

# BEYOND BEYOND

Giving Over and  
Above the Tithe

*"I testify that, on their  
own, according to their  
ability and BEYOND  
their ability ..."*

- 2 Corinthians 8:3

*"... and they brought in an  
abundance, a tenth of  
everything."*

- 2 Chronicles 31:5

## RESOURCE SAMPLER

The BEYOND Resource Sampler is for preview only.

To place your order, go to <http://tnbaptist.org/page.asp?page=104>

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# BEYOND BEYOND

Giving Over and Above the Tithe

## Introduction

The stewardship emphasis, *BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe*, offers an opportunity for people to grow in their faith journey with the Lord. Through this emphasis, members will be given an opportunity to learn what the Bible says about giving a tithe and beyond, how early Christians accomplished this even in their poverty and about the blessings God bestows when we are aligned with Him in this respect.

The Scriptures declare, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21, NIV). An extremely important indication of a Christian’s spiritual maturity is his attitude toward giving back to the Lord through His church. As growing stewards, we should hold nothing back, making necessary adjustments to give the tithe and beyond in our financial support of the Lord’s work.

This may seem much like climbing a mountain to an immature Christian. Many obstacles may be in the way in the beginning, a chief one being debt. Many believers are in debt today because they are living far beyond their means, saying that if they could get out of debt they would love to tithe. Truthfully, the only way one will ever tithe and beyond is to trust God. It is a journey of faith.

What are the benefits of giving beyond the tithe?

- We grow beyond our former selves. Just as our parents may have measured our physical growth by marks on a wall, so a Christian’s attitude toward money measures his spiritual growth. We should always be growing past our former selves.
- We see beyond our limits. Just as powerful telescopes enable our eyes to look deep into space, observing galaxies impossible to see otherwise, so giving beyond the tithe enables God to grow our faith in ways we could not do under our own power.
- We see beyond the mountain’s summit as we reach maturity and our thoughts and actions align with God’s. We truly understand that everything belongs to Him and that He works all things for our benefit. Our part is to be faithfully obedient and ever climbing upward.

Two key verses capture the challenge for Christians to go BEYOND in giving over and above the tithe.

*“I testify that, on their own, according to their ability and beyond their ability ...” (2 Corinthians 8:3, HCSB).*

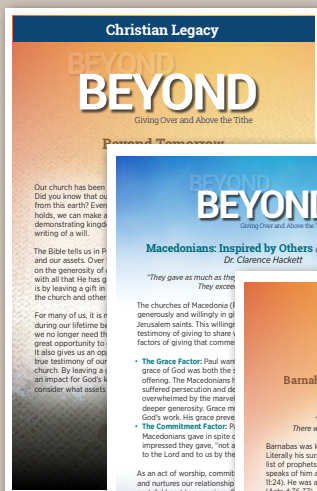
*“... and they brought in an abundance, a tenth of everything” (2 Chronicles 31:5, HCSB).*





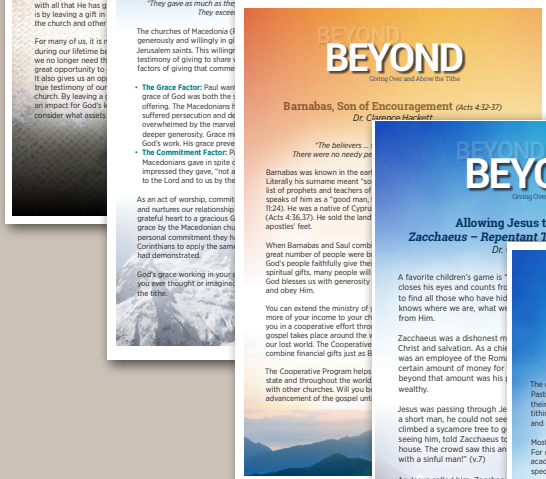
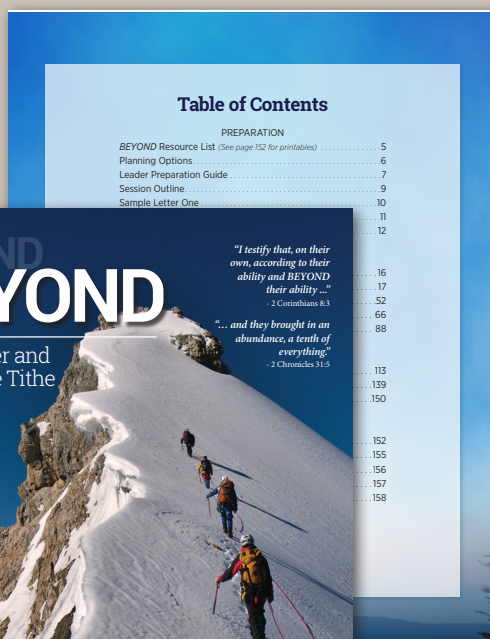
*BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe* DVD Video Introduction

*BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe* CD that includes PDF resources and other files



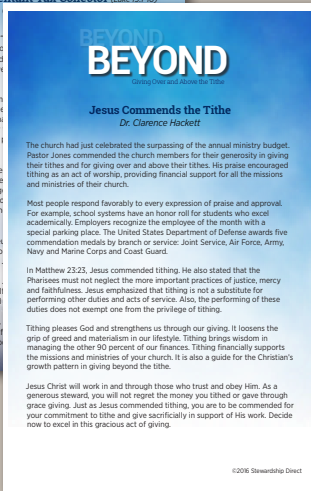
*BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe* 17" by 22" Poster/Guide

Four *BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe* Bulletin Inserts + One BONUS SUNDAY



## Session Study Topics include:

- Jesus Commends the Tithe
- Allowing Jesus to Change Us
- Barnabas, Son of Encouragement
- Macedonians: Inspired by Others
- BONUS: Beyond Tomorrow





## Planning Options

Welcome to the *BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe* stewardship emphasis.

This four-week emphasis is designed to help your church grow significantly in the area of stewardship.

This guide offers four formats to help you, as a leader, plan whether to conduct this study over a four-week period, a two-week period, on a single Sunday or over a weekend.

### Weekly study topics include:

- Jesus Commends the Tithe
- Zacchaeus
- Barnabas, Son of Encouragement
- Macedonians

### Resources:

- 22" by 17" poster/guide
- Four bulletin inserts
- DVD video introduction
- CD that includes PDF resources and other files

## Preparation Timeline Options

### Option A: Four Successive Weeks

#### Option B: Two-Sunday Format

Make appropriate decisions on preparing for this approach.

- Morning and evening presentations on first Sunday
- Wednesday night presentation
- Commitment service on second Sunday

#### Option C: One-Sunday Format

Make appropriate decisions on preparing for this approach.

- Session 1 during Sunday School
- Session 2 during morning worship

- Session 3 after a churchwide lunch
- Session 4 during evening worship

#### Option D: Weekend Format

Make appropriate decisions on preparing for this approach.

- Saturday night dinner
- Morning and evening presentations on Sunday

#### Option E: Small Group Format

Small-group studies during four successive weeks



# Session Overview

Two weeks before Session One– Use the drama sketch, “Tug of War with God,” in worship service(s).

One week before Session One– Teach “Tithing as a Positive Practice for Christ” (*The Circle of the Tithe*) in worship service(s).

## **Session One: Jesus Commends the Tithe (*Matthew 23:23*)**

Sermon One: “Taking Advantage of an Opportunity”

(Matthew 25:14-30 by Dr. Frank Page)

But let’s not neglect the more important practices:

- Justice
- Mercy
- Faithfulness

## **Session Two: Zacchaeus (*Luke 19:1-10*)**

Sermon Two: “The Soldier’s Stewardship”

(2 Timothy 2:3-4 by Eric Hankins)

Look, I’ll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord! (HCSB)

## **Session Three: Barnabas, Son of Encouragement (*Acts 4:32-37*)**

Sermon Three: “Giving in Response to God’s Blessings”

(Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3 by Dr. Jeff Iorg)

Those who believed held everything in common. ... There was not a needy person among them. (HCSB)

## **Session Four: Macedonians (*2 Corinthians 8:1-6*)**

Sermon Four: “Giving Beyond Ourselves”

(2 Corinthians 8:1-5 by Tim Maynard)

... they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability .... And they exceeded our expectations. (NIV)



# BEYOND BEYOND

## **Session One:** **The Words of Jesus—Going Beyond Giving the Tithe to Even More Important Matters of Godly Living**

Matthew 23:23

*by Dr. Ronald Meeks*

### **Overview:**

Jesus challenged the religious leaders of His day to go beyond giving the tithe to living out justice, mercy and faith.

### **Objective:**

To challenge learners to understand the practice of tithing and the importance of going beyond the tithe to uphold justice, show mercy and live faithfully.

### **Key Passage:**

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

### **Preparation:**

1. Read the full context of Jesus’ rebuke of the religious leaders and His lament over Jerusalem as found in Matthew 23:1-39.
2. Read the following selected Bible passages related to tithing: Gen. 14:20; Gen. 28:22; Lev. 27:30-32; Num. 18:21-31; Deut. 12:6-11; Deut. 14:28-29; Deut. 16:12; Mal. 3:8-12; 2 Chron. 31:12; Neh. 13:11-12; Lk. 11:42; Lk. 18:12.
3. Read the following selected Bible passages related to justice: Isa. 45:21; Lev. 19:36; Deut. 1:15-17; Deut. 10:17-19; Deut. 16:18-20; Ps. 9:8; Ps. 50:6; Ps. 96:13; Ps. 99:4; Isa. 42:1; Jer. 7:4-5; Jer. 9:24; Jer. 33:15-16; Mic. 6:8.

### **Introductory**

There once was a certain happy family. The family was made up of a 35-year-old dad named Jerry, a 34-year-old mom named Janie, a 12-year-old son named Jeffrey and a 10-year-old daughter named Jennifer. Then, along came a new addition, a son named Joey, who demanded a great amount of mom’s time and attention. Janie decided that with the extra work of taking care of Joey, she needed Jeffrey and Jennifer to help out a little with the household chores—keeping their bedrooms neat, cleaning the bathrooms and vacuuming the floors. She read a few parenting books that indicated



LESSONS  
*Adult: Session One*

a system of rewards was a common positive motivation for getting children to do their chores. So she made a chart on a poster board with the names of the older children. She told them that each Saturday at 10 a.m. she would check their work and award a gold star to the child who did the best job and a silver star to the child who was runner up.

**Develop the Lesson**

In Matthew 23, Jesus addressed some of the religious leaders of His day who had lost sight of what was most important to God—what the Lord valued most. Jesus pronounced seven “woes” upon these leaders. The word woe is an onomatopoeic word (like buzz, bang or boom) that imitates the sound associated with the objects or actions to which it refers. Prophets used the term *woe* “to express pain, displeasure, or perhaps both at the same time.” Jesus referred to these religious teachers as “hypocrites.” Jesus compared them to the ancient performers who wore masks to play a part. Jesus meant they played the part of being more righteous than they really were.

In Matthew 23:23, the fourth woe, Jesus said these hypocritical leaders paid the tithe of (or gave a tenth of) tiny spices such as mint, dill and cumin. Giving a tithe of these spices reflected a kind of detailed, meticulous observance of the law of the tithe. Yet while they were painstakingly careful in their tithing (which they understood as a requirement from the Lord), they neglected even more significant matters like justice, mercy and faith. What a contrast! They were meticulous about paying the tithe of tiny spices, but absolutely derelict concerning their responsibilities for upholding justice, showing mercy and living faithfully. In the final statement in verse 23, Jesus said they should have done these (practiced justice, mercy and faith) without neglecting the other (paying the tithe).

# BEYOND

## **Session One:** **Jesus Validates Giving BEYOND the Tithe**

*By Dr. Dennis Hooper*

### **Overview:**

Youth will learn that Jesus expected both the tithe to be given and BEYOND.

### **Key Passages:**

Matthew 23:23, Genesis 14:17-20, Malachi 3:8-10

### **Preparation:**

- Boldly print the word *BEYOND* on each index card. Glue a dime to each card. Make enough for each student. Remember that some students might not attend the first session, so make enough for the entire emphasis.
- Have a whiteboard or something similar available. Consider enlisting a good math student ahead of time for the math challenge in the introduction. Take care not to put a student in an awkward position.
- Prepare four placards or posters by writing in large lettering the following words, one word per poster: *Worship*, *Love*, *Obedience* and *Faith*. If teaching these lessons in small groups, each group will need a set of posters. This activity would probably work best in a large group at the end of the teaching time.
- Read Genesis 14, Malachi 3 and Matthew 23. This will help you get the context of the key passages.
- Look up the word *beyond* in a good dictionary. See ways to use the definition to challenge students.
- You might want to look up Melchizedek in a Bible dictionary.

### **Teaching Outline:**

- Welcome and Announcements (10-15 min.)
- Discussion outline (30-45 min.)
- Foundation of Abraham: Genesis 14:17-20
- Demonstration of Malachi: Malachi 3:8-10
- Validation of Jesus: Matthew 23:23
- Application of the lesson



LESSONS  
*Youth: Session One*

**Welcome and Announcements:**

Welcome the students to the class. Share with them the theme of this series of study, *BEYOND: Giving Over and Above the Tithe*. Ask the students what they think about when they hear the word *beyond*. They might reference Buzz Lightyear's saying, "To infinity and beyond." *Beyond* means outside the reach or on down the way. *Beyond* can indicate a challenge. To go beyond what is expected means to do extra or excellent work.

Distribute the index cards with *BEYOND* printed and dimes glued on them to each of the students. Ask the students to take these cards home and place them in a prominent place. They can place the card on the refrigerator, on their dresser mirror or on the dashboard of their cars—wherever they will see it every day.

**Discussion:**

- **Foundation of Abraham:** Genesis 14:17-20  
Long before most of the stories in the Bible occurred, God called Abraham. In Abraham's travels, he met a king named Melchizedek.
- **Demonstration of Malachi:** Malachi 3:8-10  
The passage in Malachi has been one of the strongest about tithing.
- **Validation of Jesus:** Matthew 23:23  
The life and teaching of Jesus are not separated from the Old Testament. As we have seen, the principle of tithing was well established in the Old Testament.
- **Application of the lesson**  
Break the group into four small groups and give them one of the posters. Ask them to tell why this poster speaks about tithing. Remind them tithing is all of these things.

# BEYOND

## Session One: Jesus

*By Sudi Kate Gliebe, Ph.D.*

Matthew 23:23

### Overview:

Christianity is not a works-based religion, but a supernatural all-transforming relationship with Jesus, the Son of God. When the Master Teacher, Jesus, addressed His hearers, He did so as a *heart surgeon*. He emphasized not only the “letter” of the Law but the “spirit” of the Law; He zeroed in not only on outward manifestations of piety, but on inward attitudes of surrender and obedience.

### Stewardship Emphasis:

Jesus cares about the *tithe* but he cares about our *heart condition* even more.

### Teaching Aim:

To encourage children to:

- Understand that tithing is important to Jesus.
- Understand that Jesus sees the heart and intentions of man.
- Understand that justice, mercy and faith are important to Jesus.
- Understand that giving, justice, mercy and faith go hand-in-hand.

### Bible Verses:

“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things” (Matthew 23:23, NLT).

### Lesson Explained:

The Pharisees (teachers of the Law in the time of Jesus) were very careful to obey the Law outwardly. They cared about what others thought about them and worked hard to appear religious and holy. They spent a lot of energy obeying rituals and focusing on outward actions.

In this passage Jesus confronts them sternly. He tells them that though they are careful to tithe, they are careless in matters of the heart. Jesus points out three virtues He is looking for in these leaders: justice, mercy and faith.

In the Book of Micah 6:8 (NLT), we read: “No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”



LESSONS  
*Children's: Session One*

Psalm 51:16-17 (NLT) says: "You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God."

These two passages confirm Jesus' message to the Pharisees. His message applies to us as well:  
**Good actions please God when our hearts are right with Him.**

### Activities

#### *Activity 1: Role Play*

Materials: None

**Teaching:** Have the children role-play different scenarios. Each scenario should be acted out with a bad attitude and then with a good attitude. Examples of scenarios you can use:

- Mom asks her son to make the bed. Have the children act it out with the son being grumpy while making the bed, and then have them act it out with the son being diligent and obedient while making the bed. Emphasize that the action is the same. The difference is the *heart* attitude.
- Father asks his son to take out the trash.
- Mother asks daughter to help her little sister tie her shoes.
- Mother asks her daughter to help put away groceries.
- Father writes a tithe check. (Emphasize *faith* in this example—tithing takes faith.)
- Mother gives money to a homeless man. (Emphasize *mercy* in this example.)

# BEYOND BEYOND

## **Session One:** **Jesus Teaches His Friends about Giving a Tithe**

*By Willa Ruth Garlow*

### **Bible Passage:**

Matthew 23:23

### **Objective:**

#### **Preschoolers will learn:**

- Jesus was a good teacher.
- A tithe is 10 percent (10 cents of every dollar).
- Jesus taught His friends that giving a tithe to God is important.
- Jesus also taught that being loving, kind and fair, telling the truth and doing what is right is important, too.

### **Leader Preparation:**

- For safety and good teaching, enlist at least two teachers (not baby sitters!) to be in the room at all times when preschoolers are present. A larger group of children requires enlisting more than two teachers.
- During the entire teaching session, keep the room's door closed so the children will be kept safely in the room and teaching will not be interrupted.
- Make plans to follow the church's guidelines for releasing children only to authorized adults.
- Prepare by reading, from an adult perspective, chapter 23 of the Gospel of Matthew. Think about what Jesus said to the Pharisees, whom He strongly criticized for leaving undone things that are important in the life of a godly person. Jesus assured them they should tithe, but they should also live godly lives.
- Ahead of time, read the suggestions for this session's learning activity centers and for large-group time. Prepare and gather the suggested materials.
- Learn the suggested Bible phrases (verses) and the Bible story, which are written for preschoolers' understanding. In teacher/child conversations throughout the teaching session, use the Bible phrases and the Bible story. Plan to use the large-group time for recalling and re-emphasizing the verses and the story.
- Arrive early for the teaching session. See that floors, chairs and tables are clean. Set up the learning activity areas so they are ready and teaching can begin when the first child arrives.



LESSONS  
*Preschool: Session One*

**Bible Phrases:**

Be ready to use these Bible phrases (verses) in conversations with the children. Say, “A verse in the Bible is ....” Avoid saying, “The Bible says ....,” to which one preschooler once replied, “Bibles don’t talk!”

- “Bring an offering to thank God” (1 Chronicles 16:29).
- “Help one another” (Galatians 5:13).
- “Be kind to one another” (Ephesians 4:32).
- “Love one another” (1 John 4:7).

**Bible Story:**

One day Jesus was teaching His helpers, and a big crowd of people came to hear Him teach. But, some of the people did not like that Jesus was teaching about God.

They were mean and unkind people. They cheated others and took their money. They went to church, but not to worship and thank God. They went to church only so people would see them.

They pretended to be very good people, but they were not. They gave their money, their tithe, at the temple-church not because they loved God, but to show people how much they gave.

Jesus told the unkind people it was right and good for them to give their money, which was their tithe, at the temple-church, but they should give because they love God, not for people to see them.

Jesus said they were right to always give their tithe, but there were other important things they should do, too. Jesus said they should also be honest and fair with other people. They should always tell the truth.

Jesus said they should always give their tithe, their money, but they also should do good deeds and treat other people with kindness and thoughtfulness.

Jesus told the unkind people that giving their money, their tithe, was good, but they also should always be friendly, loving and helpful to other people.

Jesus told the unkind people they should always give their tithe, but they should also be honest and loving and should not be mean and unkind.

Jesus told all the people they should always give their tithe, but He reminded them they should give their money because they love God.

# BEYOND

## **Taking Advantage of an Opportunity**

*Frank S. Page, Ph.D.*

*President and Chief Executive Officer, SBC Executive Committee*

**Matthew 25:14-30**

One thing we need to learn to do in life is to take advantage of every good opportunity that comes our way. Listen to the following story:

I heard a story out of Texas, so it may or may not be true, about a bank robber named Jorge Rodriguez, who operated along the Texas border around the turn of the century. He was so successful in his forays that the Texas Rangers put an extra posse along the Rio Grande to stop him.

Sure enough, late one afternoon one of these special Rangers saw Jorge Rodriguez stealthily slipping across the river. The Ranger tailed him at a discreet distance as he returned to his home village. He watched Jorge mingle with the people in the square and then go into his favorite cantina. The Ranger slipped in to get the drop on Jorge.

With a pistol in his hand he said, "I know who you are, Jorge Rodriguez, and I have come to get back all the money you have stolen from the banks in Texas. Unless you give it to me, I'm going to blow your brains out." There was one fatal problem, however; Jorge didn't speak English, and the Texas Ranger was not versed in Spanish. They were two adults at a verbal impasse.

But about that time an enterprising man said, "I am bilingual. Do you want me to act as



translator?” The Ranger nodded and the little man put the words of the Ranger into terms that Jorge could understand.

Nervously, Jorge answered back, “Tell the big Texas Ranger that I have not spent a cent of the money. If he will go to the well in the Town Square, face north, count down five stones, he will find a loose stone. Pull it out and all the money is behind it. Please tell him quickly.”

The translator got a solemn look on his face and said to the Ranger in perfect English, “Jorge Rodriguez is a brave man. He says he is ready to die.”

That translator was not about to miss out on the opportunity that had come his way! I think there are probably better ways to take advantage of opportunities that come our way. I believe our Scripture text for today will show us how to do just that.

Turn with me to Matthew 25:14-30.

This parable points out our need to have a great faith in the character of our Lord. At the same time it tells us that we can enter into the joy of our God. This should impart to each of us a healthy fear of the real peril of our experiencing a real failure.

This story of the talents has three scenes: the distribution of the gifts, the use made of the gifts and the day of reckoning. Listen carefully as we look at these three scenes.

#### **Look at the distribution of the gifts. (Matthew 25:14-15)**

The first fact that strikes us in this scene is that each servant received something. These “talents” were actually sums of money and were comparable to a large sum of money. Each one was given something, and so it is with us. These talents represent the powers and means that God has entrusted to His people for carrying on His kingdom work in the world today. They include the gifts that Paul enumerates as being distributed by the Holy Spirit in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14 and Ephesians 4. It could be said that

# A Few Things I Never Want to Hear Jesus Say to Me

*By Dr. Owen Robertson*

**RICK:** So, I was reading through the gospel of Matthew and ... I made a list of a few things I never want to hear Jesus say to me. Here goes:

**Number one:** You hopeless, hyper-religious hypocrite!

Not a good thing to hear Jesus say to you. Hard to imagine Jesus saying that to someone. But if you can imagine it, you'd typically want to imagine Him saying it to someone else.

**Number two:** Do you have any idea how silly you look?

Not sure which one is worse, number one or number two.

**Number two, part two:** Do you have any idea how silly you look, writing a life story that's wrong from start to finish, nitpicking over commas and semicolons? Straining gnats but swallowing camels!

You don't want to hear Jesus accuse you of focusing on the itty bitty and ignoring the ginormous. Sweating the small stuff and not worrying at all about the things that truly matter.

**Number three:** And this is as far as I got. You give a tenth of your spices, meaning you tithe from your spices—mint, dill and cumin.

What's wrong with that? Tithing from all you have is wrong?

No. Get this next part; you tithe on every nickel and dime, but you neglect the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness.

And here's my problem. Here's why I stopped.

I don't want to hear Jesus say to me I'm neglecting things that are important to God. I don't want to hear him say I'm not really following Him as closely as I like to think I am. I don't want to hear Him say I'm not treating others fairly or that I am not a man of compassion.

I hear Him say I can't tithe and then ignore justice. And I can't act in mercy and kindness if I don't tithe.

I want to hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

And so, I've decided to live like one.

Stewardship Direct