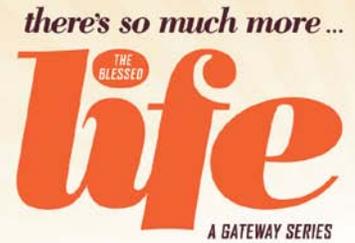


# *What Test?*



**Focus** Tithing is a test that reveals in whom or what we have our trust.

**Open** Would you say that you were a good student in high school and after? Why or why not?

**Read** Every time you receive an income, you take a test: Who will you thank for it? Who or what will you worship with your money? The answer is shown in what you do with the first of your income—the tithe. According to Malachi 3:6–12, tithing is an “ordinance,” a principle of ordinary behavior of the people of God. When we give the first ten percent of our income to God, we demonstrate our faith in Him and His Word.

A curse is a consequence of wrong behavior. God doesn't curse our finances when we don't tithe; our money is *already* under a curse that God removes when we do tithe. He wants to redeem us from the curse, “rebuke the devourer” on our behalf and bless us (Malachi 3:11–12).

Tithing is biblical. Scripture records that the commandment and practice of tithing pre-dates the implementation of the Law (Genesis 14:18–20; Genesis 28:22; Leviticus 27:30; Deuteronomy 26). Jesus affirmed tithing when speaking to the Pharisees in Matthew 23:23, instructing them to add justice, mercy and faith to what they were already doing (tithing).

Tithing is a blessing. There are only two testimonies regarding tithing: those who tithe say they are blessed, and those who don't tithe say they can't afford to. You'll never be able to afford to tithe until you tithe, because tithing breaks the curse from your finances. When the people began to tithe in 2 Chronicles 31:5–10, they were all blessed.

God is testing our hearts with the tithe. He wants to change our hearts so we *can* be blessed.

**Talk**

1. In the past, how did you view tithing and what was your understanding of it?
2. Read Deuteronomy 26:1–2 and Malachi 3:6–12. What stands out to you most as you read these passages?
3. What is the purpose of tithing? What would keep someone from tithing?
4. Why are we *already* under a curse concerning finances and provision? What is God's desire for us concerning this curse? How does this change your perspective on tithing, if at all?
5. What does God specifically promise those who will step out in faith and honor Him in their finances? What does this demonstrate about His character?

**Live**

1. Has tithing regularly been something that you find easy or difficult (or is it somewhere in between)? Why do you think that?
2. What is one thing you discussed this week that causes you to think differently about tithing or broadens your understanding of it in some way? What will you now do differently?

**Pray**

Thank God for His promise to bless and provide for those who place their faith in Him as evidenced by tithing. Thank Him for His generous nature. If you've been living under the curse because you haven't been obedient in this area, ask the Lord to forgive you and to change your heart. Express your faith and trust in Him and His goodness.