truth is that most people in the Church who give beyond a straight 10% of the gross of their income do so out of the spirit of pride, while alms deeds is a distinct move of the Spirit of Christ from within the individual

I had been tithing 10% of my gross income for many years, when I realized that, despite my sincerity and hard

work my income was wholly inadequate to support a middle-class lifestyle, so I went before the Lord with a great complaint.

I cried before him with bitter tears, and one day, despite my very small income, there appeared in my heart a desire to feed the hungry. At first I thought I would donate some canned goods to a Thanksgiving Day collection, but I soon recognized that the Lord had other ideas and was challenging me to donate some of my small income to feed others who were less fortunate than I.

The Lord then led me to a local ministry that goes out into the streets to feed the poor. At first I gave them a single donation, then I committed to a monthly donation, and after that, much to my surprise, I found the desire in my heart to give to another ministry, and then another ministry.

I was very concerned about what was happening to me, because I did not want to be financially irresponsible. So, I prayed and I prayed, until the Lord spoke to me saying, "Sheila, don't be afraid to do what is in your heart." Then I made a fleece with the Lord, saying, Lord, I will give all that it is in my heart to give, but the first month that I cannot pay my bills, I will withdraw from all of these commitments.

Well, that was about two years ago. (Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you that the Ministry was barely paying its bills, and it was not unusual for us to be in the red at the end of the month, even though the Ministry was tithing 10% of its gross income also.)

Well, last year the Ministry gave away 15% of its gross income, and the Ministry income is greater today than it has been at anytime in the past 15 years. I have not calculated what percentage of my personal income I gave away last year,

but it was well beyond 10%, and my income today is greater than it has been at anytime since I gave up my secular job. Glory to God!

I thank you Lord for everything you have taught me, and for the opportunity to pass this knowledge onto others.

E-Mail Concerning Tithing And Pastor Vitale's Response:

Mal 3:10

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. KJV

QUESTION: I have read the subject matter concerning, "Gifts, Tithes, Alms deeds, etc," from the Question & Answer section of your web page. I have also listened to Message #12, Witchcraft, Tithing & Other Tidbits and I am confused.

PASTOR VITALE: I am sorry for the confusion that this message may have caused you. I preached it 10 years ago, at a time when I was offended by the pressure that was being put on the Church to give money. At that time, many Kingdom preachers were preaching that the tithe is under the Old Covenant, and many preachers still preach that message today.

It is true that the tithe is under the Old Covenant, but it is also true that this is only half a message. The whole

message is that either you give because the Law demands it (tithe), or you give because your conscience demands it (alms deeds). The fact that there are many unscrupulous preachers in the Church today using mind control to get money from God's people, does not change the Law of Sowing & Reaping.

I was shocked to find out that the majority of the people who heard this half message (that you only have to tithe if you are under the Old Covenant) were keeping all of their money for themselves, and that many were going into destruction. It was after this that the Lord revealed the Gospel of Giving to me, which I have been preaching now for many years. I will post this email as an addition to the transcript of message #12.

QUESTION: Are you saying it is okay to tithe because we are still under the Old Covenant?

PASTOR VITALE: Yes. As I told you in the interpretation of your dream (Ascension & Finances), the New Covenant is a face-to-face relationship with Jesus Christ. The problem that most Christians have today is that they do not understand that we can have a face-to-face relationship with Jesus Christ in some areas of our life, but not in others. We are under the Old Covenant in the areas of our life where the Lord speaks to us through a mediator, a teacher for example, and we should tithe to the priest (the teacher/pastor) who covers our sins by instructing us in righteousness

QUESTION: And that when we are led by the Spirit of Christ, we are giving alms which is above the tithe amount?

PASTOR VITALE: When we are led by the Spirit, it is very likely that the Lord will lead us to give more than 10%, but the bottom line is that we do what He, our renewed

conscience, tells us to do. Those of us who have experienced giving alms deeds as a result of a face-to-face relationship with Jesus Christ, have found out that, in this area, He always asks us to give more than **we think** we can afford.

There is a great misunderstanding in the Church in this area. The truth is that, according to the Spiritual Law of God, the way we increase our finances is to give away a portion of what little we have, in the form of tithes and free-will offerings. But, this makes no sense to the carnal mind, wherefore, the people who are usually in the most need of financial assistance, follow their carnal mind, rather than Christ, and give away very little, or nothing.

The tithe is not a penalty. It is a carnal law which, when followed, defends us against the destruction of the Sowing & Reaping Judgment (which is enforced by Satan), until Christ Jesus matures our conscience in the area of finances (because it is not right to drink at someone's well and take no responsibility for replenishing that well).

Psalm 37:21

The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth. (KJV)

The above Scripture verse does not mean that we are wicked. It means that this is the way the wicked carnal mind thinks, but the Mind of Christ does His part to replenish the well that dispenses the mercy of God.

If we are not under the spiritual law of Christ (New Covenant), whether we know it or not, we are under the Law of Sowing & Reaping (Old Covenant), which is mediated

by Satan. Under this Law of Sowing & Reaping, we receive back what ever we put in. If we give nothing, our source of income and blessings begin to dry up. Experiencing loss helps us to learn that we do not have gainful employment, health, etc., because of your own righteousness, talents, skills, or hard work, but that promotion comes from the Lord.

Psalm 75:4-7

4. I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:

5. Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.

6. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

7. But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another. (KJV)

This truth sounds unfair to some who may think, "I know many who do not tithe, and they are prospering." Wherefore, it is a great mystery that judgment falls swiftly upon those whose heart is turned towards the Lord, but may take two or three generations to fall upon those whose heart is turned away from Him.

QUESTION: On the tape, you say that Malachi was not talking about tithes, and Jesus did not instruct us to tithe. Could you clear this up for me?

PASTOR VITALE: It is true that Malachi was not talking about tithes in that Scripture. Actually, he was indicting the pastors for not bringing forth the life of God in the people. There is no New Testament Scripture that tells us to tithe. Yet, pastors and ministers need money to run their churches and ministries, so, unfortunately, many ministers use that Scripture to pressure people into tithing. But pressure and the misuse of Scripture is witchcraft. The only legitimate way to solicit money from God's people is to educate them by instructing them in righteousness. If they do not respond to our instruction, it is up

to the Lord to deal with them. As far as the pastor or minister is concerned, all he can do is ask the Lord to supply his needs and speak to the people. If the Lord does not supply his needs through the people, or otherwise, the pastor or minister should get a job.

QUESTION: Correct me if I am wrong. As long as we have a dual nature (the carnal mind and the mind of Christ), we are to tithe. However, when we are functioning with the Mind of Christ, and are led by Christ Jesus to give, then it is alms when we give.

PASTOR VITALE: Yes.

QUESTION: Is the Church in error to teach that to give tithes means you should expect something, in return?

PASTOR VITALE: The answer is yes to the way tithing is being taught today. I remember once when I was a young Christian, and very short of money, I attended a Church revival where a well-known international evangelist was preaching. To make the story short, he preached that if you put in \$10, you could expect \$20 in return. Well, I put my last \$10 into the offering, but no money came to me the next day or the second day, and I had no money left for food for the rest of the week. This is irresponsible preaching.

As I told you above, tithing comes under the Law of Sowing & Reaping. This means that you tithe out of obedience (sowing), and the Lord provides your needs (reaping). That is, a job, transportation, food, home, health, etc. The carnal mind leads us astray when she tells us that we have the necessities of life (job, etc.) because of our own abilities, because this is not true. Everything that we have -- breath in our lungs, a healthy newborn child, skills that qualify

us for a good job, legs that work - are all gifts from God.

According to this formula, there are many in the Church today who should not be prospering, but God has mercy on the unjust as well as the just, and upon the ignorant. Mortal man is a spiritual criminal because of his carnal mind (1 Timothy 1:9). God has mercy on the ignorant, but is angry at the powers and principalities that live through our carnal mind all the day long.

Psalm 7:11

**God judgeth the righteous, and
God is angry with the wicked every
day. (KJV)**

He delivers the righteous [we are the righteous because of Jesus Christ] from the influence of the wicked [carnal mind] by instructing (judgeth) us [out of the Christ mind, either in us or in a teacher/pastor].

QUESTION: So we all are to tithe?

PASTOR VITALE: If the desire to give is not strong enough in us to cause us to give at least 10% of our gross income, we should put ourselves under the Law of Tithing for our own safety, and for the preservation of our family, until our conscience matures in the area of finances.

QUESTION: What is the purpose of the tithes?

PASTOR VITALE: I think I answered this question above.

QUESTION: Does it matter where we give our tithes?

PASTOR VITALE: Yes, you should give to the ministry that is supplying your spiritual food, and satisfying your spiritual needs.

QUESTION: Some of my other questions have been answered from reading the materials. Do you have any other information concerning this subject?

PASTOR VITALE: I think I have covered it all between this and my other emails. God Bless you.

Sincerely in Christ,
Sheila R. Vitale,
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