

The Faith of God - Part 3

Tithing

2/15/15

Today I want to continue the thought of what The Apostle Paul called "The Faith of God." Last week we talked about the principle of Sacrifice. Though we no longer need to sacrifice animals to pay for our sins, we are asked to sacrifice ourselves as living sacrifices unto God in Christian service. We are saved by His grace and created unto good works. We are to lay up treasures in heaven which can only be done by the good works that we do.

We understand from our study over the last two weeks that biblical Judaism was God's preferred Faith, (or religion) God gave to the Jews His teachings, the oracles of God as expressed in Romans 3:1-4.

Jesus did not come to start a new religion called Christianity, But rather He came to bring new life to an old religion. He brought a new covenant to put the law into our minds and hearts. He is our High Priest through whom we can enter into the Holy of Hollies. We can still enter into the very presence of God in the Holiest of all, The throne room of God through our High Priest, Jesus Christ. And now it is available to all who will come unto Him. Jesus did not do away with the righteous principles of Judaism, but He did modify some things, strengthening some and doing away with the superfluous.

We, at The Church of God, have called this teaching, 'New Testament Judaism,' Certainly we all understand that Judaism is the foundation from which Christianity sprang. Jesus was a Jew, His parents were Jewish, Joseph & Mary kept the Feasts of the Lord and it was during one of the Feasts of Passover when Jesus was twelve years old that He stayed behind and debated with the elders of Israel

When Jesus was in His ministry, He kept the Feasts and customs of the Jewish faith as is established by the Passover meal that has become known as the Last supper, where He ate the Passover with His disciples.

Let us look at another principle teaching of the Christian church that has its roots in Judaism. That is that teaching on tithing and giving. The first tithe, (tenth) belongs to God. From the story of Jericho where they were told not to keep anything for themselves, It was the first city nation that they conquered. After Jericho they were allowed to take spoil for themselves.

The story is told in Joshua 6: Don't keep anything for yourselves lest you be cursed! Joshua 6:19, "But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD." "And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD."

Tithing is first mentioned when Abraham paid tithe to Melchisedec, Hebrews 7:1-2, "For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham

returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;"

This Melchisedec is a type of Christ! He was King of Salem, which is Jerusalem, He is called King, (Prince) of peace, King of righteousness.

Tithing is reinforced in the story of Jacob and the ladder into heaven and a place called Bethel, "House of God." Jacob made a commitment that he would a tenth of everything god blessed him with.

Tithing is an expression of our faith in God. Will He do what he said? Can I depend on Him to supply my need if I give the first and the best of my income to Him? Pro 3:9-10, "Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Exodus 23:19, "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God..."

Jesus said it so well in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

All the firstborn of children and cattle were to given to God. The Firstborn! Imagine a young couple expecting their first child! And God says, "This one belongs to me." But if your trust is in God you would willing give him or her to the service of God whatever that meant. This is told in Exodus 13:2, "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."

Whether we are obedient in our tithing or not does not change the divine principle involved. Lev 27:30, "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." And in verse 32, "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock,... the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD."

If you borrowed or kept back part of the tithe, God charged 20% interest!

Lev 27:31 tells us, "And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof."

This principle is considered so important to God He calls it robbery if we refuse to pay it. Tithing is not giving! It is a debt we owe! Giving is what we do above the tithe! I would imagine most Christians of today are familiar with this passage in Mal 3:8-10 where we read, "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, says 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."

In this passage we hear the promise of great blessing for obedience, plus the awful consequences of disobedience. It is clear that the intent is for this principle is to be carried on into the New Testament teaching. Though there is very little expressed about tithing in the New Testament, Jesus said something profound in Matthew 23:23 where we read, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, 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.**" **Jesus said,** "You should not leave the tithing undone!"

I am thoroughly convinced that if the Christian community were faithful in tithing and giving, we could take our place once again in ministering to the needy in our community, we could reach the world with the Gospel in a far more positive way. But since the Christian church not is able to this ministry as we should, we have relinquished much of what has been ours to the Government and now the needy depend on the government and no longer need the church. We have given up much of what has made Christianity attractive to those around us and me that is sad!

Listen again next week as we continue on, "The Faith of God."

This we do know, The Bible is God's Word, God's word is true, Jesus Christ is God's son, Jesus died to save us from our sin, Without Jesus we are eternally lost. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we might be saved. Atheism is a temporary condition for every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus stands ready to save you now, Will you call on Him today?

Until next week, God bless you.