

And when you give

“Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee” (Mt 6:1). I’ve been a pastor for 26 years. In that time, I’ve really never known people to make a bragging point about what they give to God. Jesus’ culture was different. When giving offerings, people would drop metal coins into metal flute-shaped horns that fed into wooden boxes. Those metal coins made lots of noise! On-lookers, hearing the racket of the coins dropped by wealthy people, could not help but be impressed, even applauding. Jesus would say, “That is their reward.” One time, you may remember, a poor widow put in two very small coins, barely making a “clink.” Yet Jesus said she had actually put in more than all the others, for they, out of their abundance, gave. But she, out of her necessity, put in all she had to live on! (Mk 12:43)

God sees what is done in secret. He also sees what is NOT done. Are you honoring God with your finances? Are you giving at least 10% of your income to your local church? If not, you are dishonoring God. In fact, the Word of God says, you not only are dishonoring God, you are stealing what is His! (Malachi 3:8-10). Pretty strong words. But that is what God says.

An open secret to financial success is the 10-10-80 rule. Give ten percent, save ten percent, and live on 80%. Here is why many, who want to tithe (give 10%) don’t: they trained themselves to live on 100% of their income. And when the unexpected happened, which it always does, they now live on 110% of their income via credit cards. So, not only are they in constant fear financially, they are also missing out on the many blessings God gives to those who tithe.

My pastor friend in Yoro, Honduras cannot believe that some American pastors are reluctant to preach tithing. By Honduran law, the minimum wage in Yoro is \$300 a month. But, the actual usual wage is \$180 a month, because just like here, employers take advantage. “You don’t like it? Well, go somewhere else. There are lots of people who want your job.” So, you would think that giving 10% would be out of the question for Hondurans. But my pastor friend would say, “Are you trying to keep them poor?” What he has seen, over and over again, is that when his people tithe, their income INCREASES. They get better jobs, more income, and fewer expenses.

If we cannot trust God with things like our money, which we can see, how can we can trust Him for things we cannot see, like forgiveness? When we honor God by giving 10% to our local church, we will, over time, have more money than we need and will receive all kinds of other blessings for our family. Try it. Take God at His Word. Watch what happens.