

Ezekiel 44:28-31—God is all we need, He is our inheritance

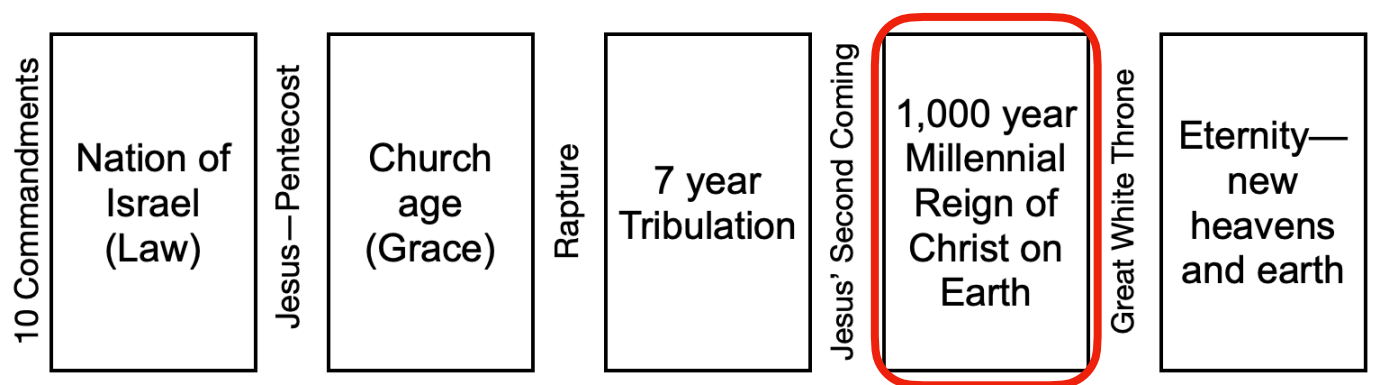
Memory Verse

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Introduction

Ezekiel chapters 40-48 describe places, buildings, land allocations, and worship that are a part of Jesus' Millennial Kingdom, when He comes back to earth from heaven and He reigns for a thousand years on a beautifully renovated earth. The chart below shows when this fits in God's plan of the ages (red outline). The vertical writing represents the events that mark the transition from one time period (or dispensation) to the next.



Outline of Ezekiel 40-48

Chapter 40—The measurement of the courts of the temple

Chapter 41—The measurements of the temple

Chapter 42—The outer court being described

Chapter 43—The glory of God returns to the temple and the altar described.

Chapter 44—Only the sons of Zadok will be allowed to go into the inner court; the other priests were not faithful.

Chapter 45—Describes how the land around the temple/city is divided up, and that the Passover will be one of the feasts observed each year.

Chapter 46—Describes the sacrificial offerings that will be made, and how the temple will be closed throughout the week and only open on the sabbath.

Chapter 47—Describes the river of living water that flows from the temple, and the boundaries of the Land of Israel.

Chapter 48—Describes the divisions of the lands given to each of the 12 tribes of Israel, and the gates of the city of Jerusalem.

Revision

So far we have seen in Ezekiel chapters 40-44:16:

- The angel give the measurements and pattern for the Millennial Temple to Ezekiel (40-42)
- God (Jesus) comes to take His rightful place on the throne which is inside the temple, which He calls "My Throne". The throne represents authority over all creation. (43:1-12)

- The altar for burnt offerings and the instructions for its consecration including animal sacrifices (43:13-27)
- The shut eastern gate and the prince. The outer eastern gate of the temple complex will be shut forever because Jesus went in there, *and He will never leave—a picture of our eternal security*. The prince (very likely king David) will have access to the chamber of the gate where he will eat before the LORD. (44:1-3)
- Only the family of priests who had been faithful in Ezekiel's day, the sons of Zadok (whose name means righteous), would be allowed to serve in the temple itself. They would enjoy the glorious, delightful, heavenly, and extraordinary privilege of ministering and fellowshiping in the direct presence of the LORD Jesus in the temple itself. The other priests who had followed the rest of the nation into idolatry in Ezekiel's day would be limited to serving the people, as they loved to do when they offered sacrifices to the idols on behalf of the people. Each of us must choose—*will I be a man pleaser or a God pleaser—will I be motivated by what pleases God, or by what pleases man*. (44:4-16)
- Real holiness starts in the heart and is expressed in; who we marry, our appearance, teaching and doing what is right from the Word of God, and most importantly total surrender to the LORD God so that we are trusting and walking in His strength (rest) and not our own (sweat). (44:17-27)

God is all we need—He is our inheritance

Ezekiel 44:28 NKJV

“It shall be, in regard to their inheritance, that I am their inheritance. You shall give them no possession in Israel, for I am their possession.

v 28 **I am their inheritance:** “Like the Old Testament priests, the [Millennial] kingdom priests will not have an inheritance of land but will have the Lord as their inheritance and be able to live from the temple offerings.” (Wiersbe)

Application: I am their inheritance (God is our inheritance)

What's exciting is to see how this applies to the church. God's dealings with us are quite unique. Similar to the Levites and priests who received no possession or land in Israel, we receive no promises for physical blessings while on this earth, and we rely on God for our daily bread, both spiritual and physical. However, our spiritual inheritance is something that we should all be looking forward to. Why?

The believer's inheritance is nothing less than their salvation: knowing God, loving God, being loved by God, being a child of God, having eternal life, forever living in the presence of God, already freed from the penalty of sin (justification), being freed from the power of sin (sanctification), and one day will be freed from the presence of sin when I receive my resurrection body (glorification)—I will be perfect in body, mind, and spirit. I will, along with all other believers, inherit the whole world (the earth) and will rule and reign with Christ for 1,000 years. After that I will then inherit a home in a city that comes down from heaven to the new earth and will last forever—the New Jerusalem.

Let's see what we can learn about the believer's inheritance from the following verses:

1. The believer's inheritance [salvation] is “in Christ”, meaning it is both undeserved and unearned and therefore we can never lose it.

Ephesians 1:11 NKJV

In [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.

Ephesians 1:11 NLT

Furthermore, **because we are united with Christ [in Christ], we have received an inheritance from God**, for He chose us in advance, and He makes everything work out according to His plan.

The believer's inheritance is **in Christ**, which necessarily means that those who are outside of Christ (unbelievers) have no inheritance [no salvation].

This verse tells us that our inheritance was given to us in advance (predestined), long before we were ever born, so it's not something that we deserve or can earn—it has nothing to do with what we do or don't do—we hadn't yet done anything when God decided to give it to us. The best thing about us having done nothing to receive it is that once we have received it, we can't lose it.

2. The believer's inheritance is guaranteed by the Holy Spirit living in us

Ephesians 1:13b-14 NKJV

You were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,¹⁴ who is the **guarantee of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

God promises in Hebrews 13:5 that He will “never leave you or forsake you”. The believer has the Holy Spirit in them to give them the assurance that the process of salvation that God has started in them, He will finish (see Philippians 1:6). Once a person is a believer, there is nothing that they can do that will thwart God's plan for their life.

3. The Father, not their good works, qualifies the believer for their share of the inheritance

Colossians 1:12-14 NKJV

Giving thanks to the Father who has **qualified us to be partakers of [share in] the inheritance** of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Here we learn that we must become **qualified** if we are to **share** in the inheritance.

Share: We can think of the believer's inheritance as a communal inheritance. Together, all believers will inherit all things; everything that Christ possessed, which is everything, will be ours to share with Him. It's just like parents leaving everything they own to their children when they die.

Romans 8:31-32 NLT

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³² **Since He [the Father] did not spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won't He also give us everything else?**

Matthew 5:5 NLT

God blesses those who are humble, for **they will inherit the whole earth.**

Romans 4:13 NKJV

For the promise that he [Abraham] would be **the heir of the world** was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Qualify: (Greek *hikanoo*: to make sufficient or capable, make complete, bring to perfection, to enable) How did the Father qualify us? What does it mean to be qualified to share in Christ's inheritance?

- *He has delivered (rescued from certain death) us from the power of darkness and conveyed us (transferred us from satan's kingdom) into the kingdom of the Son of His love (v 13)*
- *Redemption (bought out of the slave market of sin) through the blood of His Son Jesus (v 14)*
- *Forgiveness of all sins through the blood of His Son Jesus (v 14)*

4. The believers inheritance is eternal—it will never fade away or grow old

Hebrews 9:15 NLT

That is why He is the One who mediates a New Covenant between God and people, so that **all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance** God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that First Covenant.

1 Peter 1:23 NLT

For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. **Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.** ²⁴ As the Scriptures say,

"People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. ²⁵ **But the word of the Lord remains forever.**"

And that word is the Good News that was preached to you.

1 Peter 1:3-6 NLT

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. **Now we live with great expectation, ⁴ and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay.** ⁵ And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power **until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.**

So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while.

v 4 **an inheritance that is kept [reserved/guarded/watched over] in heaven for you:** it's like having won lotto but not being able to collect the money until a few months later. You eagerly look forward to being able to collect the check with your name on it, the money which is reserved for you alone.

v 5 **So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead:** Don't succumb to the temptation to think that the things in this world that we can touch and see and smell are real and lasting. Compared to the reality of the spiritual realm, this world is like a mirage; and like the illusion of water in the desert—the things of this world will never satisfy us (see John 4:13). Be like Abraham who understood that this life and this earth are only temporary. Abraham was ultimately looking forward to the New Jerusalem (see Revelation 21), and so should we be.

Hebrews 11:8-10 NLT

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. ⁹ And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise. ¹⁰ **Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.**

5. Like with any will or testament, the person (the testator) who leaves or writes the will must die before it comes into effect.

Hebrews 9:16-17, 26b, 28 NLT

Now when someone leaves a will, it is necessary to prove that the person who made it is dead. ¹⁷ The will goes into effect only after the person's death. While the person who made it is still alive, the will cannot be put into effect. . . . ²⁶ But now, once for all time, he has appeared at the end of the [ages] to remove sin by his own death as a sacrifice. . . . ²⁸ **so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again [Rapture and Second Coming], not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation [our inheritance] to all who are eagerly waiting for him.**

What we see here is that the promises of salvation and forgiveness in the Old Testament were conditional on future events. Firstly there was Jesus's First Coming which purpose was for Him to die in our place (see 1 John 2:2). Only then could the promises of salvation and forgiveness and redemption in the Old Testament (our inheritance) begin to be fulfilled. Then secondly, at His Second Coming, Jesus completes what He began at His First Coming—we receive our glorified bodies and live in the direct presence of Jesus forever.

Summary of application (from www.gotquestions.com):

"One day, we will take possession of our portion, our heritage, our full inheritance. John Calvin writes of our inheritance, "We do not have the full enjoyment of it at present. . . . We walk . . . in hope, and we do not see the thing as if it were present, but we see it by faith. . . . Although, then, the world gives itself liberty to trample us under foot, as they say; although our Lord keeps us tried with many temptations; although he humbles us in such a way that it may seem we are as sheep appointed to the slaughter, so that we are continually at death's door, yet we are not destitute of a good remedy. And why? Seeing that the Holy Spirit reigns in our hearts, we have something for which to give praise even in the midst of all our temptations. . . . [Therefore,] we should rejoice, mourn, grieve, give thanks, be content, wait" (from Calvin's Ephesian sermons, delivered in Geneva, 1558—59).

When we understand and value the glory that awaits us, we are better able to endure whatever comes our way in this life. We can give God praise even during trials because we have His guarantee that we will receive all He has promised: "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Revelation 21:4 gives us a brief but beautiful description of our inheritance: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." God and man will dwell together.

Everything will be made new. The bejeweled city, New Jerusalem, will be our residence. The river of life will issue from God's throne. The healing tree of life with twelve kinds of fruit will grow there, too. There will be no night there, because the eternal light of the Lamb will fill the new heaven and new earth and shine upon all the heirs of God.

David writes, "Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; / you make my lot secure. / The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; / surely I have a delightful inheritance" (Psalm 16:5–6). And that is why "we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18)."

Ezekiel 44:28-31 NKJV—God will provide for the priests

"It shall be, in regard to their inheritance, that I am their inheritance. You shall give them no possession in Israel, for I am their possession. ²⁹ They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering; every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. ³⁰ The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you shall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house. ³¹ The priests shall not eat anything, bird or beast, that died naturally or was torn by wild beasts.

v 31 **The priest shall not eat anything, bird or beast, that died naturally or was torn by wild beasts:** The main reason for this was that the priests were not allowed to touch dead bodies, which included that of animals that had died previously (not including those which were offered at the temple).

v 28-30 **You shall give them no possession in Israel ... They shall eat the grain offering ... The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's:** From a worldly point of view, this left the priests in a very vulnerable position materially speaking; they had no possession of land, therefore no financial security and no way of making an income—their only source of income was from the tithes and offerings of the people. They had to trust that God would provide for them as they committed themselves to working in and around the temple. Of course the priests serving in the Millennial temple will not go hungry because God's New Covenant promises to Israel include physical as well as spiritual blessings, meaning that the priests will share in the physical blessings of the nation (bumper crops, abundant fruit, large herds and flocks of animals etc).

We will see that this is similar, but not the same, to what it is like for believers in the New Testament—we also have no possession or part in this world—we are strangers or sojourners just passing through (see Hebrews 11:13). The main difference is that God does not promise the church physical blessings, except to supply our needs; but consider that Paul was often hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, and poor—obviously God knew that those material things were not what Paul needed at the time. Instead, God gave Paul contentment, peace, love, faith, and an abiding joy in his relationship with Christ. Paul really did have everything that he needed (see 1 Corinthians 4:11-13) and Philippians 4:11-13). We'll come back to the principle of godly contentment at the end.

v 30 **You shall give to the priest ... to cause a blessing to rest on your house:** "God promised that even in the period of the millennial temple to come, there would be blessing upon those who gave to God's work. The blessing would not only be financial, but it would **rest on your house.**" (David Guzik)

“The priests earn their living by doing the special work that God has given them, and their income comes from the offerings (28–30). God still calls some to what we call [full-time] service, and in giving for their support we are giving to God, as were the people who brought their offerings to the Temple.” (Wright)

Application: Giving to God of our money and material possessions

Some question whether or not a pastor should be paid. Some also question whether or not, or how much, believers should give to their local church. It’s an important question, especially considering the financial abuse and manipulation carried out by many churches. Fortunately the Bible has a clear answer.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 AMP

Let the elders **who perform the duties of their office well** be considered doubly worthy of honour [and of adequate financial support], especially those who labor faithfully in preaching and teaching.

¹⁸ For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain, and again, The labourer is worthy of his hire. [Deuteronomy 25:4, Luke 10:7]

1 Corinthians 9:1-18 NLT

Am I not as free as anyone else? Am I not an apostle? Haven’t I seen Jesus our Lord with my own eyes? Isn’t it because of my work that you belong to the Lord? ² Even if others think I am not an apostle, I certainly am to you. You yourselves are proof that I am the Lord’s apostle.

³ This is my answer to those who question my authority. ⁴ Don’t we have the right to live in your homes and share your meals? ⁵ Don’t we have the right to bring a believing wife with us as the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers do, and as Peter does? ⁶ Or is it only Barnabas and I who have to work to support ourselves?

⁷ What soldier has to pay his own expenses? What farmer plants a vineyard and doesn’t have the right to eat some of its fruit? What shepherd cares for a flock of sheep and isn’t allowed to drink some of the milk? ⁸ Am I expressing merely a human opinion, or does the law say the same thing? ⁹ For the law of Moses says, “You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain.” Was God thinking only about oxen when he said this? ¹⁰ Wasn’t he actually speaking to us? Yes, it was written for us, so that the one who plows and the one who threshes the grain might both expect a share of the harvest.

¹¹ Since we have planted spiritual seed among you, aren’t we entitled to a harvest of physical food and drink? ¹² If you support others who preach to you, shouldn’t we have an even greater right to be supported? But we have never used this right. We would rather put up with anything than be an obstacle to the Good News about Christ.

¹³ **Don’t you realize that those who work in the temple get their meals from the offerings brought to the temple? And those who serve at the altar get a share of the sacrificial offerings.** ¹⁴ **In the same way, the Lord ordered that those who preach the Good News should be supported by those who benefit from it.** ¹⁵ **Yet I have never used any of these rights. And I am not writing this to suggest that I want to start now.** In fact, I would rather die than lose my right to boast about preaching without charge. ¹⁶ Yet preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn’t preach the Good News!

¹⁷ If I were doing this on my own initiative, I would deserve payment. But I have no choice, for God has given me this sacred trust. ¹⁸ What then is my pay? It is the opportunity to preach the Good News without charging anyone. That’s why I never demand my rights when I preach the Good News. [also read Malachi 3:8-10]

One of the reasons that it's good to pay the pastor/elder is that they may have more time studying the word so that they can more effectively teach and preach the word.

Acts 6:1-4 NLT

But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food.

² So the Twelve [apostles] called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. ³ And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. ⁴ Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."

Application: Why it is so important that we give

Ray Comfort calls giving "the last frontier". Why? Most people find that their love of money, and the comfort and security that it can buy, is the hardest thing to give up. Listen to what he says:

"It has been said that the wallet is the "final frontier." It is the final area to be conquered—the last thing that comes to God in surrender. Jesus spoke much about money. He said that we cannot serve God and mammon (Matthew 6:24). **"Mammon" was the common Aramaic word for riches, which is related to a Hebrew word signifying "that which is to be trusted." In other words, we cannot trust God and money. Either money is our source of joy, our great love, our sense of security, the supplier of our needs—or God is.**

When you open your purse or wallet, give generously and regularly to your local church. A guide of how much you should give can be found in the "tithe" of the Old Testament: 10 percent of your income. Whatever amount you give, make sure you give *something* to the work of God (see Malachi 3:8–11). Give because you *want* to, not because you *have* to. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7), so learn to hold your money with a loose hand."

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NLT

Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. ⁷ **You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."** ⁸ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

The fact is that in Australia and in many other Western Countries, materialism is the greatest threat to our relationship with God.

Matthew 6:24-25 AMP

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever is trusted in). ²⁵ Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink; or about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life greater [in quality] than food, and the body [far above and more excellent] than clothing?

1 Timothy 6:10 NKJV

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

The trend seems to be that the richer the country, the less the people give, especially as a percentage of their income. The exception are the churches that manipulate people into giving through false teaching or legalism, but this money is often squandered on big buildings and fancy cars and planes for the pastors.

Why is it that we who are so rich compared to the rest of the world are at the same time so reluctant to give? Money or wealth and the pleasure and comfort and false security that it can buy is a powerful idol that our flesh loves. Scripture tells us that the mark of a believer completely sold out to or committed to God is one who sacrificially gives to God's work. I believe that Ray Comfort is correct when he teaches that giving is the cure for materialism—why? Because when we are able to let go of something, it means that it no longer controls us. If I am not able to let go of something (give something up), then it necessarily means that it is controlling me. Paul gave the “**how genuine is your love**” test to the Corinthian church who were quite well off financially.

2 Corinthians 8:1-9 NLT

Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. **² They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.**

³ For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. ⁴ They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. ⁵ They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do. [we don't just give money and say, "I've done my part"]

⁶ So we have urged Titus, who encouraged your giving in the first place, to return to you and encourage you to finish this ministry of giving. ⁷ Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving.

⁸ I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches.

⁹ You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich. [the only correct motive for giving]

Will you take the test? Will you be free from the idol of materialism? How genuine is your love? Remember that it's not the amount that matters, but what you are able to give. Consider what Jesus said:

Mark 12:41-44 NLT

Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. ⁴² Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.

⁴³ Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. ⁴⁴ For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on.”

Story: William Colgate ([link to reference](#))

"I ran across an old book the other day entitled *Spiritual Life Through Tithing* by Ernest Thomas. Glancing through the book I saw a brief paragraph about William Colgate, the founder of the Colgate-Polmalive Company, maker of soaps and dental-care products. I thought it might be useful to share this paragraph about Mr. Colgate:

"William Colgate was a tither throughout his long and successful business career. He gave not merely one-tenth of the earnings of Colgate's soap products; but he gave two-tenths, then three-tenths, and finally five-tenths of all his income to the work of God in the world. During the later days of his life he revealed the origin of his devotion to the idea of tithing. When he was sixteen years old he left home to find employment in New York City. He had previously worked in a soap manufacturing shop. When he told the captain of the canal boat upon which he was traveling that he planned to make soap in New York City the man gave him this advice: 'Someone will soon be the leading soap maker in New York. You can be that person. **But you must never lose sight of the fact that the soap you make has been given to you by God. Honour Him by sharing what you earn.** Begin by tithing all you receive.' William Colgate felt the urge to tithe because he recognised that God was the giver of all that he possessed, not only of opportunity, but even of the elements which were used in the manufacture of his products."

William Colgate died in 1857 but left behind a company that is successful to this day and a college that bears his name. What can we learn about stewardship from Mr. Colgate? Many things. Colgate not only believed in tithing but also believed in giving in an increasing measure over his life. It was not enough to give a tenth—**Colgate wanted to express his love for the Lord by giving an increasing amount to the Lord's work.** Also, Colgate heard a testimony about tithing from someone who believed in it. This captain of the canal boat undoubtedly understood what it meant to tithe and it was his personal testimony that encouraged Colgate. Finally, **Colgate recognised that by tithing he gave back to God who was the giver of all he possessed. God owns it all and Colgate learned this important lesson early in his life.**

Do you believe in tithing as a personal testimony to the Lord's goodness toward you? I think today's church would benefit greatly by sharing more testimonies about tithing and giving as practical necessities for the Christian. **Tithing involves personal surrender and sacrifice and has the potential to help us perhaps counter the rampant secularism and materialism of our society.** I would encourage you to pray how the Lord may be directing you in this area of your spiritual life. Next time you brush your teeth, remember Colgate's testimony."

Application and conclusion: Godly contentment

The secret to godly contentment is understanding that God is all I need. However, I will never know that Christ is all I need until Christ is all I have. Therefore, God must often take things from me so that I can learn the valuable lesson of not trusting in temporary things for happiness, comfort, satisfaction, and strength, but rather trust in Christ alone.

Imagine that you have just finished eating a delicious lamb roast, complete with potatoes, gravy, peas, pumpkin, and corn on the cob. It was so nice that you had three servings and now can't fit another mouthful in. You are completely content and satisfied, and no matter what other food people may offer you—chocolate, chips, KFC, MacDonalds etc, you just aren't interested. Why? Because you are already full—you are completely content and satisfied.

Now imagine that you were out hiking and got lost. You haven't eaten for a week. Now these same people offer you these same junk foods. It would be very hard to say no. You would probably eat so much of these junk foods that you would make yourself sick.

This is what happens when we don't choose to make Christ our all in all, when we don't choose to make Christ all we need and all we want, when we don't choose to satisfy ourselves with our love relationship with Him; then we will inevitably end up hungry and unsatisfied and seek satisfaction elsewhere.

Philippians 4:11-13 NLT

Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have.
¹² I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little.
¹³ For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

1 Timothy 6:5-12 NLT

These people always cause trouble. Their minds are corrupt, and they have turned their backs on the truth. **To them, a show of godliness is just a way to become wealthy.**
⁶ **Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.** ⁷ After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. ⁸ So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.
⁹ **But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction.** ¹⁰ For the love of money is [a] root of all kinds of evil. **And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.**
¹¹ **But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things.** Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.
¹² Fight the good fight for the true faith. **Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you,** which you have declared so well before many witnesses.

Hebrews 13:5 NLT

Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you."

Once again we see the dangers of materialism. Jesus wasn't joking when He said you can't serve God and money at the same time. Trusting in money and possessions necessarily means that we are not trusting in God—money has become the idol. The only cure is to willingly give it away. Who will you serve?