

# *How God's Work Is Accomplished*

*A Message from Jesus Ministry*

Through His Friend  
Joseph M. Smith

***How God's Work Is Accomplished***  
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## How Does God Accomplish His Work?

Some have wondered, “How does God get done what He purposes here on earth?” There has been much confusion about how God accomplishes His work.

In Acts 17:22-26 (NLT) we read, “So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: ‘Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way [the same could be said of many today], for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: “**To an Unknown God.**” [God is still unknown to many.] **This God**, whom you worship without knowing, **is the one I’m telling you about.**

“‘He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since He is Lord of heaven and earth... He has no needs. He Himself gives life and breath to everything, and He satisfies every need. From one man He created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and He determined their boundaries.’”

It is God that has created everything! He owns everything! Because **God is love**, He has given the whole earth for our use.

God said, “...all the earth *is* MINE” (Ex. 19:5). In Job 41:11 He told us, “...*Whatsoever is* under the whole heaven is MINE.” In Psalm 50:12 He added, “If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world *is* MINE, and the fullness thereof.” “For every beast of the forest *is* MINE, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills” (v. 10).

“‘The silver *is* MINE, and the gold *is* MINE,’ saith the LORD of hosts” (Hag. 2:8). **God stakes His claim of ownership on everything!** There isn’t anything we can build or produce that God has not first given us the raw materials. God allows us to freely use this whole earth for our benefit. In turn, God wants us to partner with Him in bringing His message of the Kingdom of God to this world. (We will explain more about how this works a little later.)

God is not the one begging—as if He has needs that we can provide. God gives the Good News of the Kingdom of God freely. Jesus said, “...freely ye have received, freely give” (Matt.10:8).

## The Priesthood

To understand how God accomplishes His desires here on earth, we must go back in history many years to the time of Abraham. The story can be analyzed most clearly and accurately by starting with Hebrews 6:20 and continuing on in Hebrews 7.

The discussion about how God has chosen to do His work with human beings centers

around the different priesthoods. In the days of Abraham, we find a priesthood that was explained as being after “the order of Melchisedec.” It was to Melchisedec that Abraham paid a tithe of all he took in the battle he had with surrounding kings that attacked his nephew Lot.

“...The name Melchizedek means ‘king of justice,’ and king of Salem means ‘king of peace.’ There is no record of His father or mother or any of His ancestors—no beginning or end to His life. He remains a priest forever, resembling the Son of God” (Heb. 7:2-3 NLT). Now, “The priests [in the Levitical Priesthood] who collect tithes are men who die, so Melchizedek is greater than they are, because we are told that He lives on” (v. 8 NLT).

When it came time to bring Israel out of Egypt, God gave them a set of laws to govern the new nation. As part of these national laws, the priesthood of Aaron, and later Levi, was established. The covenant with this new nation of Israel was basically a physical covenant with physical laws and the promise of physical blessings for obedience.

## **The Priesthood Remains**

**When Jesus Christ returned to our Father in heaven, there was a change in the priesthood. The physical priesthood of Levi ended and a new Eternal Priesthood began.**

Jesus Christ has entered the Holy of Holies once for all and has become our Eternal High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. “**Jesus became a priest**, not by meeting the physical requirement of belonging to the tribe of Levi, but **by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed**” (Heb. 7:16 NLT). The psalmist pointed this out when he prophesied, “...You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek” (Psa. 110:4 NLT).

“This new system was established with a solemn oath... ‘The LORD has taken an oath and will not break His vow: “You are a priest forever.”’” (Heb. 7:20-21 NLT).

“Because of this oath, Jesus is the one who guarantees this better covenant with God” (Heb. 7:22 NLT). Jesus Christ has become our High Priest forever!

It is Jesus who has once again assumed the responsibility as our High Priest. He now has the same position as High Priest as He had in Abraham’s time when He fulfilled the office of Melchizedek.

With a change in the priesthood came the necessity to modify the law. The closest instruction we can find in the New Covenant for the support of this new priesthood is found in Matthew 23:23 where Jesus said, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done [Christians must deal justly with others, be filled with mercy, and continue to have faith

in God's ability to make it turn out all right!], **and not to leave the other undone.**"  
**Christ said that we should not leave the matter of tithing undone! We should tith.**

## **The Ministry Under the Priesthood of Jesus Christ**

We see then that, under the New Covenant, we are now under the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. The way to support His priesthood is the same as that of the Levitical priesthood. The need for tithing has not changed. We are not to leave this matter of tithing unfinished. We are to tith.

**Jesus Christ is our Eternal High Priest and the same method of tithing is used to support His work on this earth today!**

Paul shows in I Corinthians 9:3-10 (NLT), "This is my answer to those who question my authority as an apostle. Don't we have the right to live in your homes and share your meals? Don't we have the right to bring a Christian wife along with us as the other disciples and the Lord's brothers and Peter do? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have to work to support ourselves? What soldier has to pay his own expenses? And have you ever heard of a farmer who harvests his crop and doesn't have the right to eat some of it? What shepherd takes care of a flock of sheep and isn't allowed to drink some of the milk? And this isn't merely human opinion. Doesn't God's law say the same thing? For the law of Moses says, 'Do not keep an ox from eating as it treads out the grain.' Do you suppose God was thinking only about oxen when He said this? Wasn't He also speaking to us? Of course He was. Just as farm workers who plow fields and thresh the grain expect a share of the harvest, **Christian workers should be paid by those they serve.**"

In I Timothy 5:17-18 (NLT) we see that, "Elders who do their work well should be respected and paid well, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain.' And in another place, 'Those who work deserve their pay!'"

We see the Apostle Paul's instruction in I Corinthians 9:13-14, "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.**"

## **Priesthood and Tithing**

There has always been a connection between the priesthoods shown in the Bible and the tithing system. Tithes were paid to the priesthood existing at the time. Tithing has consistently been an example for those desiring to follow God. As we read, even Abraham, long before Moses, gave a tenth of all he took in the battle with surrounding kings. (See Gen. 14.) Jacob committed himself to giving a tenth of all his increase to God (Gen. 28:22). The principle of tithing was in use long before the nation of Israel was formed. Then after Israel was established, God provided a tithing plan to carry out the

work of a physical priesthood. That covenant and contract ended with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And with the completion of that Testament came the conclusion of the Levitical Priesthood.

As we transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, we see a change in the priesthood and a slight change in the tithing process. In the Old Testament, tithing was part of God's covenant with Israel and it was commanded throughout the nation. But when the New Covenant came along, under the Priesthood of Jesus Christ, tithing and the giving of offerings were managed a little differently. Instead of a command, He made it an instruction with the admonition to continue in the long, established custom.

In the New Testament there are few commands. But Jesus said, "...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). We don't have to enter into life or have a relationship with God. We don't have to obey! Our obedience is voluntary and that is one of the main differences between the Old and New Covenants. But I want us to understand that God gives His Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. (See Acts 5:32.) We don't have to be saved or have eternal life. But in order to be saved and receive part of God (His Holy Spirit), we must be willing to obey Him.

Our giving is now based on our love relationship and commitment to God and His work here on earth!

Here is the beauty of the truth from the word of God. In the Old Covenant with Israel tithing was a command. But in the New Covenant, those who are led by the Holy Spirit of God will obey and follow all Christ's instruction; that includes tithing.

As we grow in our love for God, we will want to be more and more a part of what He is doing. We will desire to give of what we have to accomplish His purposes. Our giving in tithes and offerings shows or expresses to God our appreciation for all He has done for us.

### **How Should the Gospel Message be Financed?**

If Truth is given to us so freely, how does God carry out His work here on earth? In II Corinthians 12:14-15 (NLT) the Apostle Paul gives some insight into this matter, "Now I am coming to you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you. I don't want what you have; I want you. And anyway, little children don't pay for their parents' food. It's the other way around; parents supply food for their children. I will gladly spend myself and all I have for your spiritual good, even though it seems that the more I love you, the less you love me."

The converted Christians will give for the benefit of those that are weak or lacking in faith and for the unconverted. Because they give, God's work can be accomplished here on earth!

## **There Has Always Been the Tithing Principle**

Jesus is showing in Matthew 23:23 that it is right and good to give a tithe of what God allows us to receive. After all, it is God who owns everything—the earth and everything in it. Yet He permits us to take from what is His. He only asks that we give one tenth to Him as a thank offering which He uses to do His work. This tithe, when given to God’s servants, will help to do what God wants done here on earth.

**The principle of tithing remains and the need for the tithes still continues under the priesthood of Jesus Christ in the New Covenant!** Yet God wants us to learn to give out of our love for Him, not because of a command.

### **A Test of Christian Maturity**

**We have learned from the Apostle Paul that new believers, before being baptized, are not generally paying for their own spiritual food. But as they mature in the faith, we find them, like the Apostle Paul, wanting to work with God, as Jesus did, to do the will of the Father.**

As a new believer catches the vision of how God is working in his life, he will want to respond by helping others understand the Truth.

So, we see why we should give. It is a sign of our maturity in Christ. It’s not because we are compelled to give, but because we should want to give to complete the work we have been called to do!

**We now give tithes and offerings to God, not because we must, but because we genuinely love God and want to work with Him!** This is the same relationship Abraham had with God. He was not required to give a tenth of what he received, but he did it as an expression of his love and thankfulness to God. Therefore, God blessed Abraham. We too, like Abraham, should give to God because we love Him and are thankful for all He has done for us! In doing so, we also will be blessed by God!

This New Covenant, in contrast to the Old, is a Spiritual contract with much greater spiritual promises and blessings. Our physical needs will be provided. God already knows these needs and will be more than ready to supply them as we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. (See Matt. 6:33.)

Many use the concept of tithing and God’s promise of physical blessing as a way of luring people into giving money. **We should never give with the selfish desire to get! Our giving should be motivated by our love for God!** This love should flow from a deep desire to help God accomplish His work of proclaiming the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom!

This is why tithing is not commanded in the New Covenant. The New Covenant is based on a love relationship with God! God knows better than any of us that He can’t force or command anyone to love Him. Love can’t be demanded of anyone!

Do you say that you have faith in God and love Him? “Even so [your] faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, ‘Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works’” (Jas. 2:17-18). **We Christians cannot simple say we believe and love God and not demonstrate by our works that we believe and trust Him!**

So, you see, **whether you tithe or not is a test of your maturity in Christ and your love for God!** Do you love God enough to want to join with Him in helping others discover the wonderful knowledge of the TRUTH that He has so freely shared with you?

**God’s principles in the New Covenant are simple, straightforward, and driven by our union with Him through the Holy Spirit. We are driven by God’s love in us! Therefore, we love God; that is why we give! God’s spirit in us creates a great love for Him and a yearning to do HIS WILL!**

### **Paying it Forward**

Now Jesus our High Priest set us the example in how to give. He entered the Holy of Holies once for all of us. He laid down His life on the “heavenly altar” as the sacrifice for our sins. He paid the greatest price for us and set the ultimate example of giving. We can’t pay that price. Jesus already paid it for us. Jesus said, “This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12-13). He set us the example that we should follow in His footsteps (I Pet. 2:21).

Jesus, our Eternal High Priest, has given us the original example of **PAYING IT FORWARD!**

You can’t pay for your own salvation. Jesus Christ has already paid that price. You can’t pay for your own understanding of the TRUTH because Jesus is Truth and He was given to you freely. You are told, “...freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8). You can’t pay your own way into salvation or into a closer relationship with the Father, but you can help others receive the gifts and blessings you have been given!

This is why we offer everything on our website free with no obligation. Others have already given of themselves on your behalf! Some have spent their lives giving tithes and offerings in obedient service to our Lord and Master so you could hear the Good News about the Kingdom of God and all that pertains to Jesus. They, like Christ, have given freely so you can receive the TRUTH from God without charge!

There was an example of a person at an espresso stand who, during the winter holidays, paid for the coffee drink for the car behind him. When that car pulled up, the occupant was told that his drink was paid for by the person before him. He was asked if he wanted to pass it on to the person behind him. And he did, so this tradition was carried on for several weeks by every car that pulled up for coffee at that espresso stand.

This is the essence of giving under the New Covenant and the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. We give freely in tithes and offerings following the example of Jesus so others will come into the knowledge and understanding of the TRUTH. We give so the task of bringing the Gospel to others can be accomplished!

## How to Give Offerings

Around Palestine, in the days of the Apostle Paul, they were having a difficult drought. The Churches in Greece wanted to help their fellow Christians around Jerusalem by taking up a special gift or offering because of this drought. Paul instructed them about how to prepare and to give this offering. What they gave was on top of, or above, their regular tithes. “Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. **You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. As the Scriptures say, ‘Godly people give generously to the poor [to the spiritually poor as well]. Their good deeds will never be forgotten’**” (II Cor. 9:6-9 NLT). **The emphasis here is on having plenty left over to share with others. The fruit of this giving results in having both physical and spiritual blessings to give to others!**

**Isn’t God’s way of love under the New Covenant a wonderful way to live? You will never be able to out give God!**

Jesus goes on to show us that we should not get too attached to money. Let it come to us and flow from us as God directs. In Luke 12:15-21 Jesus said, “...Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.’ And He spake a parable unto them, saying, ‘The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, “What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?” And he said, “This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.’” But God said unto him, “*Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?*” **So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.**”

## Can a Person Steal from God?

God said in Malachi 3:8-10, “‘Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me.’ But ye say, ‘Wherein have we robbed Thee?’ **In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith,**’ saith 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.***”

How can a man rob God in tithes and offerings when the direct command to tithe no longer exists? Do we need a command to do everything in life? Is the threat of death the only thing that motivates us to action? We are disobedient when we fail to follow the instructions and recommendations of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has not commanded tithing under the New Covenant. He did, however, say, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone” (Matt. 23:23). We should be sure we understand the principle parts of God’s laws—judgment, mercy and faith. But the other matter of tithing should not be left undone under the New Covenant.

What does this mean for us today?

The topic of tithing is directly connected to the topic of faith. Surely if you do not have the faith to believe that God will bless you and take care of all your needs then you will not be giving the first ten percent of your earnings to God to do His work.

So, for most, tithing comes down to our ability to believe and trust God to supply our every need even after we have tithed to Him.

Jesus said not to leave tithing undone. Yet He didn’t command it and there is a very important reason for not commanding tithing in the New Covenant. It is so you would have room for blessings because you are willing to go above and beyond the minimum you were asked to do.

Let me explain by Christ’s own example in Luke 17:7-10 (NKJV), “And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. **So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’**”

Now do we see and understand? If tithing were commanded under the New Covenant, we would still be unprofitable servants even after we tithed! As it now stands, **we can be profitable servants by doing more than is commanded of us!**

Trust God, go above the minimum, and you too can be a profitable servant!

### **If Tithing is not Commanded, How Does Not Tithing Become Sin?**

The answer to this question is found in James 4:17, “**Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**” As we grow in the grace and

knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we come to realize that we should be giving to support the work God is doing. Then, **if we resist the inspiration of the Holy Spirit when we know we should be tithing, it becomes sin for us not to do so and, at this point, we would be robbing from God.** God expects Christians to tithe to accomplish His work here on earth, but He does not command it, thereby allowing us the opportunity to inherit eternal blessings and rewards for being His faithful servants.

In the New Covenant, our relationship with God is based on how we respond to God's total love for us. Tithing has always been an excellent example and tradition for all believers in God. The principle of tithing was in force long before the nation of Israel was formed, as we saw in the lives of Abraham and Jacob. They gave a tenth of their increase to God. (See Gen. 14, 28:22.)

### **How God Accomplishes His Work on Earth**

The work of God is carried out through faithful, dedicated worshipers of God who have learned to trust God in everything. God shows us in Isaiah 55:10-11, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: **So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.**" If God has sent His Word into your heart and mind, He expects it to achieve what He pleases!

We have been shown what needs to be done from the Words of Jesus, "**He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water**" (John 7:38). **Out of those who believe Jesus will flow everything the Father needs to do His work here on earth!**

Therefore, it is our responsibility to do the will of the Father. "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak [also meaning the weak spiritually], and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, '**It is more blessed to give than to receive**'" (Acts 20:35).

"And a servant who knows what the master wants, but isn't prepared and doesn't carry out those instructions, will be severely punished. But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. **When someone has been given much, much will be required in return;** and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required" (Luke 12:47-48 NLT).

### **I Can't Afford to Tithe or Give to God**

When a person says, "I can't afford to give to God right now" he actually is saying, "I don't have enough faith to tithe to God," or "I don't believe God will bless me for being willing to partner with Him in performing His work on earth."

**So, do you believe God? Do you trust that God will bless you and take care of your needs as you serve Him?** God says, “‘Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and **prove Me now herewith,**’ saith 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*’” (Mal. 3:10). Jesus went on to say in Matthew 9:29, “...**According to your faith be it unto you.**”**

God has given everything to us and we say, “We can’t afford to give to Him”!  
People haven’t been giving to God and this is why they find themselves lacking.

**Once we come to understand the knowledge of this truth, we can’t afford not to tithe! Tithing is the only way out of our distresses!**

If you are lacking and have needs, take God up on His challenge and give Him the first ten percent of your income. Then watch to see what God can do with the rest of your income!

Be willing to put God to the test! Do what He says and see that God is faithful! Being involved with what God is doing is a test and challenge for all Christians! We are told, “...The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17). And, “...the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Heb. 10:38).

Jesus said, “...**when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?**” (Luke 18:8). We live in a faithless generation. Will we believe God?

In Luke 16:10-11 (NLT) Jesus shows us, “If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?”

## **Giving to God Requires Faith**

Christ’s disciples wanted to increase their faith so Jesus told of a story in Luke 17 about a man and his servant. The principle of the story was that, if you do the minimum required of you, then consider yourself an unprofitable servant. But your **faith is increased if you go above and beyond what is asked or needed.** This is one reason tithing is not spelled out as a direct command in the New Covenant as it was in the Old Covenant.

It takes faith to be willing to follow Christ’s examples and instructions regarding giving. We see in Hebrews 11:6 that, “...without faith *it is impossible to please Him:* for **he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.**” In Hebrews 13:5-6 (NKJV) we read, “*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have.* For He Himself has said, ‘**I will never leave you nor forsake you.**’ So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”

God's Spirit then inspires His people to join Him in His work. By contributing from what they have, they accomplish His goals and purposes. God has chosen to use human beings as His servants to carry out the work He is doing.

To preach the message without charge doesn't mean that the message costs nothing. There is much expense in providing the Gospel. We should be willing to lay down our lives in sacrifice to help others learn the TRUTH!

We are told in Matthew 6:21, "**For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**"

So I encourage every one of you to step out in faith and follow the desires of our Father. He wants to share with you the work He has yet to do. **Be bold and fearless, trusting in God to supply all your personal needs as you work hard to do His will!**

**A loving relationship cannot be commanded, but God makes available ways for us to show our love for Him by providing the opportunity for us to give freely to Him.**

When we are in love with someone, we show our love to him by giving him gifts; our relationship with God is no different! As we do these acts, our love and faith in God will grow!

"If you know these things, happy [blessed] are you if ye do them" (John 13:17).

To Contact Us:

*A Message from Jesus Ministry*

P. O. Box 4483

Bethel Station

Spanaway, WA 98387

[www.ameessagefromjesusministry.org](http://www.ameessagefromjesusministry.org)

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