

## Bible Study Lectures

“Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born, If He’s not born in thee, thy heart is still forlorn.”

The issue cannot be evaded. He who is born but once will die twice. But he who is born twice will die but once, and that death has been changed into a sleep, which terminates with the resurrection.

Thus it becomes a very solemn question: Have you been born again, born from above, born of the Spirit? It is said of Wesley that he reached more than a thousand times from the text, “Ye must be again.” And when asked why he preached so much from one text, he replied, “Because, you must be born again.”

Romans 8:4 reveals the fact that the “righteousness of the law”- can only be fulfilled in those “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” And verse 9 states: “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” The same experience is described by Peter, “That you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” Romans 8:15 refers to those thus born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit, as having “received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” 1 Peter 1:23 reads: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever.”

### THE NEW BIRTH

Being thus adopted into the family by this new birth, 1 John 3:2 explains: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” Revelation 3:5 shows that the name is written in the book of life. And Revelation 3:12 and 14:1 refer to the Father’s name being received.

Even in this world some countries require the birth certificate to accompany the passport before admission is granted. You and I are nearing the great boundary line of the eternal country. Is your birth certificate into the heavenly kingdom registered in the books of that kingdom? It will be necessary that our names are there as a result of the new birth, and that they have not been blotted out as a result of unconfessed sin. Will there be any luggage in spection? I well remember walking off the ship into the Customs Department in Wellington, New Zealand, in the closing days of December, 1926. I remember the Customs officer examining the goods of a Chinese. He was breaking open wrappers and examining each little detail. The Chinese said, “You all the time think he opium. He no opium.”

Have you examined your luggage with a view to entrance into the last great port? Sins will have to be overcome, confessed, forgiven. No sins will enter heaven. Some may try to smuggle in some little pet sins, but they will be disappointed. Do you and I approach the border line of eternity with confidence? One of the saddest things one can imagine would be on the arrival at the last great customs port to be debarred entrance, because of not having been born again. Conversion and the new birth are two aspects of the one transaction. Conversion is our turning to God. The new birth is God’s response by giving us the enabling presence and power of His Holy Spirit, who, if not grieved away or “quenched” by sin, will safely lead the ones he controls ‘into the eternal harbor at last.

## 43. PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD

### Big Dividends to Those in Full Partnership

DESIRING to educate his son in the profitable handling of money, a banker gave him a half-crown to invest. He advised his lending it on interest to some boy who could be trusted. The father promised to increase his boy’s capital if he invested the money wisely. When night came, the banker said: “Well, son, how did you invest your money today?” “Well, father,” replied the little fellow, “I saw a boy on the street without shoes, and he had had no dinner; so I gave him my half-crown to buy something to eat.”

“You’ll never make a businessman,” said the banker; “business is business. But I will try you once more. Now here is five shillings to invest; See how you can do it.”

A loud peal of laughter from the boy followed this speech. He then explained to his father: “My Sunday-school teacher said giving to the poor was lending to the Lord; and she said He would return to us double; but I did not think He would do it quite so quickly.”

Many others have learned by experience (but perhaps not as early in life as this banker’s son), the truth of the words of Proverbs 11:25, “The liberal soul shall be made fat.”

Not only are there definite blessings promised to those who are liberal in their gifts; but there are also special promises made to those who enter into partnership with God in paying what God claims as His.

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From the study of such scriptures as Psalm 24:1, Haggai 2:8, and 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, we learn that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof,” including man and his money. Matthew 25:14-30 and Deuteronomy 8:18 show that man has the use of the goods of this world, not as complete owner, but merely as a servant or steward, God giving him “power to get wealth.”

Leviticus 27:30 and other scriptures show clearly that the share God claims for our use of His goods is one-tenth, or a tithe of our income.

But God will not be in debt to man, but rather the opposite. He promises abundant blessings to those who are in full partnership with Him. And many have received remarkable dividends for their faithfulness to God in the payment of the tithe.

I use the word “payment,” for the tithe is what God claims as His. We pay our debts. We give gifts. The scripture states: “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.” Other scriptures show that the tithe is reserved by God to support the most important work of caring for our spiritual needs. It is God’s plan that His work should be supported in an honorable way.

A letter published in the British Weekly by the honorary secretary of the Christian Stewardship Movement stated: “A generation ago a speech on tithing at the Keswick Convention proved a complete fiasco. Four years ago a similar speech led to over one thousand persons pledging themselves to the practice. Our experience of the Christian public leads us to the conclusion that more and more believers are coming to see that until the expenses of the kingdom are met, the kingdom cannot come.”

### GREAT PHILANTHROPISTS

There are great philanthropists, such as Lord Nuffield of the Morris Car industry, who are probably working on the tithing system in partnership with large amounts of their income. Some have consecrated several tithes of their income to benevolent purposes.

The world-renowned John D. Rockefeller during his life amassed one of the largest fortunes on record, and was blessed with a life that nearly reached the century mark. A biography of this remarkable man states that, “He has never had a drink, never played cards, never smoked, never been caught by the fastness of women, or the slowness of racehorses. Religion has been the dominating factor of Rockefeller’s life. His father had no particular brand of religion, but his mother was the daughter of a Scotch Baptist.

“Of all the Rockefellers, John D. has been the most religious. He has regarded himself always as the servant of God. He described his money as ‘God’s gold,’ and when asked, in one of the many Congressional inquiries which have investigated his money-making, as to how he made his immense fortune, he replied, ‘God gave it me.’

“Evidently as the result of his early religious instruction, when he took his first job as an office boy in Cleveland, he carefully tithed his income every week. Certainly he was blessed ‘in basket and in store.’ And when he retired from business he had given away more than five times the total amount of the fortune with which he retired. His gifts amounted to close on £200,000,000.”

Some time ago a lengthy article was published in the World’s Work entitled “Men Who Tithe.” It set forth with an abundance of evidence the remarkable success achieved by some of the world’s greatest benefactors who made it a rule in their lives to tithe their incomes. Doubtless a large percentage of the world’s really successful benefactors are men who consistently and regularly recognize that a tenth of their income belongs to the Lord.

This article, written by William E. Shepherd, made reference to Charlie Page of Oklahoma, who paid his first tithe into the tambourine of a Salvation Army girl. Mr. Page stated that he was down to his last dollar, having that and fifteen cents. “Well, why don’t you tithe?” the girl asked. “Tithe? What does that mean?” asked the young man. “Why, the Bible says that we ought to give one-tenth of what we have to the Lord,” she replied. “All right,” said the youth, “I’ve got a dollar and fifteen cents. I’ll do better than a tenth. I’ll give fifteen cents.”

He never forgot the Scripture lesson of that day but recognized the tithe as God’s money ever afterwards. He became financial, and devoted large sums of money especially to the care of unfortunate children.

Here are two other quotations from the same source: “Twenty-five years ago a business man in a town in Kansas failed in business, with debts of more than £20,000. Today he might be many times a millionaire, if he desired. Close friends know big story, and it runs like this:

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“When he was worse than bankrupt, he opened his Bible at Genesis 28:22, and, drawing a pencil mark around this twenty-second verse, he said: ‘From this moment on, as long as I live, of all that God gives me I will give Him one-tenth.’

### “LAY NOT UP TREASURES”

“Years later, as the president of one of America’s most successful manufacturing companies, he wrote: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,” etc., and the interview of the rich young ruler - these teachings gave me the conviction some years ago that all of my income, except what the family needs, was to be given for building up the kingdom of God. I have had more joy, I am sure, than I would have received from becoming a millionaire.”

Mr. Shepherd tells of Mr. Thomas Kane as head of two large manufacturing concerns, and one of the most notable titheers in the United States. During a period of over forty years he spent much money to prove to his fellows the moral and material benefits of tithing.

His inquiry, sent out in the form of a pamphlet, has become famous wherever it has gone. It runs: “My personal belief is that God honors both temporally and spiritually those who devote one tenth of their income to His cause. I have never known an exception. Have you?” It is said that in forty years, Mr. Kane has never received an affirmative answer to his query.

These men who have as tithe payers increased their finances and become great benefactors, recognize that the spiritual blessings derived from this practice as far exceed the material as the divine excels the human, and the celestial excels the terrestrial.

Seeing that God claims the tenth as His, it will be observed that when one supports his church by paying into the church treasury his tithe, he thus pays his minister, and supports the preaching of the gospel, without parting with one penny of his own money.

Of course many devote more than the tithe to the furtherance of the gospel. That then becomes a gift. The Bible speaks of tithes and offerings.

## 44. THE MAN ON THE LAND

### Rebuking the Devourer

I AM a son of the soil. My father’s father was one of the early Victorian settlers, coming out from Somersetshire, England. My mother’s father, from Ireland, the land of potatoes and buttermilk, with a life partner from Scotland, also dwelt among the stacks of wheat and hay on Victorian soil. From childhood till the commencement of my college career, like my ancestors I, too, breathed the freshness of the ploughed furrow, and fields of waving green and golden grain. Little wonder, then, said Pastor Mitchell, in a mid-week address, that I consider it a privilege to discuss the divine, conditional promises beneficial especially to the man on the land.

I refer to the promises found in Malachi 3:10, 11. These verses record a message direct from God to mankind: “Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, said 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. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, said the Lord of hosts.”

### BLESSINGS FROM GOD

Years ago I was associated with a preacher who, like myself, had been called from the plough. I once heard him answering a question asked by a farmer as to whether he had received any material blessings since his decision to walk fully in the paths of obedience to God. “You have asked me a frank question; it is my place to give you a frank answer,” my minister friend replied.

Then he told of his experience as a farmer in Gippsland, Victoria. His farm has been the veritable centre of the caterpillar pest. But when he received a new experience in Christian things, and made a definite decision to obey God fully, things changed. The caterpillars were just as bad in the district as in previous years, forcing the farmers as usual to cut their crops prematurely, letting the grain ripen in the stocks to avoid having the wheat eaten off by the pest.

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But the man following the Bible prescription for success told of his crop standing and ripening before being cut, and not one caterpillar being found in it. A farmer neighbor wonderingly searched the standing crop for the voracious grub that had made it necessary for the surrounding crops to be cut before they were thoroughly ripe. Being unable to find even one of the devoured, he said to the Bible following farmer, "Providence smiles upon you."

Here is an experience of a faithful tithe payer in Queensland, just as he has given it. "During a big drought in Queensland we were facing a serious situation. My large dam was dry, and I had been buying water. My ready cash had all been spent, and still the drought continued. It was my practice to rise very early in the morning, and spend an hour in Bible study and prayer, sometimes from, four o'clock to five. One morning as I was praying for rain, I decided to put the matter to the test. I said to the Lord, 'Now, Lord, those that honor Thee, You wilt honor. I have been faithful in paying tithe. I have, honored Thee.' I asked Him definitely to send rain that very day, and believed that He would do it.

"The morning passed, and still the sky was bright and cloudless, just as it had been for so many months. Noon came, and as I went home to dinner, I noticed three small clouds the size of a man's hand over the home. Before dinner was over, the room became quite darkened, and looking out we saw that the heavens were black with clouds. I went out to the barn to work, and in about half an hour heavy drops began to fall on the iron roof. Soon, the rain was falling in torrents, and continued for two and a half hours. When I went to look at the dam, there I found a great sheet of water to a depth of about four feet. It has never been empty since. No rain fell that day on any of the surrounding farms. My farm of about three hundred acres was the only one in the district that received the shower." While God is not a respecter of persons, He is a respecter of character.

### "NO MERE COINCIDENCE"

Here is an experience from New Zealand which also illustrates God's blessing upon those who are faithful in tithe paying. A Christian in New Zealand had a small farm and had experienced very bad years. At one time after paying his debts he had nothing left but his tithe money, amounting to £26. He gathered his family about him and said, "Now, all we have in the world is this £26 tithe. It is the Lord's money, but we need food for the cattle and for ourselves. What shall we do? Shall we use this tithe? Shall we borrow it, or shall we pay it in?" If they paid in that tithe there would be nothing left.

They prayed over it, and decided to pay their tithe. They sent it away and had nothing left. Inside of three days a letter came through the post office containing the cash for just £26. It was a debt that had been owing to them for about ten years, and they had thought they would never get it, but they did get it, and at the right time. After the lapse of so many years, and under such circumstances, surely such an experience was no mere coincidence. And the fact that scores of similar experiences could be cited proves beyond all shadow of doubt that it is the definite outworking of God's promises as recorded in our texts.

Now I shall relate an experience from a cattle station among the hills of the great New England Range, NSW, 4,000 feet above sea level. It is from a publication entitled, "God in the Outback," by Frances W. Waugh, who shared with her husband the experiences related. She tells how, in the midst of a severe drought, she studied with her husband concerning the importance of tithing, and the privilege of claiming the promises of God to the tithe payer. The husband believed the Scripture, and decided to become a faithful tithe payer. He planted seed "in all good faith," though the ground was parched, with no apparent prospect of rain. When the seed was planted, the following night the rain began to fall.

Then the writer tells how they were protected from a plague of grasshoppers that invaded the district, and also from a bush fire, driven by a fierce wind directly toward their home, and a paddock of weaners. So fierce was the wind that prayer was their only weapon. After prayer the onrushing flames halted, a column of smoke ascended, and then the fire turned and traveled in an opposite direction just in time to spare their home and the young cattle.

### GOD'S BENEDICTION

"Through drought, through plague, and through fire our Father had spoken," wrote Mrs. Waugh, "and had pronounced His benediction on the feeble efforts of human hearts. We recognize the great God as Creator, Owner, and Lord of all; but we know Him best as the loving, condescending God of the outback."

Pitcairn Island is truly an island plantation, a veritable Garden of Eden. The islanders are all Christians, being members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They are faithful tithe payers. The following is from a book by W. Y. Fullerton, "Romance of Pitcairn Island," published by the London Carey

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Press. "Every tenth orange tree has branded upon it the Lord's tenth. Every tenth row of produce has a stake with the same sign, marking it as devoted to God. On watermelons and muskmelons the brand is made by scraping off the thin outer skin to form the letters. Sugar cane is turned into syrup and a tenth is measured, or the tenth row is marked as it is growing. The islanders bear witness that never has as much money come to them as since they have proved God by bringing the tithes into the storehouse. So Pitcairn Island witnesses in its own way that God, who claims our all, makes a special claim on a seventh of our time and the tenth of our substance, and tells us that so much at least is the duty of those who seek to follow Christ. It would be well if we regarded the example."

### 45. MONEY AND WEALTH

The Rich Fool, and the Richer Wise Man

NOTHING deceives men like money. There is many a man who considers himself wise, because he is building up a big banking account or large properties, when actually he is merely a rich fool. No dust is so blinding as gold dust.

People sacrifice health, character, and a world of things really worth while, and even life itself, for the sake of more money. Perhaps more will lose eternal life because of inordinate love for money, than any other one sin. What some consider clever dealing with their fellow men is, in the sight of God, covetousness, robbery, and nothing short of heinous sin.

#### EVILS OF GREED

What have men not done for money! What rivers of blood have flowed, what wars have raged, what dastardly and villainous crimes have been committed, all because of the greed for money! What empires, nations, and continents have been wrecked because of the base prostitution of money! How the crime of the ages has thrown families, individuals, and communities into the bitterest and most heartbreaking quarrels, which have ruined lives and blasted homes!

I am well aware that the money question is to many a delicate theme. And there are some men so wrapped up in taking from their fellow men their hard-earned money—often the symbol of the daily toil and perspiration of a lifetime—that they have no time to think about heaven, and no chance to get there with the burden of their ill-gotten gain, even if they did. Those whose god is their money will criticize when a preacher talks about money. But practical Christianity demands the discussion of the money question. It often becomes the acid test of all our profession. The religion that does not touch a man's pocket is not Christianity, for Christianity is the exact opposite of selfishness and covetousness. Dr. James Denny is responsible for the statement that more is said about money in the New Testament than about anything else. And L. E. Froom, in "Stewardship in Its Larger Aspects," tells how, like a veritable milky way, a string of 1,565 references to man's relationship to property and money stretches across the pages of inspiration from Genesis to Revelation.

#### USE OF PROPERTY AND MONEY

Many are greatly surprised when they learn how much Jesus said about the right and wrong use of property and money. It is estimated that one verse in every six in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is on money, and 16 of the 29 parables. A sample Scripture lesson is found in Luke 12:15-22. Here Jesus illustrates by referring to the common practice of the ungrateful prosperous. Entirely forgetful of the tithe, God's share of their prosperity, and forgetting about giving an offering in proportion to their prosperity, they concentrate on building bigger barns to store their ever-increasing goods. Jesus explains that this practice of merely laying up treasure for oneself means that such a one is not rich toward God."

Jesus pictures such a one as a fool. "You fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which you have provided?" Who wants to be a rich "fool?" The way, a thousand times better, the way of wisdom, is to enter into partnership with God, to give Him what He claims as His, and liberal offerings in addition, reckoning ourselves stewards of our Lord's goods.

As a steward of the Lord's goods we may enter heaven, but not as rich men. Listen to the thrice-repeated words of Scripture (Matthew 19:24; Luke 18:25; and Mark 10:23): "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." How strange that

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professing Christians will strive to be rich men, ignoring their stewardship to God in order to gain more money, when riches are an eternal barrier to heaven!

If you have riches, and want heaven as well, read the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, and remember that you must give an account of your stewardship. Read Matthew 23:23 and 1 Corinthians 9:7-14, and pay your tithe, and use the balance in constant recognition that all belongs to God, and that you are His faithful steward. Though a man without money is poor, a man with nothing but money is poorer still. Money will not glitter in the dark valley, nor pay the ferry across the Jordan of death. I have known some people with precious little money, but whom I consider much richer than others I have known with plenty of it.

### DEFINITION OF MONEY

A London paper offered a prize for the best definition of money. It was awarded to a young man who defined it as follows: "An article that may be used as a universal passport to everywhere except heaven, and as a universal provider of everything except happiness." Money will not buy friends-true friends who will stay in trouble as well as in prosperity. The prodigal son found this out by sad experience. And who would think of exchanging one real friend for any amount of money? Surely, none of us would, like Judas, sell our best friend for thirty pieces of silver!

There are greater riches than money; richer men by far than moneyed men. A minister visited by a tax collector for the purpose of assessing the value of his property, said to the tax agent, "I am a rich man." The official quickly sharpened his pencil and asked intently, "Well, what do you own?" The pastor replied, "I am the possessor of a Savior who earned for me everlasting life, and who has prepared a mansion for me in the eternal city."

"What else?" "I have a brave, pious wife, and Solomon says, 'Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.'" "What else?" "Healthy and obedient children." "What else?" "A merry heart which enables me to pass through life joyfully." "What else?" "That is all," replied the good minister. The official closed his book, arose, took his hat and said, "You are indeed a rich man, sir, but your property is not subject to taxation." This man with no earthly riches was richer by far than the millionaire who lacks the true riches mentioned by this minister.

### THE TRUE RICHES

Money transferred to God's cause is credited as treasure in heaven. In supporting the gospel, one assists in preparing candidates for eternity. And no investment can compare with such returns as that. The results are eternal. On the other hand, the man who buries his money in the concerns of this world only dies a poor man, for Scripture teaches plainly that he is registered in the books of heaven as a robber, guilty of stealing the Lord's share of his talents. Many find that their money must leave them while living. And death parts all from their wealth, except the true riches, and the heavenly bank account.

There is a good deal of truth in the words of the old Negro who said: "I have heard folks say, 'I hope I has religion, but I don't know.' That sort of religion you hopes you got but don't know, aint going to do you no more good than the money what you hopes you got but don't know.' The money and property of this world have wings, but they won't support a flight to heaven.

Major A. H. Pruchen, of Toronto, tells how when he left his cabin, when the Titanic was sinking, he left 300,000 dollars there and took three oranges instead. "Money seemed a mockery at a time like that," he said.

### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD

A millionaire over in Oklahoma told a preacher his story of the uncertainty of money. "Preacher," he said, "I have had three fortunes. This is my third. The first I made in the Klondyke in a gambling house. God won't let any man keep money when he gets it that way. I got another in Seattle, and that wasn't straight, and the Lord wouldn't let me keep that either. Then I made up my mind that I was going into partnership with God. I promised God that next time I would make my money honestly and spend it for the cause of humanity. I first gave Him His tithe, and I have prospered ever since."

## 46. CHRISTIAN SABBATH

It Was Made at Creation-Spans All Time