

The Blessed Test

What do we seek most in life, security, freedom, power or significance? How's in working out so far? Pursuing these things, do we give God our best or what's left over?



Luke 16:10-11 (NIV)

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"

Reflections

*Entry to a compound in Nicaragua. We were instructed to lock up our cash and passports here before traveling to the countryside during a mission trip in 1998. Medicines were kept here as well, so they would not be misused or stolen. (See photo above.)*

What does it mean to be 'trustworthy with worldly wealth'? Reflecting on the 16th chapter of Luke, it is interesting to note who's wealth it is. The main character in this story is a steward only - not the owner.

What we give to God is generally a private matter, and conversations about tithing aren't always popular. Common sense would say that what we have is 'ours' and that sharing is something we choose to do or not do. The notion that by tithing, we are giving to God what is rightfully his, doesn't seem natural. We might also find ourselves living under the

assumption that we can buy our way to security, significance, or happiness.

Bills, repairs, increased cost of living, kids, family, church...the list goes on; the demands on the resources we've been given - our time,

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talents, and treasure - seem continual as well. It hurts to give away something we value; something we think we've earned. It hurts to let it go. So why do it? To what end?

There are plenty of answers, including, "because the Bible says so", I suppose. But for me, the motivation to

tithe centers around three things:

1. I need to be reminded regularly that what I have is not of my own making, but God's. Ironically, when-ever I try to 'own it all' life gets pretty stressful! He knows I need to let go, but that left to my own devices, I won't.
2. Committed giving makes my faith tangible. I need to 'put my money where my mouth is'.
3. Because I don't know how to say 'Thank You' to God. Whenever I comprehend even the smallest bit of His grace and love, I want to respond somehow.

There are plenty of other motivations and means for responding to God's Word. Are we prepared and willing for God to test us? Are we sure we've got it all figured out, or are we ready to trust God?

— Mike West

## Readings

### Sunday, February 7

Luke 16:10-11

*Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? What does it mean to be 'dishonest with little'? How do you picture God's 'true riches'?*

### Monday, February 8

Matthew 6:24

*No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. What happens when we try to have it both ways?*

### Tuesday, February 9

Ecclesiastes 5:10

*Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. Do you know any one who is satisfied with their income?*

### Wednesday, February 10

Leviticus 27:30

*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. What is your definition of a tithe?*

### Thursday, February 11

Malachi 3:8-9

*"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me." But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse — the whole nation of you — because you are robbing me." Who loses when we rob God? Does He need our money?*

### Friday, February 12

Deuteronomy 26:9-10

*"He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, O LORD, have given me." What does a land 'flowing with milk and honey' look like? How much must we have in order to be able to give?*

### Saturday, February 13

Psalms 26:2

*Test me, O LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth." Are you ready to say these words to God?*

***Don't have a Bible? Access these scriptures at [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com).***