



The Character of God

Jesus Came To Reveal the Father

The cross of Calvary testifies to the immutability of the law of God. That **law is a transcript of God's character**, the standard of character for all human intelligences. It could not be changed, not one precept of it could be altered, to meet man in his fallen condition. (*BEcho* June 17, 1895, par. 3)

1 John 4:8—He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

The work of Christ in the world was to reveal the
Father . . . (6LtMs, Ms 21, 1890, par. 3)

Christ's work was to reveal the Father as merciful, compassionate, full of goodness, and truth. The character of Christ represented the character of God.
(6LtMs, *Ms 25, 1890*, par. 15)

In Him we have a complete offering, an infinite sacrifice, a mighty Saviour, who is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. In love He comes to reveal the Father, to reconcile man to God, to make him a new creature renewed after the image of Him who created him. (*ISM* 321.3)

- * From the cleansing of the temple to the calming of the sea,
- * From his miracles, to his instructions, his answers, his healings, his prayers, his seeking out the Samaritan woman,
- * By his parables, his example, his faith, the cross,
- * It was all to reveal the Father.

- * Good Samaritan
- * Lost Coin
- * 10 Virgins
- * Fish—Fishers of Men
- * Barren Fig Tree
- * Sheep and Goats
- * Sower
- * Lost Sheep
- * Prodigal Son

- * Luke 15:1-7—Lost sheep
- * Matthew 18:11-13—Lost sheep
- * Luke 15:11-24—Prodigal son

- * God giveth all—Acts 17:25, 28
- * Even power to get wealth—Deuteronomy 8:18
- * What we have we received—I Corinthians 4:7
- * To whom do we belong—Psalm 24:1
- * Psalm 50:10–15
- * Haggai 2:8

Our great work is to reveal Christ to the world
and thus reveal the Father. (6LtMs, *Ms 16*,
1890, par. 53)

We are to learn from Christ, now, to work to be self-denying, self-sacrificing as He was. If we have His spirit, we shall realize the worth of souls and shall work for their salvation. Our work is to be done wholly through the grace of Christ. We shall have a continual sense of our weakness and frailty and shall look to Jesus in earnest prayer for His wisdom and efficiency. There will be times of despondency as we realize our unlikeness to Christ. We see ourselves small, weak, and compassed with infirmities; but we are to depend upon Jesus, we should commit [our] ways unto the Lord and while we trust in Him, in humility, obedience to His Word, heavenly wisdom will be imparted to us to do the Master's work. (6LtMs, *Ms 16*, 1890, par. 55)

He sends the sunshine and the rain. He causes vegetation to flourish. He gives health and the ability to acquire means. All our blessings come from His bountiful hand.
(AA 75.1)

. . . He would spare nothing, however costly, that was essential in saving the soul of the sinner. All the resources of heaven were given to accomplish this great work. He would not have it said by worlds unfallen, by the universe of heaven, by Satan's kingdom, by an apostate world, that His gift could have a rival, or in any way have been greater. (*BEcho* June 17, 1895, par. 3)

We Are the Lord's

- * By creation—Genesis 1:26–27; 2:7
- * By redemption—1 Corinthians 15:22

What We Are To Do

- * 1 Timothy 5:8
- * Psalm 41:1-3
- * James 2:15-16
- * 1 John 3:17
- * Matthew 22:39
- * Matthew 22:36-38
- * Leviticus 27:30, 32, 34
- * Genesis 14:18-20; 28:32
- * Malachi 3:10
- * 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Who Paid Tithe?

- * Abraham—Genesis 14:18–20; Hebrews 7:1–2
- * Children of Israel—Numbers 18:24; Nehemiah 13:5; 2 Chronicles 31:6
- * Jacob—Genesis 28:22
- * Pharisees—Luke 11:42

Melchizedek—Hebrews 7, Genesis 18

- * V. 1 and v. 18—priest of the most high God
- * V. 3—without father or mother
- * V. 4—Abraham gave him tithe
- * V. 1, v. 18—king of Salem

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse” (Malachi 3:10), is God’s command. No appeal is made to gratitude or to generosity. This is a matter of **simple honesty**. The tithe is the Lord’s; and He bids us return to Him that which is His own. (*Ed* 138.4)

Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:13–14)

As to the amount required, God has specified one tenth of the increase. This is left to the conscience and benevolence of men, whose judgment in this tithing system should have free play. And while it is left free to the conscience, a plan has been laid out definite enough for all. No compulsion is required. (Ibid. 276.2)

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements, they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of His mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job. Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and penniless wanderer, lay down at night, solitary and alone, with a rock for his pillow, and there promised the Lord: "Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have His treasury replenished with unwilling offerings. (*Counsels for the Church* 276.1)

The payment of the tithe was but a part of God's plan for the support of His service. Numerous gifts and offerings were divinely specified. Under the Jewish system the people were taught to cherish a spirit of liberality both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy. For special occasions there were freewill offerings. At the harvest and the vintage, the first fruits of the field—corn, wine, and oil—were consecrated as an offering to the Lord. The gleanings and the corners of the field were reserved for the poor. The first fruits of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, were set apart for God. So also were the first-born of all animals, and a redemption price was paid for the first-born son. The first fruits were to be presented before the Lord at the sanctuary and were then devoted to the use of the priests. (*AA* 336.3)

How Is Tithe Used?

- * I Corinthians 9:13, 14
- * Numbers 18:21
- * Proverbs 3:9
- * The primary focus for the use of the tithe is to support the ministers of the gospel, whose main function is to be involved in and promote the spiritual ministry of the Word. (*Working Policy of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2021-2022 ed., p. 636*)

Tithe is the financial lifeblood of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 2022 the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America (North American Division, or NAD) collected \$1.232 billion in tithe donations. That represents about 45 percent of the tithe collected by the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church during 2022. (Randy Robinson, “Divine Genius: Funding the Seventh-day Adventist Worldwide Movement,” January 31, 2024, at <https://www.nadadventist.org/news/divine-genius-funding-seventh-day-adventist-worldwide-movement>)

In 1987, the General Conference held “more than \$500 million in various investment funds” (“How General Conference Investments Are Handled,” November 3, 1988, Biblical Research Institute).

By this system of benevolence the Lord sought to teach Israel that in everything He must be first. Thus they were reminded that God was the proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that it was He who sent them the sunshine and the rain that developed and ripened the harvest. Everything that they possessed was His; they were but the stewards of His goods. (*AA* 337.1)

Not only does the Lord claim the tithe as His own, but He tells us *how* it should be reserved for Him. He says, “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first fruits* of all thine increase.” This does not teach that we are to spend our means on ourselves, and bring to the Lord the remnant, even though it should be otherwise an honest tithe. Let God’s portion be first set apart.—*The Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902. (CS 81.1)

When men realize that they are not their own, that they are bought with a price, and are therefore the Lord's property, and all they have is simply intrusted to them as His stewards, they will, with **cheerful** heart, render to God the things that are His, and there will be no occasion to urge or beg for the tithe. All will realize that they are not proprietors, but stewards, and will know that they must give an account of their Lord's money. (*PUR* October 10, 1901, par. 4)

God called for men in the Mosaic dispensation to give the tenth of all their increase. He committed to their trust the things of this life, talents to be improved and returned to Him. He has required a tenth, and this He claims as the very least that man should return to Him. He says: I give you nine tenths, while I require one tenth; that is Mine. When men withhold the one tenth, they rob God. Sin offerings, peace offerings, and thank offerings were also required in addition to the tenth of the increase. (Ibid., 276.3)

All that is withheld of that which God claims, the tenth of the increase, is recorded in the books of heaven against the withholders, as robbery. Such defraud their Creator; and when this sin of neglect is brought before them, it is not enough for them to change their course and begin to work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures made in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them in trust to be returned to the Lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required. (Ibid., 276.4)

Whenever God's people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out His plan in systematic benevolence and in gifts and offerings, they have realized the standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed His requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God and complied with His requirements, honoring Him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and in offerings they were made to realize that they were not only robbing Him but themselves, for He limited His blessings to them just in proportion as they limited their offerings to Him. (Ibid., 276.5)

The man who has been unfortunate, and finds himself in debt, should not take the Lord's portion to cancel his debts to his fellow men. He should consider that in these transactions he is being tested, and that in reserving the Lord's portion for his own use he is robbing the Giver. He is debtor to God for all that he has, but he becomes a double debtor when he uses the Lord's reserved fund in paying debts to human beings. "Unfaithfulness to God" is written against his name in the books of heaven. He has an account to settle with God for appropriating the Lord's means for his own convenience. And the want of principle shown in his misappropriation of God's means will be revealed in his management of other matters. It will be seen in all matters connected with his own business. The man who will rob God is cultivating traits of character that will cut him off from admittance into the family of God above. (Ibid., p. 277.1)

Can we not discern the signs of the times? Can we not see how earnestly Satan is at work binding the tares in bundles, uniting the elements of his kingdom, that he may gain control of the world? This work of binding up the tares is going forward far more rapidly than we imagine. Satan is opposing every obstacle to the advancement of the truth. He is seeking to create diversity of opinion, and to encourage worldliness and avarice. He works with the subtlety of the serpent, and when he sees it will do, with the ferocity of the lion. The ruin of souls is his only delight, their destruction his only employment; and shall we act as though we were paralyzed? Will those who profess to believe the truth listen to the temptations of the wily foe, and allow themselves to become selfish and narrow, and their worldly interests to interfere with efforts for the salvation of souls? (T₃₂ 140.1)