

**Madison Heights Christian Church**  
**(Disciples of Christ)**  
**149 Main Street**  
**Madison Heights, VA 24572**



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**MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER**

No. 18

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*Open doors-----Open hearts*

Brenda Harris  
Secretary

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**Love Climbs Above**

I think the concept of giving to the Lord has a deeper meaning than most of us take the time to analyze. Recently in the *Friends* meeting I learned something new, or at least I learned a new way of looking at something. When Moses was giving instructions about tithing, the guidelines on how much of our wealth should be spent was for a celebration. In other words, one tenth was to be, as the author put it, "blown on a party" (Anthony Campolo *20 Hot Potatoes Christians Are Afraid to Touch* p. 98). I knew the tithe was a celebration of thanks to God. I also knew that the tithe is a joyous response to the blessings we have received from God. But I did not occur to me that the 10% tithe was the minimum that was required for the celebration. This means that even more was given for missions and maintenance. In addition to that the 10% requirement was from accumulated wealth not income. According to the biblical requirement, they gave a lot, and they enjoyed doing so. It was a party in honor of God.

Giving is a combination of time, physical energy, and financial resources. With most of our paychecks, especially since most of us are on a fixed income, ten percent seems like a lot. The October 14 devotional reminds us that tithing is a trust issue. If I am not willing to let go of my money and the things that it can buy then I am not fully trusting God. It is God that provides our resources. So then, tithing is a matter of testing our trust in God's provisional care. Well, if we are disciples, then we make disciples and teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded (Matthew 28:19-20), we worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), and we store up our treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20). If we are truly then we obey God's commands.

In Deuteronomy chapter 8 it is taught that during the times of prosperity people are more likely to forget the Lord. The problem is not prosperity itself; the problem is the temptation that comes with prosperity. It is during the good times that people tend to attribute their successes to their own skills and abilities and forget to give thanks to God for providing for us. Jesus also taught that it is the deceitfulness of wealth that chokes out the word (Matthew 13:22). As I see it in today's society one of the of the biggest problems, we face today is that people are forgetting the Lord due to the abundance of prosperity.

During my sermon last Sunday I talked about a situation with my niece. When she separated from her husband, she needed a place to stay. We offered our home to her and did everything we could to help her financially, physically, and emotionally. We thoroughly enjoyed every moment we shared together while she was with us. It was our pleasure to help her out. The reason it was such a wonderful experience is because of the great love we have for each other. It was our love for her that fueled the motivation to invite her to join our household, to provide food, shelter, safety, and comfort. It is a marvelous heartfelt pleasure to give out of love. The reason people refrain from giving is because the focus is on the self. However, love climbs above the self. Love climbs above all else. We owe our thanks to God because God has done so much for us. We give to God because our love is sincere and out of sincere love it is a pleasure to give of our very best to God.

In Christian love,

George Harris