

August 1, 2020

I NEVER USE THE ENVELOPE!

"I never use the envelope when I give my tithe," said Jennifer (not her real name) to the pastor who was giving her Bible studies. She was a graduate student at John Hopkins University in the Washington, D.C., area, and the pastor was trying to explain to her the importance of the envelope. Jennifer answered that by her anonymity she was preventing the temptation to show herself as generous, thus losing God's blessings.

"You are right in trying to avoid parading yourself," said the pastor, "but at least two things may happen if you return your tithe anonymously and without any envelope," he said.

"First, it will be impossible for the church to provide you with a receipt," he explained, adding that the Adventist Church operates a worldwide, reliable auditing system, in which receipts are a very important part of the church's accountability. "All those who deal with the church's funds are regularly audited by persons outside their own organizations," he said. "But if you do not expect a receipt, which is your right, how can the auditors check if the tithe funds are being handled as intended?" questioned the pastor.

"Another thing," he added. "You know that the amount you gave can be considered God's tithe only if it is 10 percent of your income and applied according to His specific direction—exclusively for the support of the approved ministry [see Num. 18:21, 24]. But if you miss to stipulate that this is God's tithe in the envelope, the church's treasurer may record it differently, giving it to another destination. It would then no longer be tithe!" he said.

So, two aspects are very important when you give: first, you must write your name on the envelope, entitling yourself to receive a receipt; and second, you need to identify God's tithe or offerings on the envelope, assuring that the funds will reach the correct destination, as established by the Lord—a God of order and truth!

APPEAL: As we worship the Lord with tithes and offerings today, let us be sure that we are facilitating for the church to be accountable and transparent, imitating the Lord, a faithful and true God!

PRAYER: Please, Lord, accept what we bring to worship You today! Amen.

