

BEYOND

The Principle of First – Message 2

Announcements

2019 Community Series // Kicks-off in January // Small Group Host, you should have received an email with a video of Pastor Steve asking you to commit to hosting a group during the *Above The Noise* community series. Check your email and let us know if you will host an *Above The Noise* group. Also, begin to identify those in your group who will step out and host a group during the series. Email smallgroups@churchoftheking.com or call 985-292-3135 if you did not receive the email.

Warm-up

Who is the most generous person you know? In five words or less, how would you best describe this person?

Bottom Line

The *Principle of the Firstborn* helps us better understand the *Principle of Tithing*. Tithing means putting God first.

Word and Application

Last week we learned about God's vision for Church of the King. As we embark on the *Beyond* journey, we believe *God is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think* according to **Ephesians 3:20**. We also learned that the God-given vision for our own life is always bigger than ourselves, impossible to accomplish without His help, and always compelling. This week, in the second message of the *Beyond* series, we will focus on the *Principle of Tithing* and how we are most like God when we give.

The Principle of the Firstborn

- **Read Exodus 13:2, 12-15, Hebrews 9:12 and Titus 2:14.** God commanded that the “firstborn” be sacrificed or redeemed. The *Principle of the Firstborn* teaches that a firstborn from a clean animal (lamb) should be sacrificed, but a firstborn from an unclean animal (donkey) should be redeemed.

Were we born clean or unclean? Was Jesus born clean or unclean? The “clean” Jesus had to be sacrificed so that the unclean (mankind) could be redeemed. What does it mean to be redeemed?

JESUS IS GOD’S TITHE

The Principle of Tithing

- **Read Exodus 23:19 and Proverbs 3:9, 10.** The first fruits must be offered to honor the Lord with our possessions. We bring the tithe first, not last. That always takes faith. God gave Jesus while we were yet sinners. Do you see the relationship between the *Principle of the Firstborn* and the *Principle of Tithing*? Tithing means putting God first.
- **Read Genesis 4:3-5.** Did Able bring the “firstborn” of his flock? What was Cain’s offering? The Bible does not say that Cain brought the “first fruits,” but rather it says “an offering.” Cain brought *what* he wanted *when* he wanted. Why *couldn’t* God receive Cain’s offering?
- **Read Matthew 6:21.** God can’t be second. He’s first in the universe. When Cain brought an offering that wasn’t first, God couldn’t accept it. We can always discover what we truly treasure by knowing who or what we put first. That’s where our heart will be. Why must the tithe be first?
- **Read Malachi 3:10, 11.** Notice that God never says “give” when He talks about tithing. He always uses the word “bring” because we cannot “give” what does not belong to us. We can only bring it or steal it. Where are we to *bring* the tithe? What are God’s promises to us when we bring all the tithe into the storehouse? Did you know that tithing is the only area that we can test God? What is the difference between the tithe and an offering?
- We learned from this message that we tithe out of **love** and not law. Love denotes relationship while the law demands we follow rules. How does tithing enhance our relationship with God?

Life Challenge

If you struggle with tithing, you are not a bad person. Pray to put Jesus first in every area of your life. What new revelations on tithing have you received from this message? What beliefs about tithing have been confirmed?

Prayer

Father, we thank You that you showed Your limitless love to us by giving Jesus to be our Redeemer. He truly is *the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!* We pray that Jesus would hold first place in every area of our life. Help us, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to honor You with all that You have given us. Pray for the specific needs of your small group.