

# KINGDOM ECONOMICS

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**Jesus came preaching and teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven. He said you'd better get ready because it was at hand. It was almost here. The Kingdom.**

- He came to the Jews first because they were the people God chose to reveal parts of His Kingdom to.
- Parts of it, not all of it.
- There was a mystery that no one knew about until after Jesus came; after He died and rose again.
- The Jews were supposed to be a beacon to reveal this Kingdom to all the other peoples in the earth.
- Instead, they made it a religion full of manmade traditions that they honored more than the very Word and Ways of God.
- Instead of reaching out and sharing what they knew about God, they used His Word and His Ways to isolate themselves from the rest of the peoples.
- So the Jews understood Jesus when He talked about the Kingdom; but they filtered it through their manmade traditions—they only saw the earthly kingdom not the Kingdom of Heaven.
- Even the disciples missed the mystery of one flock—Jew AND Gentile!

**As Jesus taught on Kingdom life He revealed that the Old Covenant would be expanded. There was more to the laws that they had been taught on murder, adultery, fasting, giving, etc.**

- To be angry with your brother or sister is the same as murder in the Kingdom.
- To look with lust on someone other than your spouse means you have already committed adultery with them in your heart.
- Fasting is an intimate sacrifice to be seen only by Abba; if your motive is to be seen as super spiritual then that's all the reward you will receive.
- It's the same with giving—what's your motive?

**The Kingdom of Heaven is founded on the law of sowing and reaping.**

- Jesus said that if you understand this law, you will be able to understand all the other laws.
- This law applies to your relationships, which addresses anger and murder.
- This law applies to lust; adultery; marriage; divorce; remarriage.
- This law applies to spiritual disciplines, of which fasting is one as well as giving.

**Jesus taught on all these topics but we will focus on giving—Kingdom economics.**

- Sowing is an agriculture term illustrating planting a seed in order to reap a harvest.
- Giving a small amount in order to receive back a larger amount.
- We are looking at this law through the financial lenses—how does this law apply to finances?

**Let's look back at the old covenants and see what was revealed about Kingdom economics.**

- Under the **Adamic or Edenic** covenant Cain brought 'over the course of time an offering'.
- Notice the wording: over the course of time—indicates a 'whatever' attitude—'I'll bring it when I get ready'...
- Notice 'an offering', again, it's the attitude and motive of the heart—very careless; no honor.
- But look at Abel: he brought the *first* born of his flock—he didn't know if he would have any more born—do you see his trust in God?
- He gave it all—even the fat portions! believing that God would bless and increase his flock.
- Do you see his heart's attitude and motive?
  
- The **Noahic** covenant required the same heart attitude and motive as the Adamic and Edenic.
  
- The first time 'tithe' is mentioned is when Abram gave the first tenth to Melchizedek in **Genesis 14:19-20**.

- Notice that Abram gives Melchizedek the tithe in *response* to God's blessing NOT to *invoke* God's blessing—God had already blessed him—he recovered all plus more!
- Then in **Genesis 28:20-22** Jacob offers a tithe to God; this is in response to a dream that Jacob had.
- Jacob is making a covenant with God that in exchange for His care and provision, he would give God a tenth or tithe of all his belongings.
- In **Leviticus 27:30-34** the tithe is introduced as *law*.
- Under the Old Covenant the first tenth is called holy or set apart for the purpose God has for it.
- The people were to return to God what was already His, and in doing so, recognize the Almighty's provision.
- **Numbers 18:21** establishes the tithe for the Levites—it tells them what the purpose of the tithes were.
- The Levites served the Lord as priests and in the temple service and their portion was the Lord and His tithe—they did not inherit any of the land.
- **Numbers 18:26** is the Levites tithe.
- The Levites were just as responsible to give their tithe as everyone else.
- **Deuteronomy 12:5-6** give instructions for offerings and tithes under the Old Covenant.
- The tithe was not the only mandatory offering; they also tithed to support a special jubilee festival [**Deut. 12**] and took a third tithe every three years to take care of orphans, widows, and the poor [**Deut. 14**].
- These mandatory offerings averaged out to be about 23% a year from folk's income.

- On top of these compulsory tithes, there were regular opportunities for freewill offerings.
- These were generous gifts that expressed the people's gratefulness through voluntary giving in response to their devotion.
- At a bare minimum they gave 23% per year, but there was no ceiling on their generosity.
- They could and frequently would give exorbitantly out of their **excess**.
- **Exodus 36:2-7**—Moses had to tell them to stop!

**How did Jesus expand giving and tithing from what had been taught under the Old Covenant, to what is expected now in the Kingdom?**

- **Matthew 6:1-4**: Giving is an intimate act of faith for the eyes of Abba only.
- When you think of an intimate act, you automatically think this is not something I want everyone to see.
- Only Abba needs to see what you do when it comes to giving.
- God has always promised reward for the faithfulness of His saints, but Jesus tells us that when you draw attention to your giving, the respect and awe you may inspire becomes your reward—thereby invalidating further blessing!
- **Matthew 23:23**: the blessing of giving is voided if integrity is not flowing from the love of God that is in your heart.
- Don't think that giving a special offering is going to rectify the unrepentant sin in your life.
- **Mark 12:41-44**: Notice that Jesus pays attention to how we give!
- If you don't get anything from this, notice this—Jesus is watching; He is very interested in how we give.
- This is a picture of the faithful giver.
- 100% all in!
- Jesus gave 100% -- all in.
- Kingdom economics is 100%; all or nothing.

**Early church leader**, Irenaeus was quoted as saying, “The Jews were constrained to a regular payment of tithes; Christians who have liberty assign all their possessions to the Lord bestowing freely not the lesser portions of their property since they have the hope of better things.”

- In Irenaeus’ economy, the tithe was actually a constraint or a lid placed on the giving of the Israelites.
- In the Christian economy, we’re free to give above and beyond the tithe because all that we have is the Lord’s.
- “And for this reason did the Lord, instead of that commandment, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ forbid even concupiscence [strong sexual desire; lust; longing] and instead of that which runs thus, ‘You shall not kill,’ He prohibited anger; and instead of the law enjoining the giving of tithes, to share *all* our possessions with the poor; and not to love our neighbors only, but even our enemies; and not merely to be liberal givers and bestowers, but even that we should present a gratuitous gift to those who take away our goods.”
- In keeping with the previous quote, Irenaeus provides examples of Christ’s law superseding Moses by cutting directly to our heart’s motives.
- Instead of a law that simply dictates a percentage of our possessions, we willingly and liberally share our belongings with those in need—and with our enemies!

**The Scriptures clearly teach that all the old covenants have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ.**

- He died and dissolved the old covenants and instituted a New Covenant that is ratified in His Blood.
- This New Covenant ushers in His Kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven.
- This New Covenant replaces and expands the commands of the old covenants.
- Tithing as we understand it under the old covenant is not found in the new covenant.
- When I say tithing is not new covenant, I did not say ‘I don’t have to give’...

- If that is where your heart is then you have a heart like Cain's.
- Develop an Able heart!

**Under the New Covenant you are not limited to just a percentage—  
10%-23%!**

- It's 100%!
- It's ALL IN!
- When you get your income you automatically think *at least 10%*--  
Lord, how much over *that* do you want me to give?

Pastor and I have proven this out for almost all of last year. When we got our check we'd automatically round up at least 10% and then ask the Lord how much more can I give?

- And according to who we owed that week [bills that needed to be paid] He would give us an amount over the 10% to give.
- Then we'd see how much we had to give in special offerings like missions, building fund, etc. and we'd give that amount over our 'tithes'.
- Here is where folks have been misled:
- If a bill is due and you have the money to pay it, but instead give it as tithes or offering you are committing robbery—that's what Scripture says.
- If you owe \$50 and you have in hand \$100, only \$50 belongs to you—the other \$50 does not belong to you.
- Give according to what actually belongs to you—the \$50.
- Pay your bills—
- And pay them when they are due.
- That's integrity.
- That's why Scripture tells us not to go into debt.
- Don't owe anyone anything then you are free to give as much in offerings as you have.
- Under the old covenant Malachi taught that you rob God by not paying your tenth.
- That doesn't apply under the new covenant.
- Everything belongs to the Kingdom—even your debts.
- So pay your bills when they are due and give as generously as you can with the faith that you have.
- The little widow woman had great faith—she gave all she had....

- Godliness – doing things God’s way -- is very profitable!

### **Implementing Kingdom economics in your life:**

What is your motive? Do you have a heart like Cain? Or do you have Abel’s heart?

- If your first thought upon hearing that tithing is not new covenant was ‘I don’t have to give to the church’ then you need to examine your heart.
- It’s not in good condition.
- Abel’s heart is desiring to give his first; his best; AND the fat portions!
- He’s not looking for an excuse to NOT give.
- Our God is constantly looking for ways **to** give...
- If that is who He is, then that’s who we are, too!

What level of faith are you operating in?

- Anything you do that is not done in faith—that means being convinced that what you are doing is the right thing to do—is not pleasing to God.
- Faith is what pleases Him.
- So, if you are just doing what worked for someone else, but you are not really convinced that it will work for you—that’s not faith; and you will fail.
- Know what you believe and know why you believe it—be fully convinced...
- If you have \$100 and you owe \$50 in debt, then you only have \$50 in hand that is yours to spend or keep as you see fit.
- Out of that \$50 you have expenses that must be met—gas, food, etc.
- What’s left over?
- **THAT IS WHAT YOU HAVE LIBERTY TO GIVE.**
- So, if you have \$50 in hand and out of that you need \$30 for expenses and needs, then you have \$20 in **excess**.
- This is where your level of faith comes in to determine how much you are going to give.
- If you have great faith—you can give it all – the whole \$50 --and know that God will provide for your expenses and needs.
- Don’t be foolish and presumptuous!

- If you are not fully convinced that your expenses and needs are **already** met, then you better not give it all...
- Give out of the \$20—some of it or all of it – depending on your level of faith.
- Only operate in the level of faith you have—
- This is the place your faith will grow because you are exercising the faith you HAVE!
- Trying to live beyond the faith you have only brings confusion and discouragement!
- You end up regressing and not growing...

#### HOW TO:

- When you get your pay check or income from other sources the first thing you want to do is determine how much of this is actually mine and how much belongs to my creditors and debts.
- A wise steward will have a monthly budget or schedule of when debt payments are due and when expenses—bills such as water, gas, electricity, insurance, etc.—are due.
- Looking at your budget schedule will determine what portion is yours by subtracting the amount due the creditors.
- From the remaining amount the expenses/bills that are due will be deducted.
- This is your excess.
- The Lord is pleased when you save a portion of your income—He considers that person to be a very wise person who doesn't spend all they make and to store up during the abundant times for the lean times that may come...
- At this point you can ask the Lord what can you give this

#### **Giving with integrity:**

- If you are a member of a local body of believers, and you should be—the main offering of your giving should go to that local body.
- This is considered 'having all things in common' as the 1<sup>st</sup> century church did.
- You should start at the least with 10%-23% in determining your best offering.
- Remember, *Jesus expanded* the limits—and He never subtracts...



- In giving to the local body of believers you are part of giving to the poor through their community closets; community pantries and the benevolence fund which helps folks in need with rent, light bills, etc.
- The secondary giving should also go first to the local body of believers to support their outreaches such as missions, special events, and a building fund for future kingdom expansion.
- Excessive giving can go to the local body or it can go to other ministries that the local body doesn't support; personal evangelizing like when you go out to a restaurant, plan on giving a large tip to the wait staff as a witness and blessing; or obedience when you are prompted to bless an individual, etc.

If every disciple gave with integrity following these guidelines, the Kingdom would be Fully funded and there would not be any need for church fund-raisers...

Let's implement these changes in our giving this year and I believe that we will all become the conduits that Kingdom resources will be funneled through into our personal lives and into our local body of Beauregard Worship Center.

- We will begin to see an abundant increase that overtakes us and we become the folks that give and cause the vision of BWC to come to pass this year!