The Low-Down on Tithing History









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Get the inside scoop on what God said about tithing



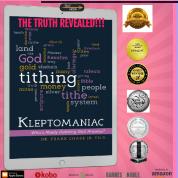
1. How Did The Tithe Get Changed To Money?

Constantine in the (fourth century A.D.) made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire and free-will offerings was replaced with various forceful means of raising money. Constantine began a huge building program, constructing churches and renovating pagan temples for use in what would become Roman Catholicism. Prior to this time, believers did not need ornate buildings because believers worshipped from house to house in the new testament (1 Cor. 16:19, Romans 16:5, Act 20:20)



2. How Did Monetary Tithing Become Church Doctrine?

Around A. D. 250, Cyprian tried to impose tithing in Carthage, North Africa, but his ideas of tithing were never adopted. In A.D 585 the local church Council of Macon in France, also tried to enforce tithing on its members, but they were unsuccessful in their endeavors. It wasn't until A.D. 777 that Charlemagne legally allowed the church to collect monetary tithes as secular law outside of the bible.



3. Who Advanced Monetary Tithing Further?

As the Church expanded Constantine's Successor Charlemagne and institutions arose, it became necessary to make laws which would insure the proper and permanent support of the clergy. The payment of tithes was adopted from the Old Law... The earliest positive legislation on the subject seems to be contained in the letter of the bishops assembled at Tours in 567 and the [canons] of the Council of Macon in 585." (The Catholic Encyclopedia)



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4. How Did the Church Force Monetary Tithing?

The Council of Tours in 567 and the Council of Macon in 585 enacted regional church decrees for monetary tithing and excommunication of non-tithers, but did not receive authority from the king to enforce collection through civil decrees. It is significant that tithing did not emerge historically until the church became powerful in the secular realm. Even at this late date tithes were still only food. Eventually the Roman Church even refused to administer last rites if it was not given wealth or land in wills.



5. What Happened in England Concerning Tithes?

Prior to the Revolutionary War, American churches enjoyed public financial support, which was supplemented by pew sales and rentals. Congress debated continued tax support for churches during the formation of America. The Establishment Clause in the U.S. Constitution effectively ended government financial support for church. Churches were forced to develop new revenue streams, hence the monetary tithe system, which began in the middle of the nineteenth century and became a financial necessity and not a biblical requirement.

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