



OWING GOD

I have a tally sheet in the top drawer of my bedside dresser in a box. It's a list of money amounts that I owe as tithes. Or, at least I feel I owe them. I'd been tithing regularly till three months ago, when I abruptly got all of my hours pulled from an agency that I had worked at for over four years. Just BAM! You're done. Not fired. But done with this client. And she was my only client. The family had different plans for their mother that didn't include me. I was stunned, to say the least. I didn't see it coming. It put me in a real tight situation with my finances. Tighter than usual. You know what they say – "the tighter the squeeze, the sweeter the juice". I think what they are talking about is sacrifice. Each

I'm in a quandary about how to go about this. How do I give money that I need every penny of? I've struggled with this concept more than once in the last several years. In the book of Malachi from the Old Testament, it is written that the Lord says to test him on this concept of tithing, but I find myself wanting a guarantee. In writing. Notarized.

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse....If you do, says the Lord Almighty, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you!



I care about my credit rating. It's in my DNA to pay my bills and not be late. I'm conscientious to a fault. Blame it on the fact that I'm the first-born.

I've learned to be very thrifty. I buy toilet paper at The Dollar Store, for Pete's sake! Also, laundry detergent, paper towels, dryer sheets, lotion.... and, well, there's a whole list of other stuff that's still too expensive even at Wal-Mart prices. Very thrifty indeed! And that's all good. I'm happy for the discipline I've acquired.

I have not always been this extreme, but life has taught me some things. I came within inches of losing my house – twice – when a series of financial disasters hit me - one, two, three! Bam, bam, bam! I don't ever want to be in that position again.

I'm trying to reconcile the ideas of being a good steward of my money and giving my tithes to God, knowing that I will be short if I do. I'm stuck in logic, I will confess. I don't have the guts to test God on this.

Its part of my journey, of that I'm sure. And probably a test. I suspect that I'm like the monkey with so many cookies in his hand he can't get it out of the cookie jar. I imagine that God is looking at me, with all the fatherly love in his eyes that only God could have, silently hoping I'll get it. *Open your hand, my little child. Let the cookies go. You'll see*, I imagine him saying. But they don't seem like cookies to me. They seem necessary, like survival. And I want to see what he says I'm going to see first.

I can't Lord. I almost lost the cookies twice. I can't let them go. I can't afford to let the cookies go. So I'm stuck. And I realize I'm trying to rationalize with the creator of the universe and the one who owns it all.

I wonder what he thinks about this list in the box in my drawer? I think, *now I have another bill to pay. To God.* Half joking, I think, *should I start making minimum payments?*

Draw up a payment plan? I look up the word owe in my trusty dictionary. This one definition resonates – to have a moral obligation to render or offer. Yes, I do feel a moral obligation to offer it to him. Sometimes this Christian faith really bugs me.

As soon as the word faith hits the computer screen, it hits me that faith is what I lack. I teeter on the brink between the natural and the supernatural.

It all comes down to trust and faith, doesn't it? I hate jumping off the damn cliff. Just the thought of it scares the daylight out of me. I'm not adventurous that way. Never have been, never will be. Parachutes hold no thrill or comfort for me. They might not open. Let someone else be a crazy person.

So, the next phase of my journey begins.

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse....If you do, says the Lord Almighty, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you! Malachi 3:10



If only I could. But, this is where I'm at. I thank God that he is patient, merciful and kind.

Chris Macy July 2018 cjmacy@earthlink.net