

PAM
4446

No. 21

THE DEACON'S TENTH

By Mary S. Chapman

Ye see, the elder had preached a most powerful sermon on Christian givin', in which he took what I called purty strong ground. Among other things, he said we'd ought to do as much for our religion as the old Jews did for theirs, an' while it was all right to lay up for a rainy day, an' to get ahead if we honestly could, we should set apart at least one-tenth of our income as the Lord's money.

"Now, I think the elder went a leetle too far," says I to my wife, Huldy, as we was a drivin' home from meetin'. "Givin' is well enough, but I get a'most tired a hearin' these ministers forever a dingin' about it."

"Waal, Lyman," says Huldy, "why don't you try givin' a tenth—try it for one year anyhow."

"My!" says I, "as if I didn't give more'n that now; it's two shillin's, an fifty cents, every time I turn around, to say nothin' o' the contributions to big objects. If I get home with a dollar in my pocket I think I'm a lucky fellow."

"Then, I'm sure," says Huldy, with that queer little smile o' hern, that she sometimes has, "it'll be a real savin' to ye to go into systematically a givin' yer tenth."

Now, I hadn't any idee of doin' it, an' keepin' a reckonin' of what I contribute—in fact, I thought that verse about lettin' yer right hand know what yer left was a doin' was rather again it, but somehow Huldy has a cool way o' takin' things for granted, an' though the mildest of all women, she generally manages to carry her p'int.

Next mornin' I see her a makin' a book out o' some sheets o' paper, an' rulin' 'em off, and stichin' on to 'em a pasteboard kiver an' on the outside she writ in big letters that was as plain to read as printin', "The Lord's Money." This she handed to me an' said nothin'.

That very week I got pay for my wheat; it was an uncommon good crop; it come to six hundred dollars. I was a settin' by the fire a countin' it up with some satisfaction, when Huldy jest stuck under my nose that book, "The Lord's Money."

"What's that for, Huldy?" says I.

"Why, for the tenth," says she.

"Bless my soul!" says I, a wrigglin' an' twistin', "that would be sixty dollars; I can't stan' that."

"She didn't say anything, but set a watchin' me, an' I knew it warn't no use a dodgin' her, so I took six ten-dollar bills, all crisp an' new, an laid 'em in a pile.

"Yis, yis," says I, a tryin' to screw my face into a smile, an' to act as if I'd been a calkerlatin' all the way through to give 'em.

Ye see there was an awful sight o' old Adam in me. I jest set there a begredgin' that money. I most wished the wheat hadn't come to so much. Then I happened to remember what the elder had said in his sermon—that it would be a mighty hard wrench on us at first to give a tenth—that when the fingers had got crooked up a graspin' this world's goods 'twas hard to get 'em straightened out, but that when we'd become used to this way o' givin', we'd enjoy it an' be blessed in it as much as in prayin' an' readin' the Scriptures. A thinkin' on that sermon, I made up my mind I'd double my subscription for the elder's support, an' that would just take the sixty dollars.

As I harvested my crops an' sold 'em, I was astonished to see how the Lord's pile grew, an' I had to think it over middlin' sharp to know where to invest it so 'twould do most good, an' I was gettin' over the wrench a little until my interest became due. The year before old Uncle Nat had died, an' most unexpectedly had left me five thousand dollars. If the legacy had dropped down from the skies I couldn't have been more surprised. Now I had three hundred a comin' in from it, and it most killed me to take thirty on't an' put it aside for the Lord. I couldn't help whinin'.

"Now, Huldy," says I, "don't ye believe the old Jews deducted their taxes afore they laid by their tenth?"

"I dunno," says she; "we might read up Leviticus an' Numbers an' Deuteronomy an' see."

"Bless my soul, Huldy," says I, "I'd ruther pay the whole thirty dollars then wade through all them dull books. "An' then," says I, a thinkin' hard, "accordin' to what these agents that come around beggin' say, I s'pose it would be a peconary speckerlation to give to the Lord. They tell about throwin' out crackers an' coming back loaves, an' show how them is blessed in their basket an' in their store that bestow their goods on the poor. Anyhow, I've made up my mind to try it."

"Now, Lyman Tubbs, don't ye go into this tenth business with no such worldly motives. If ye do ye'll be worse than Ananias and Sapphira, who was struck dead at once. Not but that the Lord has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' and 'prove me now herewith,' but if we undertake to drive a sharp bargain with Him, ye'll find out that He'll git ahead of ye every time. No, He's given us all we have, an' I'm thinkin' He'll ask us some mighty close questions about the way we've used it."

Huldy didn't very often preach, but when she did her sermons were what I call p'inted.

Times passed on, an' I got used to givin' my tenth. I didn't squirm over it as I did; in fact, I got kinder raised, an' to feelin' liberal. I didn't sell so much as a turkey without puttin' aside tithes of it.

It happened in the summer that my wife's cousin Silas an' his family came to see us, an' I was a braggin' about givin' my tenth, an' I supposed he'd never heerd o' sech a thing; but Silas says, says he, "I've done it ever since I was converted. I airn two dollars a day, an' every Saturday night I jest lay aside one dollar and twenty cents, an' I pray over it; it's sacred; it's the Lord's money."

"Don't ye take yer livin' out o' it first?"

"Yer what?" says Silas, amazed. "It's jest so much I airn, an' the ability to airn it comes from the Lord, an' I joyfully give back to Him the little part."

"But," says I, "ain't that kinder resky? Ye might be took sick, or yer work give out; I should be a little fearsome."

"These are the promises," says Silas: "'My God shall supply all your needs,' an' 'Lo, I am with you.' They are all yea an' amen."

Waal, if I didn't feel small after that. I had simply given a tenth of am I'd sold an' grumbled over it at that, an' there were all those broad acres that had fed us, an' those big trees in the woods that had kept us warm—blessin's that I hadn't counted, an' here was Silas with nothin' but his hands, an' yet so willin' hearted an' doing so much. When I carried him an' his folks back to the city I jest filled my wagon box full o' things, an' felt as if I was a givin' directly to the Lord.

One day the elder an' his family was over to our house, an' we was a talkin'. His son Fred was a playin' with my Thomas—they was awful good friends—an' says the elder, "If I had as much money as you have, Deacon Tubbs, I'd send Thomas to school, an' ask the Lord to make a minister o' him."

"Bless my soul!" thought I, "that's the last thing I want him to be." Ye see I had other things for my boy, but I said nothin'.

My next neighbor, old Mr. Hodges, had a son who went to the city an' studied law, an' got to be a judge, an' comes home in his big carriage once in a while to visit the old folks, his wife an' children dressed to fits, an' seein' them I had a natural hankerin' for Thomas to turn out like that, I was a sayin' this to Huldy when the elder's folks was gone.

"Now, Lyman Tubbs," says she, a lookin' at me with them great, earnest eyes o' hers, "would you really like to have our Thomas jest like old Mr. Hodge's son—a breaking the Sabbath, he an' his boys, a shootin' ducks an' a drinkin' an' a playin' cards? Be you a deacon an' a member of the church an' not feel as if 'twas bigger business to persuade men to forsake their sins an' to love the Lord Jesus Christ?"

Ever since Silas was here my mind has been dreadfully took up with somethin' he was a tellin' me. He said some good Christian men had hired rooms in the worst part o' the city an' made them bright an' attractive, an' was a singin' hymns an' a preachin' to the folks, all without money an' without price, an' some sech work as this is what I'd been a wishin' my boy could do, an' jest then Thomas came in an' stood beside his mother. He had the same hair as hers an' the same brown eyes, an' somethin' told me that if he took to preachin' he'd be one of the convincin' sort, for I must say that nobody's words ever took hold of an old sinner like me as Huldy's does.

Well, my tenth money grew; half the time I didn't know what to do with it. I was over to the elder's one day an' he was a tellin' me of a school nearby which he thought would be a good place to send our Thomas—he'd noticed how crazy the boy was for books an' learnin', an' the minister said he'd a cousin livin' jest out o' the village that would take care o' Thomas, an' board him, an' he'd be under good Christian influence.

"What do you say, Huldy?" says I, as soon as I'd got home.

"I'd like him to go," says she, "an' for the elder's boy to go with him."

Sure enough, he should, an' that would be a use for the rest o' the tenth, an' Thomas an' Fred was awful good friends; they were like David an' Jonathan, an' what do you think, there was a revival that, jest like a big wave, struck that school, an' in fact the whole community, an' both the boys was converted, an' you can't think how I felt, so glad about it, an' kinder streaked, too, for I knew it warn't none o' my doin' I'd been sech a poor, good-for-nothin' Christian all my life, it was enough to set my Thomas again' the Lord.

We got the good news on Saturday mornin' an' in the afternoon was the covenant meetin'. It was jest about a year from the time that Huldy handed me the "Lord's Money" book. I remember how I got up in the meetin' then and talked, not because I'd any thing to say, but bein' a deacon, I felt as if I ought to, an' told the brethren I hadn't made no progress, an' all that—jest what I commonly said. How could I talk that way now when I'd had a year o' sech oncommon blessin', an' with Huldy beside me a cryin' for joy because our Thomas had been converted. No, I couldn't keep from breakin' down, an' thankin' the Lord for His goodness to me an' mine, an' I knew that givin' my tenth, though it had come so begredgin'ly, had been a help to me. I warn't sech a small, waspish critter as I was afore.

The next year I was man enough to divide my tenth with Huldy, an' sech good times as we had investin' it. Now, Huldy was great on what we call the "Inasmuch charities"—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one o' the least o' these," etc. She was always a findin' some bed-ridden old woman to help, or crippled child, or some other case o' need, while I couldn't hardly sleep o' nights a thinkin' o' the great West, with the foreigners a comin' into it, an' of the poor freedmen of the South, or of the great heathen world that so needs the gospel. We'd spend hours an' hours a talkin' it over, an' as we did so we'd get nearer to each other, an' I trust nearer to the Lord.

It's now been a good many years that we've been a tryin' this tenth business, an' I wouldn't go back to the old helter-skelter way o' givin' for anythin'.

Huldy has jest been to the city to see the children, an' she came home with her face all aglow. Our Thomas an' the minister's Fred, who married our Mary, have gone into business together, an' are doin' first rate; but that isn't the best of it; they've started a mission in the wickedest part o' the city, and Huldy said it did her old soul good to hear those young voices a tellin' them poor, ignorant ones of the love of Jesus, an' to see 'em listenin' an' a comin' into the kingdom.

As I'm a closin' I've got this much to tell you: If you want to be a happy Christian you must let your prayin' and praisin' an' givin' go together, an' I will say that Huldy never did a better thing for me than when she gave me "The Lord's Money" book.—*The Examiner*.

AUNT MARGARET'S TENTH

The following little dialogue by Miss Edna B. Burdick, Dunellen, N. J., was given as part of the Young People's program in the Eastern Association at Rockville, R. I. (First published in the Sabbath Recorder.)

Characters: Aunt Margaret; Ruth, a little niece; mother of Ruth; Miss Walton, a friend of Aunt Margaret's; Esther, a Christian Endeavor Worker.
(*Aunt Margaret and Ruth alone*)

Aunt Margaret—I believe some one is knocking, Ruth. Will you run to the door, please?

Ruth—Good afternoon, Miss Walton.

Miss Walton—May I speak with your Aunt Margaret, please?

Aunt Margaret—Certainly, Miss Walton. Please take a chair.

Miss Walton—You see, I am canvassing again. Not exactly another drive, but our Community Welfare Society is planning to send 200 children from the mission to a Fresh Air Camp for at least two weeks this summer. In order to do this, we are canvassing the members of our society and others whom we think will be interested in the cause for financial support.

Aunt Margaret—Certainly, Miss Walton. Ruth, dear, will you run upstairs and get that blue box in the top drawer of my desk. I'm always interested in the welfare of children, and especially those little tots who have to spend the hot days in the most crowded districts. I shall be very glad to share in this work.

(*Ruth returns with the box—Aunt Margaret takes out several dollar bills*)

Miss Walton—It's truly delightful and such a relief to hear one speak in that way, and to give so freely, too. It would be a joy to canvass if I were met this way at every home. I thank you again for your very generous gift.

(*Exit Miss Walton*)

Ruth—Is that your bank, Aunt Margaret? I've got a little toy bank home. Father brought it to me last summer. But I can't open mine whenever I want to.

Aunt Margaret—No, Ruth, that is my "One Tenth Box."

Ruth—What is a tenth box, Aunt Margaret? Is that for the soldiers?

Aunt Margaret (seated beside Ruth)—No, Ruth. The money in this box belongs to God. Aunt Margaret calls it her "One Tenth Box." Hold

both hands up like this. Now count the number of busy workers on each hand.

Ruth—Of course I know without counting. I knew that long before I ever went to school. Ten, of course.

Aunt Margaret—Now close a'll but one-tenth of them. What is one-tenth of ten dollars?

Ruth—One dollar.

Aunt Margaret—One-tenth of seventy dollars?

Ruth—Seven.

Aunt Margaret—The Sabbath Day takes what part of our time each week?

Ruth—One-seventh.

Aunt Margaret—And who commanded us to keep the Sabbath Day?

Ruth—God.

Aunt Margaret—In just that way, we are asked to set apart one-tenth of our money for his work. It is the Bible rule for giving.

Ruth—Do you put one-tenth of all the money Uncle Ned earns in that little box, and then give it all away?

Aunt Margaret—Yes, dear, and one of the happiest moments in all the week is when we can open God's box and replenish it—then I know we'll have something to give when help is needed.

Ruth—Is that why you give so much to the church, Aunt Margaret? Father earns lots more than Uncle Ned, too. He said so, once.

Aunt Margaret—It's not as much as I'd like to give.

Ruth—I wish I could earn some money, and I'd have a box like that, too.

Aunt Margaret—You can, dear. How much does father give you to spend every week?

Ruth—He gives me thirty cents for ice cream and candy. Then mother gives me twenty cents for the movies. That's for washing dishes, you know.

Aunt Margaret—What is one-tenth of thirty cents?

Ruth—Three cents.

Aunt Margaret—What is one-tenth of twenty cents?

Ruth—Two cents. But don't you see, Aunt Margaret, if I gave two cents to the Lord, I couldn't get in to the movies, 'cause they won't let me in for eighteen cents.

Aunt Margaret—Yes, my little girl, but that means you would go to one less movie in every ten, and it would be the first one, not the last. Let me see, you get fifty cents a week. Don't you think it would be lovely to have a little gift box and each week put in five cents? Then you could give of your own money to Sabbath school and Junior.

Ruth—But father gives me money for that.

Aunt Margaret—Yes, dear, but that is his money, not yours. If he still wanted to give you money for that purpose, you might give your tenth to the church in a little envelope all your own.

Ruth—Oh, Aunt Margaret, I'd love to do that. I could write my name on the envelope and put it in myself, couldn't I? (*Puts her arm around Aunt Margaret.*) Yes, I'm going to have a tenth box, too. Oh, here comes mother.

Mother—Hello, are you here? What do you think, Margaret? I just met Miss Walton out here. She's canvassing again. I should think she'd get tired of dinging people for money all the time. I simply told her I couldn't do one thing more. I've given for Thrift Stamps, Liberty Bonds, drives and drives, until I can't give one more cent, for a while at least. Mr. Brown was over to the house Monday night and asked how much we wanted to subscribe to the church this year, and I just told him we couldn't promise anything this year. We'd give when we could but that was all. You just can't, these days. Say, Margaret, you ought to have seen the show last night. It was great. I believe it was equal to— There comes some one.

Aunt Margaret—Come in, Esther.

Esther—Mrs. Hall, the Christian Endeavor Society is making a Tenth Legion Drive this week. I know you have said in Sabbath school class how happy you have been since you began to give one-tenth to the Lord, and I thought perhaps you'd like to be enrolled as a Tenth Legioner. It is for all tithers, not merely Christian Endeavorers. It serves to promote the cause by showing how many believe in it.

Mother—Where did you get that name from?

Esther—It is named from Caesar's famous and trusted body of warriors. I suppose just as we would say the Tenth Regiment. You know that legion won many battles for the king, and our legion hopes to win many battles for Christ.

Mother—Is it something your society is organizing?

Esther—Oh, no. People all over the world belong, especially many Christian Endeavorers. There are now over fifty-one thousand Tenth Legioners, and it is constantly increasing.

Mother—Well, I think it's a pretty poor time to canvass for that. Don't believe you'll meet with much success.

Esther (turning to Mrs. Hall)—What about it, Mrs. Hall?

Aunt Margaret—Of course, I'll sign. I'd be glad to belong to such a legion.

Ruth (turning to Esther)—May I have a card, too? I'm going to be a Tenth Legioner.

Mother—Why, Ruth, what are you saying? You don't understand.

Ruth—Yes, I do, mother. Aunt Margaret has told me all about it. I'm going to have a little money box that belongs to Jesus. I can put five cents in it every single week. Then I'll love to give just like Aunt Margaret does. Oh, mother, I'm a Tenth Legioner now. (*Signs her name.*) Won't you sign it, too, mother?

Mother—Well, dear, not now. I'll have to talk it over with father. It's time for him now. I must be going. Come along, Ruth.

Esther (taking card)—Thank you, Mrs. Hall.

Aunt Margaret—Not at all. It seems to me that our gifts are only a test of our love for Christ. With our gifts will go our interest, our labors, and our prayers. I wish your Christian Endeavor Society great success in this Tenth Legion Drive.

(*Both exit*)

BENEFITS OF TITHING

The supreme benefit of tithing is not the money it brings to the church. It is the joy, the contentment, the individual personal happiness it brings into the daily life of the tither. To these the money standard does not apply. They can be neither weighed, measured nor counted, yet these and not the money are what God cares for. His glory is enhanced by the happiness of His children. To think that He cares for the money involved is absurd.

True, our tithes are needed and do infinite good in the extension of His Kingdom, but His Kingdom, His Church, is made up of individuals. God especially cares for individual people, just such people as you and I.

All of God's laws, including His law of the tithe, are intended to promote the highest good and greatest happiness of those who obey them. God's laws are God's will. When we pray "Thy will be done," we are praying for obedience to His always good, kind, wise, loving laws, and joy, peace, contentment, happiness and prosperity are the perfectly natural and to be expected results of obedience.

HOW TO SUCCEED

There is only one always successful and permanent method of winning tithers: one word describes it.

Education

But to be permanently successful it is absolutely necessary that the education be persistent and unceasing; not from the pulpit alone or even chiefly, but by the continuous circulation and reading of tithing literature. Reasons for and results of tithing, experiences of tithers, the tithe as a debt, giving vs. paying, partnership with God, all these and scores of other reasons for tithing, as set forth and explained in tithing literature, are at work while the pastor is asleep or engaged in other duties.

Tithing literature occupies the same relation to education in tithing that textbooks do in the education of children and young people. What would you think of a school or college where the teachers and professors depend upon occasional lectures and talks to their pupils rather than textbooks and the study their use involves?

Price of this pamphlet, No. 21, "The Deacon's Tenth," and "Aunt Margaret's Tenth," postpaid, \$1.00 per hundred. Always give denomination.

THE LAYMAN COMPANY,
730 Rush Street
Chicago, Ill.