

THE BEST SYSTEM OF FINANCING THE  
WORK OF GOD.

By Charles V. Fairbairn

Three main thoughts are suggested by the title of this article. First in importance, the work of God; second, systems of finance; and, third, the best system.

The work of God. How much that expression comprehends. There is but one work, that of winning souls for Jesus. Anything that does not directly or indirectly contribute toward this has nothing to do with God's work and has no claim on us whatever. On the other hand, everything that does in any way contribute to the success of this enterprise is the work of God and commands our attention, prayers and support.

"Go ye," said Jesus, "into all the world and make disciples of every nation." "Preach the gospel to every creature."

Whether one teaches a primary class in Sunday School, travels a circuit, goes to a home mission field or crosses to a foreign country, he is a unit in God's great army and helping to extend our Lord's kingdom. His work will become "a passion for souls," and he is a "worker together with Him."

Many a one has been called to dry away tears of real heart anguish and, bidding farewell to father, mother and loved ones, constrained by the insistent call for help, has turned his face towards his Macedonia, where, from the unevangelized north, the rolling prairie west, the home or the foreign field, voices of dying millions are calling, calling, calling.

Brother, let me tell you, that wherever a soul has the divine love of God in his heart, "Souls for God, souls for God," will be his heart cry, till God answers prayer: and when the called one goes, a genuine Christian will say, "I may not have a call to preach but my heart cries out, Amen. Though I may not be so talented yet I am talented and I can give. You go for Jesus' sake and I for Jesus' sake will stand by you."

The work must be financed; evangelists must be sent out; missionaries must go; Sunday schools must be organized and churches built. How shall we meet all this expense?

One system of finance goes in for lazy aid teas, chicken pie suppers, oyster stews, etc. A system this is, which will feed one sinner for twenty-five cents in order to send a twenty-five cent gospel to another sinner. "Let not such a thing be once named among you as becometh saints."

This is never in harmony with God's will. He says, "Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever is of a willing heart let him bring it, an offering of the Lord." Yet God did not leave them to the mere fancies of their own minds but revealed a definite method of procedure. His system is the best system.

Abraham, the friend of God, "gave tithes of all." Jacob said, "I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." When God gave Moses the Law, ratified His covenant and ordained the worship of the tabernacle, to finance His work he indorsed and commanded the giving of the tithe, as

formerly practised by the patriarchs. This was the minimum. God demanded one tenth, at least, and no man offered of his own free will until he gave over and above the one tenth, the minimum commanded and demanded by the King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the tax in the kingdom of heaven.

Now no man would say, "I gave the government an offering, I paid my taxes." He is obliged to pay his taxes, he can not do otherwise. So it is in the kingdom of heaven. You can not say, "I gave the Lord an offering, I paid my tenth." You are obliged to do so and taking the Bible as the Word of God and your guide you can not do otherwise and be honest.

After receiving light on this duty, God's people neglected to obey and every time they did so they backslid. Hezekiah called in his day for a revival and their first obligation was "to bring in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated things, faithfully." Later they again neglected and again backslid. God sent Malachi with his ringing message, "Ye robbers of God, bring in all the tithes." Longing for blessing, yet refusing to meet the conditions, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse \* \* \* and prove me now \* \* \* saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

"Oh, but," says one, "that was in the Old Dispensation."

"Yes, but Jesus indorsed it. He told the Pharisees that they paid tithes and neglected other matters, yet did He not discredit the tithing system, but said, "This ought ye to have done and not left the other undone."

Paul inspired said, "Upon the first day of the week let every one lay by in store as God hath prospered him." Here he said, "Lay by in store as" or "give in proportion to the measure of your prosperity." Do not say, I think this means this or that or the other thing; stick to the Bible. The only proportionate giving emphasized in the Bible is the giving of one tenth—the Scripture tithe.

Now if I become convicted that this is my plain duty how shall I begin. First consider, "What am I worth now?" Naked I came into the world; then all I have is God-given gain. Say my property is worth \$10,000, I owe God exactly \$1,000 and nothing less will do.

Now this year of grace, nineteen hundred twenty, I invest myself and all I have in a hard year's work, with the result that in a year the value of my property is increased \$500. I owe the Lord one-tenth of this new gain or fifty dollars, and nothing less will do.

Meanwhile I have been shipping my hogs during the year. Feed cost me \$300; I got \$500 for the pigs; then I owe God one tenth of the net income, \$200, twenty dollars, and nothing less will do.

My milk checks for three months amount to \$500. It cost me \$240 for meal to feed the cows. Then deducting this cost I have another net gain of \$260 and of this I owe Him one tenth or twenty-six dollars, and nothing less will do.

A duty lies here which is all too much neglected. Holiness folks declare they have the real true doctrines of the word. Then spread the truth. Get right at it. Is

this being done? Not as it ought to be!

What about the Seventh Day Adventists? "Oh, they're all wrong!" Well they are ahead of us in missionary givings.

What about Christian Science? "Oh, that is all bosh!" Well the Christian Scientists are ahead of us in missionary offerings. They are more anxious to spread their delusion than many of the holiness people are to spread the truth. But I spare you.

I once heard a preacher say, "We used to ask people, 'How much do you pray?' but now we ask, 'How much do you pay?'" I would alter that a little, as a test of real salvation, make it this, "How do you pay?"

The early church believed that those who "preached the gospel should live by the gospel." We have apparently altered it to read this way, "Those that preach the gospel shall live on the gospel." That is the man of God must feed the pilgrims "the real solids," yet he himself may live on "hot air and fire."

I know where some holiness folk (I can't believe they were all holy folks) stood by their pastor to the extent of twenty-five cents in a week. Marvelous!

I know where a pastor of a holiness charge in three months paid out of pocket \$80.61, part of it circuit obligations and to live on and help meet expenses he received from the charge the enormous sum of \$59.61. Well, that preacher hasn't started a bank account.

"How shall people hear without a preacher and how shall they preach except they be sent?" God is calling the preachers and bidding them go, yet they are not going. Why? Because the church is not indorsing God's call with their dollars.

"Hallelujah! Glory to God!" Yes! What are you shouting about?

"Why God saved me from worldliness and fashion and folly—from chewing tobacco, and from booze! Praise God!"

Yes, brother, you have a reason to praise God; but say, my brother, you once poured out that money for the devil, you ought now to pour out annually above and beyond your tenth, a free-will offering into the Lord's treasury, cent for cent, every bit as much as you squandered in your sins, year by year.

But, listen! Right in our holiness churches we have miserable miserly souls who for selfish reasons desire to escape the pangs of hell in the future life, yet who while in this life for other selfish reasons grab and snatch at every dollar that rolls within a mile of them. Their old black wallets are fat with dollars stolen from God. They pull the drawstring tighter and say, "God bless the perishing! Amen!" Lord help us.

Brother, brother! Bible salvation will deliver from selfishness, stinginess and greed.

If God is convicting you along these lines (and I hope He is) let Him have His way and "quench not the Spirit."

Let us be real, Bible Christians, and ere long some of the arid, parched, spiritual deserts shall break forth with water and streaming blessings, beyond the powers of receivability or control which shall cause them to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Amen and Amen.

Newburgh, Ontario.