

# Why are TV Preachers Always Asking for Your Money?

by Denver Cheddie

If you've ever watched TBN or Daystar, it is impossible to hear a sermon without the preacher asking for donations. There are two things that are impossible – for God to lie, and for a TBN preacher to not guilt you or lure you into giving. Preachers asking for financial assistance is not wrong. The Bible makes it clear that those who preach the gospel should be supported financially (1 Corinthians 9:14). But 1) they must be preaching the GOSPEL, and 2) there is a right and wrong way to ask for money.

## The Gospel

Joel Osteen is one of the wealthiest preachers on earth. But have you ever heard Joel preach the GOSPEL? I have heard him preach a lot of Christianized inspirational messages. I wouldn't lie, many of them have blessed me when I really needed it. So I definitely appreciate that aspect of his ministry. But how does anyone get saved in his church? And please don't tell me that he prays the sinner's prayer at the end of every sermon. That's a sure sign that you don't know anything about Christianity. No one gets saved by repeating a prayer.

Most TBN preachers preach everything other than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let me tell you why. It is because the gospel is free. They can't make any money out of that. They can't tell you, "If you want God's salvation, send \$100 right now." So instead, they teach you how to prosper, how to break curses, how to walk in victory, how to live in

increase, or whatever is the latest catch phrase. That leads them straight into the crux of their message ... wait for it ... “Sow a seed today, and all these blessings can be yours”. You don't even have to be holy or living in God's will. Just give them money and your problems will be solved. It is obscene and disgusting. Many Christians don't watch Christian TV because of this. They don't have a problem giving, but they don't want to be hoodwinked into giving.

## **Greed of Modern Day Christians**

If you make a purchase online, you have the option of expedited shipping, where you pay a little extra to get them to prioritize your order. I know of one "prophet" who used this technique to make a profit. He told the crowd to bring their offerings to the prayer line. All of those who came with \$100 bills were placed in an "expedited" prayer line. He prayed for them, then he took his money and left. The pastor of the church had to pray for those with \$20s and less. That serves him right for inviting a false prophet to his church.

These guys appeal to the greed of the modern day Christians. Paul talks about this in 2 Timothy.

2 Timothy 3

1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, ...

5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Did you read the part where Paul called them imposters? He told us to expect imposters in the church in the last days who are lovers of money, who deviate from sound doctrine. He said they would get worse and worse. Yet Christians are so naïve, it is not funny. Where do you think these imposters are? Uncritically, Christians accept everything these TV preachers and traveling prophets tell them, and they don't just give their money, they give their soul. They are attracted to churches where preachers teach these things (2 Timothy 4:4). They are attracted to churches that offer them a lot of spiritual junk food, and that's why there are so many unhealthy anemic Christians today.

## **The Right Place for Money**

There is a right place for money issues, and a right balance. I can tell you that if all your pastor ever preaches about is money, you're in a cult. Even if what he preaches is scriptural, his message is not balanced. If your pastor calls you whenever your tithes are late, but you can never call him when you need prayer, RUN from that church.

A good minister will never overemphasize money. A good example of this is when the Philippian church gave a gift to the apostle Paul. Paul never asked for a gift, and he was more concerned about their Christian fruit than about his own needs being met (Philippians 4:17). In fact, Paul was more passionate when asking for funds to support the church in Jerusalem that was going through a famine. He never asked for money for himself.

The Bible does say that if we sow, we will reap (Luke 6:38; Galatians 6:7). It does say that with what measure we give, we will receive (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). All of that is in reference to money and finances. So all of that is true. But that makes up less than 10% of the overall message of the Bible. In Matthew 23:23, Jesus commended the Pharisees for paying tithes, but rebuked them sharply for neglecting weightier matters of the law. What? There are weightier matters than money? There are weightier issues, such as salvation, grace, holiness. You wouldn't believe that in this day and age of information, how few Christians understand basic things like the grace of God. But they know all about sowing and reaping.

Make no mistake, the Bible teaches us to give. There is a clear precedent for giving to ministers who teach us (Galatians 6:6). There is a clear precedent for giving to the poor (Proverbs 19:17; Acts 20:35; James 2:15,16). There is a clear precedent for giving to those in need (Acts 11:29). There is NO precedent for giving to conmen and imposters who use the church to build their person empires. There is NO precedent for giving to church building funds to construct mammoth monuments that you can't take to heaven with you. The church is not a building, it is a people. There is NO precedent for giving to travelling "prophets" so that your prayers will be prioritized or expedited.

## **Tithing**

Many preachers appeal to the Old Testament practice of tithing. You may argue whether or not tithing is for the church today. Nevertheless the principles of giving to support the ministry are clearly outlined in the scripture. But what exactly was the principle behind tithing?

The Israelites paid tithes to the Levites because they devoted themselves to the work of the ministry, and because of this they had no other means of providing for their needs. Part of the tithes was also used to help the poor (Deuteronomy 26:12). So preachers latch on to those details and encourage people to give to them. That is all well and good. But here is the part they leave out. The Levites had no allotment of land among the children of Israel (Numbers 18:24; Joshua 18:7). All the other 11 tribes had land allocated to them. The Levites lived among the other tribes, serving in the ministry. This is a far cry from the modern day TV preacher who lives in a mansion, drives a luxury car, and owns his/her own private jet. The Bible never teaches us to give to support that.

Is there anything wrong with having a big house and a nice car? No. But don't use church funds to pay for it. That's bad stewardship. The church funds should be assigned to kingdom building acts. There is nothing wrong with having nice things if you work for it or invest wisely to get the money. But there is something seriously wrong with using ministry as a means of getting rich. That's when you've gone too far. And I agree that I can't judge anyone's heart, but some of these TV preachers sure do look like crooks. I obviously won't call names.

Here is another thing these TV preachers don't tell you. They give you the impression that if you give to them, God will bless you and you will get rich like them. But that is NOT how they got rich. They got rich because many people like you gave to them, not because they gave.

## **Motives in Giving**

The Bible says that if we give, we will receive. But there is a subtle difference between giving to support and giving to get. God wants us to

give to support his work and to help the poor. He does not want you to see his kingdom as a good investment. Many Christians err on this point. When they give, their primary focus is not on meeting a need, but investing for their own reward. If that describes you, you may require more than just a change in mindset. You may require a change in heart. It may be a subtle difference, but it says a lot about the person giving.

## **Conclusion**

TBN is one of the greatest sources of false doctrines today (google it for yourself and see what comes up). It is dangerous because most Christians are not even aware of the danger. And so greedy for material gain, they send money in droves to these ministers, totally unaware that they are supporting some of the most devastating heresies to have ever infiltrated the church.

They propagate what Paul called fables and myths. In contrast, Paul urged Timothy to preach the GOSPEL, to stick to SOUND DOCTRINE as taught in the HOLY SCRIPTURES. If you investigate, you will find that the best ministers to give to are not the celebrity preachers who are well integrated into TBN's network. They are humble unassuming servants of God quietly doing his work day in and day out. If your church comes across as a live version of TBN, you would be better off finding another church that preaches the word of God.

Give to support that kind of ministry, and let God surprise you with good things.

1 Timothy 6:3-11

If any man teach otherwise ... He is proud ... supposing that gain is godliness: from such

withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

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