

Series: What would Jesus say...
Title: **To a greedy business leader**
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He entered Jericho and was passing through. There was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was not able because of the crowd, since he was a short man. So running ahead, he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus, since he was about to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down because today it is necessary for me to stay at your house.” So he quickly came down and welcomed him joyfully. All who saw it began to complain, “He’s gone to stay with a sinful man.” But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, I’ll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord. And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I’ll pay back four times as much.” “Today salvation has come to this house,” Jesus told him, “because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:1-10)

Christ's generosity will make you generous.

Sample Passages of the Tithe Commanded in the Old Testament

The tithe (a tenth) belongs to the Lord, not to us. All we have is from Him.

“Every tenth of the land’s produce, grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD. (Leviticus 27:30)

Thus God declares that to not give a tithe is to rob from Him.

“Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!” “How do we rob you?” you ask. “By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions. You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing me. Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way,” says the LORD of Armies. “See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.” (Malachi 3:8-10)

Passages Affirming Tithing in the New Testament

When challenging the Pharisees, Jesus affirmed the tithe.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You pay a tenth of mint, dill, and cumin, and yet you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faithfulness. These things should have been done *without neglecting the others.*” (Matthew 23:23)

When the apostle Paul challenged the Corinthian Christians to give, he emphasized *regular (first day of the week) and proportionate (in keeping with one’s income) giving.* Some scholars believe the proportionate is a reference to the principle of the tithe.

Now about the collection for the saints: Do the same as I instructed the Galatian churches. On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with one’s income, so that no collections will need to be made when I come. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

Reflection Question:

How has your experience of God's grace led to greater generosity in your life?