

KINGDOMNOMICS PART THREE

DEVOTION OF A TITHE

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Q: Have you found that there is always something more to buy... Not just with cars, but everything.

Drive-in You a burger... "Would you like cheese on that? Would you like to make that a combo meal? Do want to go big on that? Could I interest you in a cookie?"

- More money does not decrease the pressure of dealing with money... just means you can get in more trouble quicker.

Lottery Jonathan Hade writes of the new trend in America of Lottery winner support groups... People think they are on easy street discover that more money comes w/ a whole new set pressures... "I know, you'd be willing to sponsor a lotto winner SG in your house.

In this series Roger and I have talked about setting the right priorities for our finances... **Give, Save, Live.** (Get the tapes if you missed them)

Roger's point ...made a great point last week about one of Jesus teaching's. Jesus didn't say money is the root of evil...

Q: What is the root of all kinds of evil...? (*love of money*) *give out a dollar*

Nothing wrong with making lots of money, buying stuff... it's when we love money the way we would love a child, spouse... or... or God.

Abram One of the great examples of a guy who gets this right is Abraham. I want look a major event in his life that illustrates what it looks like to prioritize one's life with Give as the first priority.

background In Gen 14 several cities near Abram become embroiled in war.
There are 4 kings who control a coalition of other city-states, and when a few of these city-states rebel these 4 kings they go on a rampage... they start tearing up everything in their path... and as they approach the Dead Sea Basin 5 different kings from the area come together to fight back... 2 of the kings happen to be from Sodom & Gomorrah. They destroy everything in their path.

Gen 14:11-13a "The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom. One who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew"

At this point Abram is really out of harms way. He was a wealthy man who owned a lot of land... He was powerful... but if he sticks his neck into the middle of this fight... he stands to loose a lot... including his life.

Lot
Gen 14:14

When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

This is a battle that could cost Abram everything he has, but he gives it up for someone else

Q: You've just got to ask the question? **Why make a sacrifice for Lot...** he's not the sharpest tool in the box... **Lot doesn't deserve this...**

He's not a shining example of character and steadfastness... It was his bad choices that got him sucked into the materialism and depravity of Sodom. Abram could have said "Nephew, you made your own bed now sleep in it."

So Why did Abram put his house, land, all his possessions, and even his own life at risk?

A: He loved his nephew...!
~ The truth is... I'm Lot... your Lot – We get sideways... we make choices that put us in the deep weeds.

Foreshadowing
(ILL)

One day Jesus is sitting at the table... picks up the bread and says... think of this as my body... my life... Then he breaks it... "This is my body broken for you"

↳ I'm going to sacrifice my body... my life for you... Next...

Matt 26:27-28

"Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Q: Why would Jesus just pour out his life? Because He loves YOU!

It's not that Jesus thought dieing on a cross was easy or pain free... scripture tells us Jesus dreaded the thought of death on a cross...

↳ Jesus loved his life... he just loved you and me more.

(ILL)

If you're a parent... you understand this.

- ✓ You've sacrificed sleep, you've watch Barney the dinosaur and the Tela tubbies until you were ready to throw up in the kitchen sink.
- ✓ You've given up countless weekends
- ✓ You've given up your own health... toddlers are like little Petri dishes... wherever you take them germs just... soooooosh stick to them... then they bring it home.
- ✓ Older wiser parents tell me sleepless nights will not go away when Cole & Chan become teens... the reasons just change.

- ✓ Maybe you have an adult child who's gotten sideways... and it breaks your heart... but you never give up on them... WHY???

Because you love them.... you love them more than you love your own body.

Melchizedek

Gen 14:15-16

During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.

Against over whelming odds Abram defeats 5 Kings that until now were very successful warriors.

Picture the Scene

Abram is big stuff now, in fact two kings come calling on him immediately They've won the battle... 318 men have defeated thousands of warriors, they are dancing and cheering... there was probably talk of forming a flag football team to compete with the Egyptians to the South, and the Hittites to north.

Song

They are singing... We will, we will, rock you. *Maybe they didn't sing that exact song*

↳ Then the King of Salem shows up

Gen 14:18

"Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High"

Don't miss the foreshadowing of Jesus Christ with the bread and wine... being symbols of his body and blood... (We are going to come back to this in a min)

Gen 14:19-20a

"and he blessed Abram, saying, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.' blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand."

⇒ **God is the source of life.**

~ Abram led the battle... but he understood that the real wisdom, power, and strength of his life all went back to God.

~ As followers of Christ we seek to live in this same truth... *Let me illustrate*

Colie Driving

One afternoon this past summer Chandler was at summer camp and Angie was gone. So it was just Colie and me. She wanted to go four wheeling... So we drove down into a large riverbed... Put Colie on my lap gave her the wheel and floored it. We were flying down the wash... she didn't always look strait ahead.

While Cole tech the driver... the truth was... I was playing a very active role. She could not have done what she did w/o me...

Later she is telling Angie about it and said... "I think dad was making the truck go."

~ For followers of Christ... we understand that the real strength of our lives comes from God. His wisdom, his power, His joy.

Q: The question for Abram is... how do I respond? How do I respond to the source of life... my sustainer.

Def a tithe

Abram looks at the celebration... the piles of riches taken in the battle... and

Gen 14:20b

Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. "

Abram's response is a practice that has its roots going all the way back to the Garden of Eden... His response was a tithe.

⇒ Titling is an act of devotion

Def:

A tithe is the act of giving back to God the first tenth of what we have received as income. Whether it was crops harvested, or live stock, or a pay check. Different in different cultures... It is something God has asked for throughout scripture

A tithe is never done flippantly... You can sing a song, do a simply act of service... say a prayer, put a few bucks in the plate (All of which are important) BUT we've all done them mindlessly or w/ a casualness that didn't match

Q: Ever fall asleep while praying? Yea me too. It happens... but I've never fallen asleep writing my tithe check.

No one tithes casually or flippantly... it is always a deliberate act... that is meaningful to God.

Loading Up

Picture Abram in these moments... This is not like he's slipping Melchizedek a couple bucks under the table...

He's taking a tenth of all the spoils from this battle... this is the spoils collected from several cities by these four kings. This would have meant loading up wagons... using animal to haul it... Everyone would have noticed what was happening.

~ What an expression to 318 men who fought for Abram. What an example of humility to the hostages who had been rescued. Think of the kings who had lost their cities and now have control of them again.

⇒ Fundamentally, tithing is one of the greatest acts of devotion we ever make...

It is a tangible act of putting God first in my life.

Personal I want to share a passage of scripture that has helped me understand the great value of tithing...

It has increased my joy in tithing. It's found in Lev 27

This is a chapter that is seemingly very boring... it is walking through the technical methods of the Hebrews for handling a tithe, how to handle property exchanges in the year of the Jubilee, how to devote things.... Then it makes this statement revealing something of God's heart.

Lev 27:30

'A **tithe** of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.

This is holy to God... This is an act of worship and honor to God.
This is important to God.

Homemade Card from Chan

To anyone else this may or may not be valuable... but they are to parents... It was something that he did that was a gift to me... He did it for me.

T>>

So picture this moment following the Battle. What will happen? How will Abram respond?

Walk over to table w/ Lord's supper elements covered

~ Melchizedek brings out the bread... a symbol of God provision and a foreshadowing of Christ's body.

~ He brings out the wine... a symbol of God's power and the foreshadowing of Christ's blood shed on the cross.

He's pointing Abram back to the God he loves. The God who loves him and sustains him.... He's saying don't miss the opportunity you have to do love God as a devoted one.

Next week we will be sharing the Lord's Supper... we will share in the bread and the cup... It will be an opportunity for all of us to come to this table as a tithers... To love God as devoted ones.

Desire

Consideration:

If you have never tithed as a life-style.

I would like you to put that out as an issue before you and God. Pray... ask Him... See if he doesn't put a desire in your heart. To tithe.

I believe God puts that desire in our heart...

~ It doesn't mean it isn't easy. It always feels risky. Tithing requires faith...
God can I still make it financially if I giving up the first 10 percent?

⇒ Tithing is one of the greatest acts of devotion we ever make...

It is something we desire as Christ followers... As much as Chandler loves to make gifts for me.

So... for many of you next week may be the first time you come to this table not just as a Christian... but as a deeply devoted one... Bring your first tithe as an act of worship... and experience the Lord's Supper from a whole new perspective.