



LEADER FAQ

What is tithing?

Tithing is a practice that began in ancient Israel long before Jesus was born. Leviticus 27:30 says: “A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.” Tithing was a way for God’s people to acknowledge their dependence on him. It was a way to remember that all they had was from God and belongs to God.

Why do we tithe?

God didn’t institute the tithe because he wanted to take from the Israelites. He instituted it as a way of strengthening his relationship with them by giving them a practical way to ensure that their money and stuff didn’t become something they worshiped instead of God (Ex 20:3).

We face the same temptation to worship our stuff. In Luke 16:13, Jesus says, “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Tithing—giving the first 10% of our income back to God—is a practical way of helping us make sure we’re serving God and not money. And if you talk to people who tithe, they’ll tell you it’s almost eerie how such a material act has the power to orient our hearts toward God.

Are Christians required to tithe?

Jesus never commands us to tithe. Because of his grace, we’re freer but also have more opportunity. The apostle Paul urges us to give what we’ve decided in our hearts to give and to do so with a cheerful heart (2 Cor 9:7). That means that, yes, we’re free to give less than 10%—we’re even free to give nothing. But it also means we’re free to give more than 10%.

For Christians, tithing isn’t about a percentage or dollar amount. It’s about a relationship. Jesus tells us to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Mat 22:37). Giving to the church is about loving God by placing our trust in him instead of in our possessions, which is really just trusting that we can provide for ourselves.

For centuries, Christians have found tithing a good starting point, the preferred way to allow God into their financial decision-making. Ten percent isn’t a magic number, but it is what God commanded in Leviticus, and it does seem to provide a threshold across which we open ourselves to God.



What if one of my group members needs help getting his or her finances in order?

Some of your group members may be in dire financial straits—they may be jobless or upside-down in their mortgages. Be sensitive to this. Some may need help getting their financial feet back under them or shifting their financial priorities. They may be victims of the bad economy or they may have created financial messes they have no idea how to clean up.

Point them to these resources for assistance:

- [Balanced](#) (a financial series by Andy Stanley)
- [MoneyWise](http://northpoint.org/moneywise) (northpoint.org/moneywise)
- [Financial Peace University](http://daveramsey.com/fpu) (daveramsey.com/fpu)

Each offers practical biblical perspective on getting out of debt and managing your money responsibly.

What should I say about my own giving?

Be open about how you prioritize giving and how you decided to give what you give. Be honest about your struggles and challenges in giving. Don't share dollar amounts. You don't even need to share percentages. But talk about how giving has changed the way you view your finances and, more important, your relationship with God.