**“Systematic Giving. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 10, 14.**

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*(Concluded.)*

There is a common objection to the tithing plan, that demands a brief notice. The matter of tithing is not spoken of directly by any of the apostles, nor are any of the churches enjoined by them to pay tithe. But the man who thinks to escape the payment of tithes by such a plea as this has overreached himself; for (1) Christ taught it, as has been shown in the comment on Matthew 23:23. That alone would be sufficient. (2) The commandment to pay tithe having been once made by God himself, it would remain in force, forever, if not countermanded, and the reason for its continuance existed as in the beginning. Therefore if there was no mention made of it in the entire New Testament, it would not affect the case in the least. And, strongest of all, we find (3) that the teaching of the apostles, and of Christ himself, if strictly followed, would lead to the sacrifice, not merely of a tithe, but of *all* our possessions! Let us read and see. {SITI April 3, 1884, p. 217.1}

Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price.” We are, as a literal translation of Philippians 1:1 would read, “the slaves of Jesus Christ.” Our servitude, however, is a blessed one, for his yoke is easy, and his burden light. But a slave cannot hold property in his own right; all that he may acquire belongs to his master. Therefore since we are Christ’s by purchase, all that we have belongs to him. Then if we give him his just due, we will give, not one-tenth, but *all* that we have. {SITI April 3, 1884, p. 217.2}

With this conclusion agree the words of Christ: “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which lacks not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.” Luke 12:33. When the young man came to him inquiring the way to life eternal, “Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me.” Matthew 19:21. {SITI April 3, 1884, p. 217.3}

We do not wish to be understood as advising all indiscriminately to sell their property. We are to be guided by sanctified reason, and not by fanaticism. “To everything there is a season;” and if we stand at the counsel of God, we shall know when the time comes for us to part with our possessions. We need not hold it all, however, so that it may be sold at once. If we study the lives of the reformers, and the most devoted Christians, we will find that they gave away nearly all they had, in their life-time, and died poor. Had they been intent on laying up treasure on this earth, they would not have given themselves so unreservedly to the work of preparing themselves and others for a better world; their interest would have been divided. {SITI April 3, 1884, p. 217.4}

At the beginning of the Christian era was a time for men to sell all that they had. The cause of Christ had to struggle against fearful odds, to establish itself in the earth. There were but few Christians who had wealth, and those who had, “sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” Acts 2:45. They had given themselves wholly to Christ, and therefore none of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own. Acts 4:32. Since then there has not been so great need, and even true Christians have not felt it their duty to sell out everything, although they held all subject to the disposal of the Lord; the Master did not call for it. “But the end of all things is at hand,” and before the end shall come there will be a conflict between truth and error, such as the world has never witnessed. Even now the enemy is coming in like a flood, and the Spirit of the Lord is lifting up a standard against him. Satan is mustering all his forces for a last, desperate struggle; he is determined to deceive the whole world. But the message of the third angel, warning man against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9-15), and preparing them for the coming of the Saviour, must go with a loud cry. Means are needed more and more every day, to carry forward the great work; and as the conflict increases, and approaches its consummation, the loyal soldiers of Jesus, realizing that earthly wealth will soon lose all its value, will know that the time has come to sell, and will throw out not only themselves, but all that they have, into the cause of truth. {SITI April 3, 1884, p. 217.5}

How soon this time will come, we know not, but it is fast approaching. In ancient times the value of acquired property varied according to the nearness of the year of jubilee. At the year of jubilee all land that had been sold returned to its original possessor. Leviticus 25:8-16. If that year were very far off, so that a man might reasonably expect to spend a life-time on land that he should buy, he would have to pay nearly or quite its full value; but if the year of jubilee were near at hand, the land would bring but a small sum, since the buyer would have possession for only a short time. Well, the year of jubilee is just at hand. The redemption of God’s people draws nigh, and he will soon “proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof.” The earth will then be given to him whose right it is (Ezekiel 21:27). Those, therefore, who are now putting their money into houses and lands, are being deceived. They are paying full price for that which is depreciating in value every day, and which will be worth nothing to them when the jubilee is proclaimed. In that day those who have still clung to their possessions, will cast their idols of silver and gold to the moles and to the bats, as worthless trash. May God grant, reader, that both you and I, ere that day dawn, shall have laid off all our treasure in Heaven, so that we may hail are expected Lord with joy, and receive an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not a way. E. J. W. {SITI April 3, 1884, p. 217.6}