



SABBATH 15—APRIL 13, 2024

The Greatest Purpose of Faithfulness

Proverbs 23:26—“My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.”

Today’s scripture describes God’s greatest interest. He wants our hearts, which have turned away from Him because of sin, to return to Him. We could call it a “character transformation.”

Carefully read the following quote from Ellen G. White: “This tithing system, I saw, would develop character, and manifest the true state of the heart” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 237).

This is the true purpose of faithfulness: to develop character and manifest what truly rules our hearts. We need to understand that the “use” of tithes and offerings is one thing, and the “purpose” of tithes and offerings is something completely different. Tithes and offerings are used to advance the cause of God, but the purpose of returning tithes and offerings is the development of our character.

So, when we talk about faithfulness in church or to our children, we shouldn’t just argue that God’s cause needs resources and that the mission needs to advance and, therefore, we need to be faithful. What we really should emphasize is how selfishness takes over our hearts when we are not faithful to God.

Imagine, for example, a child who receives an allowance of ten dollars from his parents and returns one dollar of tithing and another dollar of offering. Over five years, she will have returned sixty dollars of tithe and another sixty dollars of offering. This money certainly will not cause a great impact on the preaching of the gospel in the world, but it can cause a great impact on the character of this child over five years.

What is most important to God is not the monetary difference our offering will make, but the difference it will make in revealing where our treasure truly is. Therefore, I am faithful not because I will get something back, nor because God’s cause depends on me, but because I understand the role of faithfulness in transforming my character.

Appeal: Ask God to help you understand the importance of faithfulness to character formation and transformation. Ask Him to help you be faithful in all aspects of life, including in your tithes and offerings and helping those in need.

