

Our God is Patient

I have been a Christian all my life. I went to Sunday School, taught Sunday School, joined a youth group, went to a Lutheran College, married a Lutheran boy, and brought my kids to Sunday School. I thought God was good, knew Jesus loved me and tried to follow the golden rule.

But . . . when it came to giving offering, I actually had a bitter heart. My husband and I were pretty poor in our early days. My husband's job did not pay well. I had to work at a job I hated, and our kids ate generic mac & cheese for years.

Every Stewardship Sunday, requests for money or talk of tithing would stir up the bitterness in me. We've given enough of ourselves to the church . . . We don't have any extra to give. I have to work at a job I hate just to eat generic mac & cheese.

This bitter attitude went on for years - all the while attending and being involved in Church, Sunday School, Bible Studies, etc.

I think the change started when I was at a low point. I had just been laid off, was spiraling into more self pity and financial despair. During that time, a friend, one of those friends from Church, shared with me about her practice of doing a gratitude journal. WOW! What a powerful tool! Instead of focusing on what I didn't have, this practice helped me focus on what I did have. All the blessings I had been taking for granted. Amazingly, God opened my heart to see pages of blessings each day.

This practice prepared my heart to actually listen during a stewardship retreat. I heard about how none of this is "mine," that I had done nothing to deserve any of it, it is all a gift, and about God's nature of generosity. He wants to give us every good thing. By tithing, we are telling God, thank you for the other 90% (which we don't deserve). We are also telling Him that we truly trust him for our daily needs.

For me, tithing is a matter of trust. When I tithe, I recognize my dependence on God. I recognize the many gifts already given, and I trust His promises for daily bread and all his other promises.

For me Thankfulness leads to Tithing which leads to Trust which leads to Peace, and the Joy of knowing that you are held in the hands of a loving and generous God.

*Sincerely,
A Thankful Tither*

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