**DON’T BE A SLAVE TO DEBT**

*“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows” (Malachi 3:10)*

In his book “The Generosity Revolution”, Paul Hatfield comments about this verse from Malachi. He says:

God tells the people of Israel that since they aren’t giving Him what they are supposed to, He is making their financial life a wreck. He loves us too much to allow us to put Him second and trust in our own abilities rather than His ability to provide. Don’t try to get out of debt without God’s help. Give first to Him so you invite Him to help.

It is not your church’s fault that you are in debt. It isn’t the fault of the family in need that God has put in your path to bless. It is not God’s fault you are in debt. Don’t rob God and your eternal inheritance by taking it out of giving. Don’t rob your earthly future by taking it from retirement savings. Let’s take our increased debt payments out of our spending money. Be aggressive in getting out of debt, but also remain committed to giving the full percentage you are supposed to give to God while doing so. Be generous now while getting out of debt so that God can bless us so we can get out of debt quicker in order to be even more generous in the future.

He raises some interesting thoughts. How did you feel reading through this? What stands out for you? Is God challenging your heart in the area of giving and generosity?

When we find we have gotten ourselves into debt what is the first thing we give up in order to endeavor to pay off our debts? Even when going to Christian financial counsellors, some recommend that you don’t include your tithe in the budget. There is the endeavor to get the debt paid off asap. While getting the debt out of the way is certainly an excellent goal, should God be sacrificed in order to do so? Should the generosity we could show others be ignored because we have gotten ourselves into debt? Honouring God first will make everything else fall into place.

There could be people in your group or congregation who are really struggling with debt but you may have no idea. By sharing God’s truth about how to be good stewards with others just may bring freedom to someone who needs to hear this message.

God bless you as you live out God’s generous life.

*(Hatfield, P. 2013, “The Generosity Revolution” Endurance Press, USA) available for kindle.*