

We are being transformed into the image of Christ Jesus! Not only that, but we are learning that our finances can also be transformed from cursed to blessed.
Last week we saw that giving is all about the heart, and is one of the keys to the Blessed Life.

Next Life Transformation Step – I am attending all three X-Form My \$ teachings, checking it on my Communication Card, turning it in and will receive a free copy of “The Blessed Life” by Robert Morris.

Have you ever had one of those crazy dreams when you suddenly find yourself back in school and the teacher asks you, “Are you ready to take the test”, and with no idea what subject or class you are in, so you reply, “What test?” For some of you that may not be a dream, it might be a memory. I remember a few times when I said, “What test?” But somehow, I made it through school! I’m very proud that I graduated in the top ten percent... of the lower one-third of my class!

Today we are talking about the X-formation Test, and some of you might be saying, “What Test?”

How many of you get paid weekly, every other week, monthly, or never at all? LOL

The Bible teaches us that every time we get paid we are taking a test.

When you get your paycheck the test question is, “Who are you going to thank for your income?” The answer will be the one you pay first.

Who are you going to thank with the first 10% of your income. Who are you going to worship with the first 10% of your income. Some people thank VISA, it’s the first, one they pay. The problem is VISA has no power to bless their finances, but God does.

Malachi 3:6–10 “I the Lord do not change. (This is key, God does not change) So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. 7 Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. The word “Decrees” means “orders from God”. The order establishes what should be ordinary behavior for God’s children, but the people had not obeyed the orders. Their ancestors had turned away from the norm, and now God wants them to return to doing things His way. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’ 8 “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. “Well Scott that’s Old Testament”, wait minute, how did this text begin, “I the Lord do not change.” This isn’t preacher talk. A preacher is not saying this. The God that cannot change is saying this! Therefore, it is an ordinary principal established for God’s Children to thank God for their income. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me.

When you violate God’s orders you are under a curse, but people are quick to say, “Well Jesus has redeemed me from the curse of not keeping the law.” This is true that in Christ Jesus you are redeemed from the curse of breaking the law. He has saved us, but now that you are saved, are you telling me that in your life you can choose to do whatever you want to, and it will not affect you?

To steal results in what is no better than a curse, there is a consequence to stealing.

- In essence, when you choose to STEAL from God, you are putting yourself under a curse, there will be consequences.
- Some say, “Well God owns everything anyway so what does it matter.” He does own everything and He allows us to be stewards of what He has given us, but the bible is very clear that the first ten percent is His, it’s Holy to the Lord, and should be given to His house.
- If you want to read a good example of what happens when you steal from God and cause a curse to come upon you and the whole nation, read the story of Achan in Joshua 6 and 7.
- God doesn’t want us to be cursed, or to willingly place ourselves under the curse.

¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse (In the New Testament this is the church), that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, (The Lord Almighty is repeated several times to make sure you know it’s His words, that’s the God who does not change.) “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

1. Tithing is a Test

God tests our hearts through the tithe. When people want to argue about why they shouldn’t have to tithe, I’m a little taken back and wonder, “What’s the spirit behind that.”

- The Hebrew word tithe means a “tenth part.” In Scripture, the number ten represents testing.
- The thing I love about it being a percentage and not a fixed number is that it is fair to everyone.
 - It doesn’t matter if you make \$30,000 or \$300,000 one penny of every dime is a tithe, and 1000.00 dollars of every 10,000.00 is a tithe.

A. Ten is the Number of Testing in the Bible

- When God tested Pharaoh's heart, how many plagues did He send to test Pharaoh? Ten
- In the Old Testament, how many commandments did God give us to test our obedience? Ten
- In Numbers 14 how many, times did God test Israel in the wilderness? (There's a pattern here) Ten
- How many times were Jacobs wages changed? Ten
- How many days was Daniel tested? Ten
- In the New Testament, how many virgins were tested to see if they were prepared for the Bridegroom's return? Ten
- How many lepers were healed to see how many would return unto Christ to thank Him? Ten
- How many days of testing are mentioned in Revelation? Ten
- How many disciples in the NT did Jesus surround Himself with? Actually, 12- just testing you.

Ten is the number of testing, and God wants to see if we will return a tenth to Him. At the same time, we are allowed to put Him to the test. *"Test me in this!"*

B. Tithing is a Two Way Test.

Ten is the number of testing, and God wants to see if we will return a tenth to Him.

At the same time, we are allowed to put Him to the test. *"Test me in this!"* God wants to take a test too.

Malachi 3:10-11 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 throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. ¹¹ I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the Lord Almighty.

Test me, God says; try me. Tithing is the only area where God says we can test Him.

- "Try me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, (NKJ)
- "Prove me now herewith," saith the LORD of hosts, (KJV)
- "Try it! Let me prove it to you!" (NLT)

We test God and we are tested by God. This same word test is the same a "tried" such as when Gold is tested or tried to see if it is pure. God is saying, try me and see if I am pure. I want to bless you, I want to open up the windows of heaven for you!

Just like gold must be tested by fire to become pure, so we are tested to bring about purity in our lives.

C. Bottom Line: If we tithe, our finances are blessed. If we don't tithe, our finances are cursed.

We must trust God and believe that 90% blessed goes further than 100% cursed. (Increase our faith!)

D. The Number One Reason People Give for Not Tithing

They say, Tithing is under the Old Testament law.

- But when you search the scripture you will find that the principal of tithing is pre-law, law, and post law. Remember this principal was set in place by the God who does not change.
- What about adultery? Are we free to commit adultery because that was in the Old Testament Law?
- What about murder? That was in the Old Testament Law too. No consequences.

2. Tithing is Biblical

A. Abram Tithed to Melchizedek

Genesis 14:18-20 Then Melchizedek king of Salem (means peace) brought out bread and wine (a representation of communion in the OT). He was priest of God Most High, ¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. ²⁰ And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

This is 500 years before the law is given! Abraham is our spiritual Father and Galatians teaches us that Melchizedek was a "type" of Christ seen in the Old Testament.

It's a Biblical Principal. Next week I will show you tithing 2500 years before the law.

B. Jacob Gave God a Tenth

400 years before the law in Genesis 28, Jacob experiences the Living God at Bethel and set up a stone, that was his pillow the night before, and declares the space God's house. What else does Jacob do? *Genesis 28:22 ...and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house (again all the tithe goes to God's house), and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth."*

C. Ten Percent is Holy to the Lord *Leviticus 27:30* says, "And all (how much? ALL) *the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy to the LORD.*" Holy means "set apart". It's set apart for the Lord. That's why God can say, "Spending the tithe is stealing, because I've set that apart for my house and if you take it, you're stealing."

D. Bring to The Lord What is His

Deuteronomy 26:1-2, 13-15

¹ When you have entered the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and settled in it, ² take some of the first fruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land the Lord your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name. (Again, the church, His house)

¹³ Then say to the Lord your God: "I have removed from my house the sacred portion and have given it to the Levite, the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, according to all you commanded. I have not turned aside from your commands nor have I forgotten any of them. ¹⁴ I have not eaten any of the sacred portion while I was in mourning (I didn't use any of the tithe when I was going through a difficult time), nor have I removed any of it while I was unclean (think about how we've used our money for sinful purposes), nor have I offered any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the Lord my God; I have done everything you commanded me. ¹⁵ Look down from heaven, your holy dwelling place, and bless your people Israel and the land you have given us as you promised on oath to our ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey." (I have removed your holy portion from my house and brought it to your house Lord. Now you can pray, "look down from heaven and bless me and my family.")

E. If Jesus Said to Tithe, Would You?

Sad to say, but some would still have to think about it and some would still say no. If the one who bled and died for us said to tithe, would we? It's in the RED LETTERS!

Matthew 23:23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former."

F. Jesus Our Melchizedek

Hebrews 7:5-8 (Talking about Jesus) Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from their fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham.

⁶ This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷ And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸ And here men that die receive tithes (moral men here on earth); but there (in heaven), he (the living Christ Jesus) receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.

When you put your tithe in the basket, give at the kiosk, give on line, direct withdraw, it may be handled by faithful mortals who take care of it and manage it, but understand it is the living Jesus Christ in heaven who is really receiving it! That makes me want to tithe!

3. Tithing is a Blessing

In *2 Chronicles 31:4–10* King Hezekiah is reading the scripture and realizes the nation is under a curse. So, he ordered that the tithe be brought into the house of the Lord.

⁴ He ordered the people living in Jerusalem to give the portion due the priests and Levites so they could devote themselves to the Law of the Lord. ⁵ As soon as the order went out, the Israelites generously gave the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, olive oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything. ⁶ The people of Israel and Judah who lived in the towns of Judah also brought a tithe of their herds and flocks and a tithe of the holy things dedicated to the Lord their God, and they piled them in heaps. ⁷ They began doing this in the third month and finished in the seventh month. ⁸ When Hezekiah and his officials came and saw the heaps, they praised the Lord and blessed his people Israel. ⁹ Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites about the heaps; Are the people ok? Have they given too much; are they hurting financially? ¹⁰ and Azariah the chief priest, from the family of Zadok, answered, "Since the people began to bring their contributions to the temple of the Lord, we have had enough to eat and plenty to spare, because the Lord has blessed his people, and this great amount is left over."

Two Testimonies I have heard about tithing over the years.

- 1) Tithers tell me: we are so blessed! There is no way we will ever stop tithing.
- 2) Non-tithers tell me: we can't afford to tithe.

Malachi 3:12 "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the Lord Almighty

Obeying God's word through tithing breaks the curse and invites God's blessings and provision for our lives and finances. Transform your finances from cursed to blessed!

Next Life Transformation Steps

I will test God with my tithe and tithe 10% of my weekly income on ALL TITHE SUNDAY MARCH 18th.

I will take The Tithing Test Challenge and tithe 10% of my income during April and May 2018.