

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prosperity Test

- Focus** God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.
- Open** Have you experienced what you would call a “financial miracle”? What was it?
- Read** The Prosperity Test examines whether or not we use our prosperity (money) wisely. Money is meant to meet our material needs such as food, clothing and shelter, but beyond that, God wants to use *us* to distribute His resources on the earth. He’s looking for faithful people to steward His resources. God uses money to test our hearts, beginning with whether or not we’ll put Him first through tithing (bringing Him the first 10% of our income). Every time we receive a paycheck, we take The Prosperity Test.
- We live in a cursed world, and until we tithe, our finances are under a curse. God wants to redeem us from the curse. Throughout the Bible, we learn the principle of the first: *giving the first redeems the rest*. Jesus was *God’s tithe*—He redeemed the rest of us when He was sacrificed.
- The *first* fruits must be brought to God. That is, the *first* of our income, or “prosperity.” Tithing brings blessing because it’s given in faith. (It doesn’t require faith to give the last 10%!) Any first thing given is never lost; any first thing kept is always lost. Tithing isn’t about legalism; it’s about the heart. Exodus 13:14–15 tells us the first fruits offering (or tithe), is reflective of a sacred covenant between God and His people.

Talk

1. There are over 2,300 references to money in the Bible. Why do you think the way we handle our resources is so important in our relationship with God?
2. Up 'til now, would you say that you've truly understood *why* we should tithe? In general, how would you characterize your attitude towards tithing? Why?
3. What does the word "redeem" mean? How does the tithe "redeem" the other 90% of our income?
4. What do the following verses tell us about how we can pass the Prosperity Test?
Malachi 3:8–11 Exodus 13:1–2 Proverbs 3:9–10
Leviticus 27:30 1 Timothy 6:6–10 2 Corinthians 9:7
5. The tithe isn't giving—it's returning to God what's already His. Anything over and above the tithe is giving (an offering). How is our attitude towards tithing affected when we understand this?

Live

1. The principle of the first fruits (tithing) is not about coming under condemnation—it points to how to live in victory. If you've struggled with this issue, be encouraged. The way to get victory in any area is to rely on God's help, and the way to get His help in your finances is to put Him first. What does Malachi 3:10 promise to those who will step out in faith to obey God with their tithe?
2. What are practical strategies to begin tithing when you feel that you can't "afford" it? What will you do this week?

Pray

If you haven't been tithing regularly, ask the Lord to forgive you for robbing Him and not putting Him first. Tell Him you'd like to take Him up on His offer in Malachi 3:10, and commit to begin tithing in faith. Ask Him for help in your finances—for direction, provision and wisdom. Thank Him that His desire towards you is for good and not to condemn you. Express your love for Him and your desire to serve Him first.

To receive help managing your finances through classes or counseling, visit stewardship.gatewaypeople.com.