

Helps to Bible Study

15. BIBLE PLAN FOR THE SUPPORT OF GOD'S WORK

There is only one right plan of church finance, and that is the plan of tithes and freewill offerings as laid down in the Scriptures.

1. Deuteronomy 8:18. We are to remember God in both earning and spending our money, for we are able to earn our money only as God gives us strength, breath, and life to work from day to day.

2. Leviticus 27:30, 32. All the tithe is the Lord's, and it is holy unto the Lord. Verse 32 says that this tithe is the tenth part, which is holy unto the Lord. (Compare also Genesis 14:20 with Hebrews 7:2) This means that one tenth of all the money we earn is the Lord's tithe. This one tenth is not ours, it is the Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord. This one tenth is God's holy portion of our money income, just as the seventh day of each week is the Lord's holy portion of our time. In order to obey His commandments, we are to render this tenth of our money to the Lord as tithe for the support of His work, just as we are to render to Him the seventh day of each week as the Lord's day.

3. Psalm 24:1. Everything in this world belongs to God. All the gold and silver is the Lord's. Haggai 2:8. All the cattle are His. Psalm 50:10. Each one of us, with all that we are and have, is the Lord's. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. When one lives in a house or on a farm that belongs to another person, he pays him rent for the use of his house or farm. In the same way, the one tenth, or tithe, is due the Lord as His rent money. All that we have and are, or ever shall have or be, is the Lord's. One tenth, therefore, is due Him for the use of His goods, for the breath, strength, and life that He gives us that we may earn our money from day to day.

4. Numbers 18:20, 21. God has decreed that this one tenth or tithe is to be used as a living or support for His ministers. No one has any right to use the tithe for helping the poor or the sick, etc. We should help them out of our nine tenths after the Lord's tithe has been taken out. The tithe is the Lord's, and He is the only one who has the right to say how that tenth shall be used. In Numbers 18:21 God has decreed once for all how this holy tithe is to be used, and that is for the support of His ministers.

5. 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14. God has ordained that they who preach His Word shall be supported by the tithes or tenth of the income of those who accept His Word, in the same way as the Levites under the Mosaic system were supported.

6. Matthew 23:23. The Pharisees were very strict in tithing, even to giving a tenth of the little herbs that grew in their gardens, such as mint and anise. But they failed to obey the weightier matters, such as justice, mercy, and faith. Jesus said that they ought to pay their tithe even on these small items, but not to leave undone those other more important duties. So this means that Jesus Christ indorsed tithe paying, or the giving of the tenth, as a part of the duty of every person.

7. Deuteronomy 16:17. In addition to rendering to God the tenth as His special holy part of our income, we should give freewill offerings from the nine tenths, as we are able.

8. Proverbs 3:9, 10. The one tenth, God's part of our income, should be taken out first. Note in verse 10 how those will be blessed who will thus put God first.

9. Malachi 3:8. Those who do not render the tenth of their income to the Lord, and offerings as they are able, are guilty of robbing God, and transgressing the eighth commandment, which says, "Thou shall not steal." No thief or robber who persists in stealing will ever get to heaven. 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

10. Malachi 3:9, 10. Nine tenths with God's blessing is better than ten tenths without it.

Helps to Bible Study

11. Genesis 28:20, 22. If God gives us only bread to eat and clothing to put on, we should faithfully render to Him the one tenth of all He gives us.

12. Luke 16:10-12. If we are faithful in rendering to God His part of our goods in this world, He will give us true and everlasting riches in His better world, in the future.

16. BIBLE TEMPERANCE

1. 1 Corinthians 10:31. Christians are commanded to eat and drink as will please God. The only way that we can eat and drink that will be pleasing to God, is to be governed in our eating and drinking by the principles laid down in the Word of God. A Christian is to be governed in his eating and drinking by the principles of the Bible, and not merely by appetite or taste.

2. Isaiah 55:2. God has commanded us to eat only that which is good, and we learn what is truly good to eat by the teachings of His Word.

3. Genesis 1:29, 31. The God who made man knows what is best for man to eat, and the original diet which God ordained for man was fruits, grains, vegetables, and nuts. God did not permit man to eat the flesh of animals until the time of the Flood. To Israel in the wilderness He made it very plain that man is not to eat the flesh of any unclean animal, fowl, or fish.

4. Deuteronomy 14:7, 8. God told His people not to eat the flesh of swine.

5. Deuteronomy 14:9, 10. Creatures in the waters which do not have fins and scales are not to be eaten. God's people should not eat catfish, eels, crabs, lobsters, oysters, or clams. This instruction cannot be set aside by Christians today on the ground that it is in the Mosaic law, which has passed away. This prohibition against eating unclean creatures was in force centuries before the Mosaic law was given (read Genesis 7:2), and this uncleanness is still recognized in the last book of the Bible, long after the ceremonial law had passed at the cross. (Read Revelation 18:2)

6. Isaiah 66:15-17. When the Lord Jesus comes, those who are found eating swine's flesh will be consumed by the fire of His presence, along with those who eat mice. God is love; He never deprives us of anything that is for our good. So when He tells us not to eat unclean creatures, it is for our good to obey.

7. Deuteronomy 14:2, 3. God's people are to be a holy and pure people; they are not to eat any unclean or abominable thing. Leviticus 20:25, 26,

8. Proverbs 23:29-32. There is plain instruction in the Bible against the use of alcoholic liquors. 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10. This means that when we drink as will please God, we will not drink beer, wine, whisky, gin, or any alcoholic liquor. Coffee contains a poison known as caffeine, which is injurious to the body. Tea contains two poisons, known as tannin and theine, which are injurious to the body. Cola drinks also contain injurious poisons or dope. Tobacco, snuff, and cigars contain a deadly poison known as nicotine, which is injurious to the body. Cigarettes contain nicotine and another poison known as furfural. When we really eat and drink as is pleasing to God, as Scripture commands us, we will lay aside tea, coffee, cola drinks, and tobacco, or any narcotic habit, such as the morphine habit, paregoric or opium habits, etc.

9. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and is to be kept clean from these harmful things, so it will be a fit place for the indwelling of Jesus by His Holy Spirit. 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18; 7:1.

10. 1 Corinthians 3:17. If we defile the body temple with these unclean and harmful things, God will destroy us. True Christian temperance is a total abstinence from all that is harmful, and a moderate use of that which is good.