

# What GOD said about GIVING...

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**W**hen the church began on the day of Pentecost, one hundred and twenty believers who were assembled in the upper room came down to the streets of Jerusalem as **ONE** body, *welded* together by the Holy Spirit. Thus began the New Testament *invisible* church led by the "*Comforter*" that was promised to come (JOHN 14:16).

*Then Peter preached, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost...*** (ACTS 2:37-40).

God added to the church about three thousand souls that day. Later, their numbers increased again to an additional five thousand that **believed** (ACTS 4:4).

There was no "*covetousness*" among these new babes in

Christ for they all were of **ONE** spirit, **ONE** heart and **ONE** mind. They were **ALL** of **ONE** accord, mixed with the *sacrificial* love of God in their heart:

"And **ALL** that believed **were together**, and had **ALL THINGS COMMON**; And sold their possessions and goods, and **parted them to ALL men**, as every man had **NEED**. And they, continuing daily with **ONE ACCORD** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and **singleness** of heart, praising God, and having favor with **ALL** the people. And **the Lord added to the church** daily such as **should be saved**" (ACTS 2:44-47).

*God's* invisible church has not changed. Although we are **few** in number, we are still in **ONE ACCORD**.



**“DISTRIBUTING to the NECESSITY of saints”**

As the church grew, they continued to be “...of **ONE** heart and of **ONE** soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed **was his own**; but they had **ALL THINGS** common” (ACTS 4:32).

**“Neither was there any among them that lacked**: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses **sold them**, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them [THE MONEY] down at the apostles' feet: and **DISTRIBUTION** was made unto every man according as he had **NEED**” (ACTS 4:34-37).

The believers were *instructed* to *distribute* “...to the *necessity of saints*” [THE BRETHREN] (ROMANS 12:13) and also *instructed* to **labor**, working with our hands

“...the thing which is **GOOD**, that [WE] may **HAVE** to **GIVE** to him that **NEEDETH**” (EPH. 4:28).

But then, **false brethren** entered in among the believers: “...*certain men crept in unawares...ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness* [CHARACTERIZED BY LUST; LEWDNESS; DISREGARDING ACCEPTED RULES AND STANDARDS]” (JUDE 1:4), “*having eyes FULL of adultery...beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices*” (2 PETER 2:14).

Even Paul **WARNED** the church that after his death, “*shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things* [DISTORTIONS; MIS-INTERPRETATIONS], *to draw away disciples after them*” (ACTS 20: 29, 30).

They began to change the “*true*” character of the *invisible church* by referring to it as a “*physical building*” and practiced the deeds of the **Nicolaitanes** (REV. 2:6) by establishing a “*laity*” to *rule* the congregation. By doing so, they also created a “*need*” for *financial support*, while “*stealing*” from the “*collection*” as **Judas Iscariot** stole from the bag (JOHN 12:4-6).”

They use Malachi 3:10 to persuade the unstable and unlearned into giving: “*bring ye all the tithes into the*

*storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house.*” The **TRUTH** is that the “*tithes*” are **NOT** for the body of Christ, but for *the tribe of Levi* only, because God *gave them no inheritance* in the land of Israel. He, alone, was their inheritance (EZEKIEL 44:28).

But, *being deceived*, many religious people today are pouring millions of dollars into the hands of these *covetous* individuals who are ignoring the *needs* of the congregation.

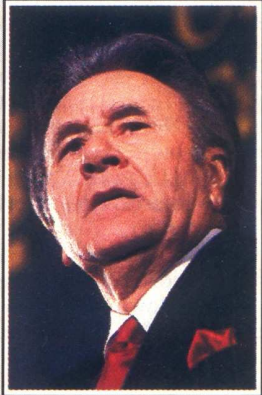
Men and women are creating “*ministries*” for their *own purposes* because they “...*loveth to have the preeminence* [FOND OF BEING FIRST] *among them*” (3 JOHN 1:9). According to Peter, “...*through covetousness shall they with feigned* [ARTIFICIAL] *words make merchandise of you*” (2 PETER 2:3).

God has already announced that their judgment “*lingereth not*” and their damnation “*slumbereth not.*”

But what about **YOU**? Are you going to con-



**January 19, 1987**



■ “We’re at the point where God could call Oral Roberts home.” Evangelist Oral Roberts, 68, saying he may die soon unless followers donate \$4.5 million to a scholarship program for his Tulsa medical center.



tinue *marching right along with them* into the ditch (MATT. 15:14)? Call on God and believe His Word by *faith* without wavering.

“*If the Son therefore shall make you FREE, ye shall be FREE INDEED*” (JOHN 8:36).

“And all that believed were together...and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need”