

## The Tithe And The Great Controversy Between Christ And Satan (The Battle For Money And For Hearts)

This present study will try to mention those Bible verses and quotes from inspired books regarding the tithe. Tithe means the tenth part from the income we have. Faithful people from ancient times offered to God the tenth part from their harvest, goods and even more than the tenth part. We discuss also if tithe is part of the Christian duty today in our relationship with God.

### 1.The tithe in the Old Testament

- Owner or administrator / steward?
- Tithe before the existence of the Jewish people
- Tithe and the Jews

### 2.The tithe in the New Testament and today

- Tithe and the Christians from the first century
- Tithe and the Christians today

### 1.Tithe in the Old Testament

- **Owner or administrator/steward?**

“ But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For **all things come of Thee**, and of Thine own have we given Thee. ” 1 Chron. 29:14

„Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Moreover it is required in **stewards**, that a man be found **faithful**.” 1 Cor. 4:1,2

„**The earth is the LORD'S**, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. !” Ps. 24:1

- **Tithe before the existence of the Jewish people**

„And **Melchizedek** king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the **priest of the most high God**. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he [Abraham] **gave him tithes of all**.” Genesis 14:18-20

How did Abraham know about tithe? The Bible doesn't mention the tithe before this moment in the life of Abraham. From this example it is evident that giving tithe was already a practice among believers. Moses, the person who wrote the book of Genesis, doesn't present this moment as one when Abraham receives a revelation about the necessity of paying tithe and he doesn't provide more explanations about a practice which was well established. Thinking about the principle behind this practice, we have all the reasons to believe that it started with **Adam and Eve, the first stewards or administrators of this planet**, appointed by God.

„And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and **of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee**.” Genesis 28:20-22

**Jacob** is a second example, before the existence of the Jewish people and before the laws given through Moses, where the one about tithe was included. Jacob knew about tithe from his grandfather Abraham. As the Sabbath of the seventh day of the week was given to the man, in the same way, the principle of giving tithe was given to the man (not just to the Jews).

- **The Tithe And The Jewish People**

- „And **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 unto the LORD.**” Leviticus 27:30
- “And, behold, **I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel** for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.” Numbers 18:21
- „And **I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.** Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. **Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.** And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.” Nehemiah 13:10-13
- „Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from Mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? **Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.** Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. **Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,** that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.” Malachi 3:7-11
- “**The tithe was to be exclusively devoted to the use of the Levites, the tribe that had been set apart for the service of the sanctuary.** But this was by no means the limit of the contributions for religious purposes. The tabernacle, as afterward the temple, was erected wholly by freewill offerings; and to provide for necessary repairs and other expenses, Moses directed that as often as the people were numbered, each should contribute a half shekel for “the service of the tabernacle.” In the time of Nehemiah a contribution was made yearly for this purpose.” PP 526
- “**The contributions required of the Hebrews for religious and charitable purposes** amounted to fully **one fourth of their income.** So heavy a tax upon the resources of the people might be expected to reduce them to poverty; but, on the contrary, the faithful observance of these regulations was **one of the conditions of their prosperity.**” PP 527
- “God intended that His people Israel should be **light bearers to all the inhabitants of the earth.** In maintaining His public worship they were bearing a testimony to the existence and sovereignty of the living God. And this worship it was their privilege to sustain, as an expression of their loyalty and their love to Him. **The Lord has ordained that the diffusion of light and truth in the earth shall be dependent upon the efforts and offerings of those who are partakers of the heavenly gift.** He might have made angels the ambassadors of His truth; He might have made known His will, as He proclaimed the law from Sinai, with His own voice; but in His infinite love and wisdom He called men to become colaborers with Himself, by choosing them to do this work.  
**The work of the gospel, as it widens, requires greater provision to sustain it than was**

**called for anciently; and this makes the law of tithes and offerings of even more urgent necessity now than under the Hebrew economy.” PP 528**

- **What happened with the second tithe the Jews gave?**  
„Thou shalt truly **tithe all the increase of thy seed**, that the field bringeth forth year by year. And thou shalt **eat before the LORD thy God**, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always... At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: And **the Levite**, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and **the stranger**, and **the fatherless**, and **the widow**, which are within thy gates, **shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied**; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.” Deut. 14:22,23,28,29
- „**To promote the assembling of the people for religious service, as well as to provide for the poor, a second tithe of all the increase was required.** Concerning the first tithe, the Lord had declared, “I have given the children of Levi *all the tenth* in Israel.” Numbers 18:21. But in regard to the second He commanded, “Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always.” Deuteronomy 14:23, 29; 16:11-14. This tithe, or its equivalent in money, they were for two years to bring to the place where the sanctuary was established. After presenting a thank offering to God, and a specified portion to the priest, the offerers were to use the remainder for a religious feast, in which the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow should participate. Thus provision was made for the thank offerings and feasts at the yearly festivals, and the people were drawn to the society of the priests and Levites, that they might receive instruction and encouragement in the service of God.  
Every third year, however, this second tithe was to be used at home, in entertaining the Levite and the poor, as Moses said, “That they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.” Deuteronomy 26:12. This tithe would provide a fund for the uses of charity and hospitality.” PP 530

## **2.The Tithe In The New Testament And Today**

- **The tithe and the Christians in the first century**  
“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for **ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters** of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: **these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.**” Mt. 23:23  
In this passage Jesus doesn't talk against the tithe practice, but He speaks about priorities and He lays this practice on the solid foundation of the character. The fact that the Pharisees paid tithe of those herbs, not weighty at all, and not cultivated on large portions of land, was a clear evidence of their stinginess. They could very well round the numbers of the tithe, but they wanted to be very precise for fear of giving too much to God! In the same way we can have the same attitude, when we don't round positively the sums we pay as tithe. When our tithe looks like this: 355.67 or 398.45 and we pay it with that kind of precision, do we really understand how blessed we are? Do we count every blessing we receive? Does the way we pay tithe speak about generosity or about a very dangerous attitude?

„And here men that die receive tithes; but there **He receiveth them**, of whom it is witnessed that He liveth.” Heb. 7:8

From what Paul wrote we understand that **today God continues to receive the tithe of the believers**. In the Old Testament, the worship and the sacrifices, supervised and directed by the priests and Levites in the Tabernacle and, later on, in the Temple, made necessary the generosity of the Jews by bringing offerings and their tithes. The Levites were God's instruments to explain the Plan of Salvation to the whole world, by the work done in the Sanctuary. Of course God doesn't need our money for Himself, but **the spreading of the Gospel to every tongue, to every nation needs financial resources**. Having these resources, faithful servants of God can go in all the corners of the world to proclaim the Gospel. It is our privilege, not just our duty, to be part of this final missionary effort, by personal physical and financial involvement (through our gifts and tithes).

„Now consider how great this man [Melchisedec] was, unto whom even the patriarch **Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils...** For he testifieth, **Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.** ”. Evrei 7:17  
Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and His priestly ministry is active in our time.

„For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. ” 1 Tim. 5:18

“For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. **Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple?** and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? **Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel**”. 1 Cor. 9:9-14

- **Generosity of Christians in the first century:**

„And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.” Fapte 4:33-37

- “Now, when the Jews were trying to destroy the infant church, **Nicodemus** came forward in its defense. No longer cautious and questioning, he encouraged the faith of the disciples and **used his wealth in helping to sustain the church at Jerusalem and in advancing the work of the gospel**. Those who in other days had paid him reverence, now scorned and persecuted him, and he became poor in this world's goods; yet he faltered not in the defense of his faith.” AA 105

- **Tithe And Christians Today**

We live now in one of the most blessed periods of history in terms of easy access to spiritual knowledge (Bible and other religious books), comfort, speed of transportation, personal safety, goods safety (compared with other periods in history), social services etc. Considering all these blessings, **the generosity** of the Christians today should be **proportional with these blessings**.

- We quote below some inspired fragments which can be a guide for those who want to make informed and healthy spiritual choices regarding the tithe.

- *Tithe belongs to God*

“All should remember that **God’s claims upon us underlie every other claim.** He gives to us bountifully, and **the contract which He has made with man is that a tenth of his possessions shall be returned to God.** The Lord graciously entrusts to His stewards His treasures, but of the tenth He says: This is Mine. **Just in proportion as God has given His property to man, so man is to return to God a faithful tithe of all his substance.** This distinct arrangement was made by Jesus Christ Himself.

This work involves solemn and eternal results, and it is too sacred to be left to human impulse. We should not feel free to deal with this matter as we choose. In answer to the claims of God, regular reserves should be set apart as sacred to His work.” (6T 384)

- „I speak of **the tithing system**, yet how meager it looks to my mind! **How small the estimate! How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much!** From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unconditional surrender. He promised the young ruler that if he sold all that he had and gave it to the poor, and lifted His cross and followed Him, he should have treasure in heaven. **All we have should be consecrated to God.** The Majesty of heaven came to the world to die a sacrifice for the sins of man. And how cold and selfish is the human heart that can turn away from such incomparable love and set itself upon the vain things of this world.” 4T 119
- „God’s requirements come first. We are not doing His will if we consecrate to Him what is left of our income after all our imaginary wants have been supplied. **Before any part of our earnings is consumed, we should take out and present to Him that portion which He claims... There are a few faithful standard-bearers** who never flinch from duty or shirk responsibilities. Their hearts and purses are **always open to every call for means** to advance the cause of God. Indeed, some seem ready to exceed their duty, as though fearful that they will lose an opportunity of investing their portion in the bank of heaven. **There are others who will do as little as possible.** They hoard their treasure, or lavish means upon themselves, grudgingly doling out a mere pittance to sustain the cause of God. If they make a pledge or a vow to God, they afterward repent of it, and will avoid the payment of it as long as they can, if not altogether. **They make their tithe as small as possible, as if afraid that that which they return to God is lost.** Our various institutions may be embarrassed for means, but this class act as though it made no difference to them whether they prospered or not. And yet these are God’s instrumentalities with which to enlighten the world.” 4T 477

*Destination of the tithe*

- „**God lays His hand upon all man’s possessions, saying: I am the owner of the universe, and these goods are Mine. The tithe you have withheld I reserve for the support of My servants in their work of opening the Scriptures to those who are in the regions of darkness,** who do not understand My law. In using My reserve fund to gratify your own desires you have robbed souls of the light which I made provision for them to receive. You have had opportunity to show loyalty to Me, but you have not done this.” 6T 387
- „God’s reserved resources are to be used in no such haphazard way. The tithe is the Lord’s, and those who meddle with it will be punished with the loss of their heavenly treasure unless they repent. **Let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go. Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained, but not from the tithe.** God has not changed; **the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry. The opening of new fields** requires more ministerial efficiency than we now have, and there must be means in the treasury. ” 9T 249

- “Light has been plainly given that **those who minister in our schools, teaching the word of God, explaining the Scriptures, educating the students in the things of God, should be supported by the tithe money.** This instruction was given long ago, and more recently it has been repeated again and again.” 6T 215
- “Some utterly fail to realize the importance of missionaries being also medical missionaries. A gospel minister will be twice as successful in his work if he understands how to treat disease. Continually increasing light has been given me on this subject. **Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick.** In response to such statements as these, I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete.” MM 245
- “**The tithe should go to those who labor in word and doctrine, be they men or women.**” EV 492

#### **For what expenses we shouldn't use the tithe?**

##### ***Tithe is not for the help of the poor:***

- „The widows and fatherless were to be supported by contributions from the church. Their wants were not to be relieved by the church but by special donations. The tithe was to be consecrated to the Lord, and was always to be used for the support of the **ministry.**” WM 275
- “**The tithe is set apart for a special use. It is not to be regarded as a poor fund.** It is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God’s message to the world, and it should not be diverted from this purpose.” WM 277

##### ***Tithe shouldn't be used to support the education of the students:***

- “All these things are to be done, as you propose, **to help students to obtain an education;** but I ask you, Shall we not all act in this matter unselfishly and create a fund, and keep it to draw upon on such occasions? When you see a young man or a young woman who is a promising subject, advance or loan the sum needed, with the idea that it is a loan, not a gift. It would be better to have it thus. Then when it is returned, it can be used to educate others. **But this money is not to be taken from the tithe, but from a separate fund secured for that purpose.** This would exert a healthy uprightness and charity and patriotism among our people. There must be thoughtful consideration and a skillful adjustment of the work in the cause of God in all its departments. But let there be no meager, stingy plans in using the consecrated portion for the sustaining of the ministry; for then the treasury would soon be empty.” DG 258

##### ***Tithe shouldn't be use as a loan for business purposes or to cover other needs we have:***

- “That which has been set apart according to the Scriptures as belonging to the Lord constitutes the revenue of the gospel and is no longer ours. It is no better than sacrilege for a man to take from God’s treasury in order to serve himself or to serve others in their secular business. Some have been at fault in diverting from the altar of God that which has been especially dedicated to Him. All should regard this matter in the right light. Let no one, when brought into a strait place, take money consecrated to religious purposes and use it for his advantage, soothing his conscience by saying that he will repay it at some future time. Far better cut down the expenses to correspond with the income, to restrict the wants, and live within the means than to use the Lord’s money for secular purposes.” 9T 246

*Tithe shouldn't be used for church expenses*

- „His people today are to remember that **the house of worship is the Lord's property** and that it is to be scrupulously cared for. **But the funds for this work are not to come from the tithe.**” (9T 248)
- „I was shown that **it is wrong to use the tithe for defraying the incidental expenses of the church.** In this there has been a departure from correct methods. It would be far better to dress less expensively, cut down your indulgences, practice self-denial, and meet these outgoings. By so doing you will have a clear conscience. **But you are robbing God every time that you put your hands into the treasury for funds to meet the running expenses of the church.**” CS 103

*Tithe is not for paying colporteurs*

- „Still others reason that **canvassers and colporteurs** should be supported from the tithe. But **a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers.** There should be today in the field one hundred well qualified laborers where now there is but one.” (9T 248)

*What if people are too poor to give their tithe?*

- “No person, whether rich or poor, can glorify God by a life of indolence. All the capital that many poor men have is **time and physical strength**, and this is frequently **wasted in love of ease and in careless indolence so that they have nothing to bring to their Lord in tithes and in offerings.** If Christian men lack wisdom to labor to the best account and to make a judicious appropriation of their physical and mental powers, they **should have meekness and lowliness of mind to receive advice and counsel of their brethren**, that their better judgment may supply their own deficiencies. **Many poor men who are now content to do nothing for the good of their fellow men and for the advancement of the cause of God might do much if they would.** They are as accountable to God for their capital of physical strength as is the rich man for his capital of money.” 3T 400
- “All should be taught to do what they can for the Master; to render to him according as he has prospered them. He claims as his just due a tenth of their income, be it large or small; and those who withhold this, commit robbery toward him, and cannot expect his prospering hand to be with them. **Even if the church is composed mostly of poor brethren, the subject of systematic benevolence should be thoroughly explained and the plan heartily adopted.** God is able to fulfill his promises. His resources are infinite, and he employs them all in accomplishing his will. And **when He sees a faithful performance of duty in the payment of the tithe, he often, in his wise providence, opens ways whereby it shall increase**”. {RH August 24, 1886, par. 9}

**Tithe which was withheld for years**, finally paid by those who neglected their duty towards God:

- „During the following week some of those who had not been dealing justly with God, and consequently **had been separating themselves from Him**, began to restore that which they had withheld. **One brother had not paid tithes for two years.** He gave his note to the secretary of the conference for the tithe he had withheld and the interest on it, amounting to \$571.50. I thank the Lord that he had the courage to do this. Another gave his note for \$300. Another man who had backslidden from God so far that but little hope was cherished that he would ever turn his feet into the path of righteousness again, gave his note for \$1,000. **It was proposed that these long-withheld tithes and offerings be devoted to the Central European Mission;** so with these and the Christmas donations, nearly \$6,000 has come into the treasury from this church to be **applied to the missionary cause.**” 5T 643

**A woe upon those who don't support the missionary work by their personal effort and finances:**

- “When a minister who has labored successfully in securing souls to Jesus Christ abandons his sacred work in order to secure temporal gain, he is called an apostate, and he will be held accountable to God for the talents that he has misapplied. When men of business, farmers, mechanics, merchants, lawyers, etc., become members of the church, they become servants of Christ; and although their talents may be entirely different, their responsibility to advance the cause of God by personal effort, and with their means, is no less than that which rests upon the minister. The woe which will fall upon the minister if he preach not the gospel, will just as surely fall upon the businessman, if he, with his different talents, will not be a co-worker with Christ in accomplishing the same results.” 4T 468

**Ministers paid from tithe and health reform:**

- “Why do some of our ministering brethren manifest so little interest in **health reform**? It is because instruction on temperance in all things is opposed to their practice of self-indulgence. In some places this has been the great stumbling block in the way of our bringing the people to investigate and practice and teach health reform. **No man should be set apart as a teacher of the people while his own teaching or example contradicts the testimony God has given His servants to bear in regard to diet, for this will bring confusion. His disregard of health reform unfits him to stand as the Lord’s messenger.**” 6T 378
- „As God’s messengers, shall we not say to the people, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”? 1 Corinthians 10:31. Shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? **Will any who are ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, set an example in returning to the fleshpots of Egypt? Will those who are supported by the tithe from God’s storehouse permit themselves by self-indulgence to poison the life-giving current flowing through their veins?** Will they disregard the light and warnings that God has given them? The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for growth in grace and the acquirement of an even temper. If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of an upright, moral character will be hindered. The brain and nerves are in sympathy with the stomach. Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting. ” CD 404

**When some just suppose that the tithe is not used properly:**

- „Some have been dissatisfied and have said: “**I will not longer pay my tithe; for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work.**” **But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint, plainly and openly, in the right spirit, to the proper ones.** Send in your petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order; but **do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right.** ” 9T 249  
Sometimes people have just doubts and suppositions, and based on that they decide to withhold the tithe. We all may find reasons not to give tithe any more, but the warning is clear: **we don't give tithe to people but to God. Not paying tithe at all means to rob God.** From other following quotes we can see that **when there are strong evidences that the human agents who are managing the tithe are unfaithful, and even fight against the truth, they are not God's servants any more and they shouldn't be paid from the tithe.** This kind of situations are not a reason to stop giving the tithe to God. **We have to send it where it is needed and where it will be used according to God's will.**



**Does God encourage an attitude of indifference about the way the tithe is used by the human agents?** Are the church members called to ask questions about how the money are used? Those who are named God's servants have to be evaluated and even removed from the ministry if they are not following the light provided by God, if they live and speak against God's truth. They can't be paid from the tithe fund.

- **“The churches must arouse. The members must awake out of sleep and begin to inquire, How is the money which we put into the treasury being used? The Lord desires that a close search be made.** Are all satisfied with the history of the work for the past fifteen years? Where is the evidence of the co-working with God? Where has been heard throughout the churches the prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit? Dissatisfied and disheartened, we turn away from the scene.  
**Our churches and institutions must return to where they were before the backsliding commenced, when they began trusting in man and making flesh their arm.** Have we not seen enough of human wisdom? Shall we not now seek God in earnestness and simplicity, and serve him with heart and mind and strength?” **The Kress Collection, pg. 120**  
“Sunnyside,” Cooranbong, June 18, 1900
- **“If men fail to educate themselves to become workers in the vineyard of the Lord, they might better be spared than not. It would be poor policy to support from the treasury of God those who really mar and injure His work, and who are constantly lowering the standard of Christianity.**  
In order for a man to become a successful minister, something more than book knowledge is essential. The laborer for souls needs integrity, intelligence, industry, energy, and tact. All these are highly essential for the success of a minister of Christ. No man with these qualifications can be inferior, but will have commanding influence. Unless the laborer in God's cause can gain the confidence of those for whom he is laboring, he can do but little good.” **3T 553**
- **“There are fearful woes for those who preach the truth, but are not sanctified by it, and also for those who consent to receive and maintain the unsanctified to minister to them in word and doctrine.” 1T 261, 262** Here we can see the responsibility of the administration and of the church members to evaluate and, if needed, to reject those who consider themselves to be God's servants, but who in reality are not His servants. A woe is addressed to those who neglect this responsibility. Aici se poate observa responsabilitatea pe care o au membrii bisericilor locale de a-i evalua și la nevoie respinge pe cei care se numesc slujitori ai lui Dumnezeu dar care în realitate nu sunt. Un vai este rostit în dreptul celor care tratează cu indiferență această răspundere.
- **“God's ministers must have the truth in their hearts in order to successfully present it to others. They must be sanctified by the truths they preach or they will be only stumbling blocks to sinners.** Those who are called of God to minister in holy things are called to be pure in heart and holy in life. “Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.” If God pronounces a woe upon those who are called to preach the truth and refuse to obey, a heavier woe rests upon those who take upon them this sacred work without clean hands and pure hearts. **As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill.** If the Spirit of God has not sanctified and made pure and clean the hands and heart of those who minister in sacred things, they will speak according to their own imperfect, deficient experience, and their counsels will lead astray from God those who look to them and trust in their judgment and experience.”  
**2T 552**

## **Tithe management, appeals for funds addressed directly to local churches, support for Gospel workers who are not paid by the Conferences**

A number of letters were written by EW when Madison Missionary school was established in Tennessee, not far from Nashville, in the South field, as it is mentioned in many of these letters. This school was the first independent one in the Adventist Church, with no financing from the Conferences. Also it was the only Adventist school where EW accepted to be part of the board. God's messenger supported this project and made appeals to the leadership of the church to stop hindering its development and the funds gathering done in different local churches. The Conferences' leadership was not happy about this school, about its philosophy, about its independence. The following quotes were written in this context.

### **Watson Letter And The Tithe Issue**

After this introduction you can read a letter sent by EW to Elder Watson in 1905, when he was the president of Colorado Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

**Historical context of the letter:** Some adventist self supporting workers tried to do some missionary work in the South of USA, work supported by EW, but not done and not supported by the church organization. In letters addressed to these workers, EW told them to address their urgent needs to members from local churches and to solicit funds. While they were in Colorado they followed her advice and members gave them money from offerings and tithes. After their return, they used these funds for the work they were doing. Elder Watson, hearing what happened, was very upset. He wrote letters to these workers saying that the money belonged to the Conference and no money could go directly to these workers, as it happened. In that moment EW intervened and wrote a letter to Elder Watson where she underlines how the tithe can be collected and used. She says that (1)Elder Watson was wrong by talking and acting against what happened, (2)for many years EW did the same thing like those workers, (3)the way she acted was because God told her to do so, (4) there shouldn't be too much noise about what happened, (5)those supported from tithe this way (directly, and not through the Conference) were doing God's work and they were not supported by the church organization, (6)tithe given in that way was not considered by God as being withdrawn, (7)tithe given in that way went into "God's treasury", (8)EW didn't stop other people to do the same thing, (9)EW appreciated those who felt led to proceed in the same way because the tithe was sent where it was the greater need to do a work which was neglected (10)this was a work which the Lord told her to do it and told others to do it, (11) nobody should make a practice from collecting the tithe, (12)those who are convinced that they have to send the money to self-supporting workers and not to the Conference, can continue to do so, (13)the church shouldn't try to stop such a practice or to punish somehow those who do it from conviction.

Here it is the letter:

### **THE USE OF THE TITHE**

Mountain View, CA - Jan. 22, 1905

"Elder Watson:

My brother, I wish to say to you, Be careful how you move. You are not moving wisely. The least you have to speak about the tithe that has been appropriated to the most needy and the most discouraging field in the world, the more sensible you will be.

**It had been presented to me for years that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive**

**sufficient properly to support their families.** When my attention was called to aged ministers, white or black, it was my special duty to investigate into their necessities and supply their needs. This was to be my special work, and **I have done this in a number of cases.** No man should give notoriety to the fact that in special cases the tithe is used in that way.

In regard to the colored work in the South, that field has been and is still being robbed of the means that should come to the workers of that field. If there has been **cases where our sisters have appropriated their tithe to the support of the ministers working for the colored people in the South,** let every man, if he is wise, hold his peace.

**I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this; and as money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, it is not a matter that should be commented upon;** for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best.

**Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed? I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so. I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help to do a work that is being left undone;** and if this matter is given publicity, it will create knowledge which would better be left as it is. I do not care to give publicity to this work which the Lord has appointed me to do, and other to do.

I send this matter to you so that you shall not make a mistake. **Circumstances alter cases.** I would not advise that any should make a practice of gathering up tithe money. But for years there have now and then been **persons who have lost confidence in the appropriation of the tithe who have placed their tithe in my hands,** and said that if I did not take it they would themselves appropriate it to the families of the most needy ministers they could find. I have taken the money, given a receipt for it, and told them how it was appropriated.

I write this to you so that you shall keep cool and not become stirred up and give publicity to this matter, lest many more shall follow their example.

(Signed) Ellen G. White

Letter 267, 1905, pp. 1, 2. (To Elder Watson, January 22, 1905.) {2MR 100.3}

- “In the past one set of men have tried to keep in their own hands the control of all the means coming from the churches, and have used this means in a most disproportionate manner, erecting **expensive buildings** where such large buildings were **unnecessary and uncalled for,** and **leaving needy places without help or encouragement.** They have taken upon themselves the grave responsibility of retarding the work where the work should have been advanced. It has been left to a few supposed kindly minds to say what fields should be worked and what fields should be left unworked. A few men have kept the truth in circumscribed channels, because to open new fields would call for money. Only in those places in which they were interested have they been willing to invest means. And at the same time, in a few places, five times as much money as was necessary has been invested in buildings. The same amount of money used in establishing plants in places where the truth has never been introduced would have brought many souls to a saving knowledge of Christ. {SpM 174.3}

**For years the same routine, the same “regular way” of working has been followed, and God's work has been greatly hindered.** The narrow plans that have been followed by those

who did not have clear, sanctified judgment has resulted in a showing that is not approved by God. {SpM 175.1}

God calls for a revival and a reformation. **The “regular lines” have not done the work which God desires to see accomplished. Let revival reformation make constant changes.** Something has been done in this line, but let not the work stop here. No! **Let every yoke be broken. Let men awaken to the realization that they have an individual responsibility.** {SpM 175.2}

The present showing is sufficient to prove to all who have the true missionary spirit that the “regular lines” may prove a failure and a snare. God helping his people, the circle of kings who dared to take such great responsibilities shall never again exercise their unsanctified power in the so-called “regular lines”. **Too much power has been invested in unrevived, unreformed human agencies.** Let not selfishness and covetousness be allowed to outline the work which must be done to fulfill the grand, noble commission which Christ has given to every disciple. He, our Lord and Master, has given us an example, in his life, of self-sacrifice, of the way in which we must work to advance the kingdom of God...

We look to see whether new fields have been worked whether the barren portions of the Lord’s vineyard have received attention. **We see that most of those who have sought to begin work in new regions, as Brother Shireman has done, have been discouraged by those at the heart of the work, for fear that they would need money from the treasury. Yet from that same treasury money has been used to erect imposing and unnecessarily expensive buildings. If men had received the wisdom of God, they would have exercised justice and equity in regard to the outlay of means. All parts of the Lord’s vineyard would have received a just proportion of help...**

Shall the “regular lines”, which say that every mind shall be controlled by two or three minds at Battle Creek, continue to bear sway? The Macedonian cry is coming from every quarter. Shall men go to the “regular lines” to see whether they will be permitted to labor, or shall they go out and work as best they can, depending on their own abilities and on the help of the Lord, beginning in a humble way and creating an interest in the truth in places in which nothing has been done to give the warning message? {SpM 176.5}

The Lord has encouraged those who have started out on their own responsibility to work for him, their hearts filled with love for souls ready to perish. A true missionary spirit will be imparted to those who seek earnestly to know God and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. The Lord lives and reigns. Young men, go forth into the places to which you are directed by the Spirit of the Lord. Work with your hands, that you may be self-supporting, and as you have opportunity, proclaim the message of warning. {SpM 176.6}

The Lord has blessed the work that J.E. White has tried to do in The South. **God grant that the voices which have been so quickly raised to say that all the money invested in the work must go through the appointed channel at Battle Creek, shall not be heard. The people to whom God has given his means are amenable to him alone. It is their privilege to give direct aid and assistance to missions.** It is because of the misappropriation of means that the Southern field has no better showing than it has today. {SpM 176.7}

I do not consider it the duty of the Southern branch of our work, in the publication and handling of books, to be under the dictation of our established publishing houses. **And if means can be devised to reduce the expense of publishing and circulating books, let this be done.** {SpM 177.1}

**I have to say, my brother, that I have no desire to see the work in the South moving forward in the old, regular lines.** When I see how strongly the idea prevails that the methods of handling our books in the past shall be retained, because what has been must be, I have no heart to advise that former customs shall continue. Let those who are laboring in

Nashville do the will of God in all humility. I sincerely hope that the changes will be made that the necessities of the case demand.” (Letter to br Daniells 1901, SpM 174-177)

- **“And in reference to our conference, it is repeated o’er and o’er and o’er again, that it is the voice of God, and therefore everything must be referred to the Conference and have the conference voice in regard to permission or restriction of what shall be and what shall not be done in the various fields. {SpM 162.4}**  
Now from the light that I have, as it was presented to me in figures: There was a narrow compass here; there within that narrow is a king-like, **kingly ruling power**. Here the outlets are blocked. And the work all over our field demands an entirely different course of action than we have had. **We have heard enough, abundance, about that “everything must go around in the regular way.” When we see the regular lines are altered and purified and refined, and the God of the heavens mold is upon the regular lines, then it is our business to establish the regular lines. But when we see message after message that God has given has been accepted, but no change, just the same as it was before, then it is evident that new blood must be brought into the regular lines.** The leaders of the regular lines, they must have an entire change, an entire new organization, and to have a committee that shall take in not merely half a dozen, that is to be a ruling and controlling power, but it is to have representatives of those that are placed in responsibility in our educational interests, in our Sanitariums, that are working, and the life in them, constantly at work, constantly adding, constantly giving to the field the talent that has come from it...  
**... there is to be no kings here in their midst at all. There is to be no man that has the right to put his hand out and say, No, you can not go there; we won’t support you if you go there. Why, what have you to do with supporting? Did they create the means? The means come from the people, and those who are destitute fields. The voice of God has told me to instruct them to go the people and to tell them their necessities, and to draw all the people to work just where they can find a place to work, to build up the work in every place they can”. Spaulding Magan Collection, pg. 162-168, 1901 “Kingly Power”**
- **“You ask me what you shall do in view of the fact that so little help is given to that department of the work in which you are working. {SpM 498.2}**  
I would say, “Trust it with the Lord. There is a way opened for you in regard to securing help for the Southern field. Appeal to the people. This is the only course you can pursue, under the circumstances. {SpM 498.3}  
**Send no statement of the situation through our religious papers; because it will not be honored. Send direct to the people.** God’s ways are not to be counterworked by man’s ways. There are those who have means, and who will give large and small sums. **Have this money come direct to your destitute portion of the vineyard. The Lord has not specified any regular channel through which means should pass.”** Spaulding & Magan Collection, pg. 498
- **“In the work being done at the training school for home and foreign missionary teachers in Madison, Tennessee, and in the small schools established by the teachers who have gone forth from Madison, we have an illustration of a way in which the message should be carried. I would say to the workers there, Continue to learn of Christ. Do not be daunted. Be free in the Lord; be free. Much acceptable work has been done in Madison. The Lord says to you, Go forward. Your school is to be an example of how Bible study, general education, physical education, and sanitarium work may be combined in many smaller schools that shall be established in simplicity in many places in the Southern states.**

{SpM 420.5}

**My brethren in responsible places, mourn not over the work that is being done at Madison** to train workers to go forth into the highways and the hedges. It is the will of God that this work should be done. Let us cease to criticize the servants of God, and humble our own hearts before the Lord. Let us strengthen this company to continue the good work in which they are engaged, and labor to encourage others to do a similar work. Then the light of truth will be carried in a simple and effective way, and a great work will be accomplished for the Master in a short time...

Do not worry lest some **means** shall go **direct** to those who are trying to do missionary work in a quiet and effective way. **All the means is not to be handled by one agency or organization.** There is much business to be done conscientiously for the cause of God. Help is to be sought from every possible source. There are men who can do the work of securing means for the cause, and when these are acting conscientiously and in harmony with the counsels of their fellow-laborers in the field which they represent, **the hand of restraint is not to be laid upon them. They are surely laborers together with Him who gave his life for the salvation of souls.** {SpM 421.7}

**Brethren Sutherland and Magan should be encouraged to solicit means for the support of their work. It is the privilege of these brethren to receive gifts from any of our people whom the Lord impresses to help. They should have means—God’s means—with which to work.** The Madison enterprise has been crippled in the past, but now it must go forward. If this work had been regarded in the right light, and had been given the help it needed, we should long ere this have had a prosperous work at Madison. **Our people are to be encouraged to give of their means to this work** which is preparing students in a sensible and creditable way to go forth into neglected fields to proclaim the soon coming of Christ...

**To those in our conferences who have felt that they had authority to forbid the gathering of means in certain territory I now say:** This matter has been presented to me again and again. I now bear my testimony in the name of the Lord to those whom it concerns. **Wherever you are, withhold your forbiddings.** The work of God is not to be thus trammled. **God is being faithfully served by these men whom you have been watching and criticizing. They fear and honor the Lord; they are laborers together with Him. God forbids you to put any yokes on the necks of his servants.** It is the privilege of these workers to accept gifts or loans that they may invest them to help in doing an important work that greatly needs to be done. This wonderful burden of responsibility which some suppose God has placed upon them with their official position, has never been laid upon them. If men were standing free on the high platform of truth, they would never accept the responsibility to frame rules and regulations that hinder and cramp God’s chosen laborers in their work for the training of missionaries.”

**Spaulding-Magan Collection, pg. 420-424. (Jan. 6, 1908)**