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April 18, 2020

## TWO PRINCIPLES ON GIVING

Martha, a new believer, understands that tithes and offerings are not to be controlled by emotions, impulses, projects, or human sympathy, but should be vowed to be given from a fixed principle, as regularly as her income (God's blessing) is. She knows that in God's plan, both tithes and offerings are indispensable for preparing the world for His second coming. She also knows that God specified the tithe as being 10% of her income. "But how much am I supposed to vow as offerings?" she asked Jackie, her Bible study teacher.

Jackie told her that Paul established the Principle of the Purpose, suggesting that we should purpose in our hearts something to give (2 Cor. 9:7). "Some vow a fixed amount to be given regularly," said Jackie, "but there is a problem in this case: how to keep the vow if the income stops or if you lose your job? On the other hand, if our income is variable, or if it increases, a fixed amount may not express your gratitude appropriately."

"Another principle," explained Jackie, "is the Principle of the Proportion. The Bible suggests that we should give offerings 'according to the blessing' (Deut. 16:17), or according to the prosperity (1 Cor. 16:2)—which becomes easier

if we give in proportion (%) to the blessing. In this fair percentage-based system of offerings, those who earn more, give more; those who earn less, give less; and those who earn nothing, give nothing, and are considered 'truly faithful!'"

Then, Jackie quoted Ellen G. White, when she says that "according to the amount bestowed will be the amount required", (*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 99). God's messenger also said that "in the Bible system of tithes and offerings the amounts paid by different persons will of course vary greatly, since they are proportioned to the income... (*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 73)".

"You may prayerfully vow a percentage of your income to be given as a regular offering," said Jackie, "as regularly as are God's blessings."

**APPEAL:** God also calls us to give offerings regularly (every time He blesses us) and systematically (proportionally), as an answer to His blessings!

**PRAYER:** Lord, please, accept the offering of our heart today! Amen!

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