

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Genesis 14:18-20

REFLECT

The first mention of the tithe (a tenth) is seen here in Genesis 14 when Abram (Abraham) gives a tithe to Melchizedek who represented a higher spiritual authority in Abraham's life. This is such a beautiful picture of the tithe. When we present our tithe to God, we are acknowledging His authority over us and His incredible love for us in a very tangible form. Why do you think the tithe has been a struggle for many and so often been misunderstood?

All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Acts 2:44-45

REFLECT

The early church in Acts consisted of mostly poor believers who were committed to living out the teachings of Jesus. One of the tangible ways they did that was by selling their possessions to provide for anyone who had a real need. They expressed their faith in Jesus by sacrificing financially for a greater purpose. Acts 2 also tells us that the love and sacrifice of the early church was a major reason so many people sought out Jesus and were saved. List some ways we could better utilize the resources God has provided to make a difference like the early church in Acts 2.

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18a

REFLECT

God's Word confirms that everything was created by God and belongs to God. As a result we must recognize that He is the Owner, and we are His managers or stewards. But it's easy for us to feel that since we earned our money, we are the owners. Deuteronomy 8 reminds us that God has given us the ability to earn wealth, and without His provision, we would have nothing. List some ways in which an owner is different from a manager or a steward.

And He [Jesus] died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

2 Corinthians 5:15

REFLECT

What does it mean, practically, for you to no longer live for yourself but for Jesus?
