

# THE CHANGING OF THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE TITHE

by Richard R. Suarez

The scriptures make a deliberate effort to show that there are distinct differences between the many covenants that existed prior to the commandments of Mount Sinai, and the statutes and ordinances that followed. They also emphasize the difference between them and the "**better covenant**" of the New Testament.

Briefly, the main differences between covenants are, to whom and for what purpose a particular covenant is made, and for how long it is in effect. There were so many covenants throughout biblical history that it would be too tedious to even list all of them much less explain them in the context of this writing. Therefore we will limit ourselves only to the ones that pertain to this subject.

There are only two covenants that directly address the priesthood and the tithe. The first covenant is the Abrahamic covenant (for Christians this one is ours) and the Mosaic covenant (this one was made for the Hebrews at Sinai).

The Mosaic covenant, often referred to as "the law", actually consists of several different and distinct parts. First there were the "**ten commandments**", then the statutes (the oral law) and finally the handwriting of ordinances. This appears to be the way the scriptures describe them. (2Ch.33:8, Ex.18:20, Ki.17:34 & 37, Eze.11:20,etc.)

Ex 34:28 *And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the **tables** the words of the covenant, the **ten commandments**.*

De 4:13 *And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, [even] **ten commandments**; and he wrote them upon two **tables of stone**.*

De 10:4 *And he wrote on the **tables**, according to the first writing, the **ten commandments**, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.*

Ex 31:18 *And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, **tables of stone**, written with the **finger of God**.*

De 9:10 *And the LORD delivered unto me **two tables of stone written with the finger of God**; and on them [was written] according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.*

These "ten commandments" are the same commandments God says that he will replace or rewrite on the tables of the hearts of the "New Covenant" or Christian believer.

2Co 3:3 *[Forasmuch as ye are] manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy **tables of the heart**.*

Heb 8:10 *For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my **laws** into their mind, and write them **in their hearts**: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:*

Jas 2:8 *If ye fulfil the **royal law** according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:*

Lu 10:27 *And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.*

It is no coincidence that the "**ten commandments**" of scripture contain no reference to the "tithe" or any other law that would apply to only a limited amount of time or dispensation.

The next part is the "oral law" or "**statutes**" as found in the book of Exodus chapters 20:22 through 34:28. I am referring to these as the oral law because these are the statutes God spoke to Moses but didn't write down and are neither part of the "Ten Commandments" nor part of the "handwriting of ordinances" which were later written by Moses.

This leaves us with the third part, the "**handwriting of ordinances**" which are the body of the "Levitical Law" so named because it is found in the book of Leviticus. This body of work is what is referred to often as "the law", especially by the New Testament authors, and is replaced by grace.

Joh 1:17 *For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

Ro 6:14 *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

Ro 6:15 *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

When it comes to the statutes and ordinances, there is definitely a limitation as to whom and for how long they apply.

Hebrews 8:13-AV ***In that he saith, A new [covenant], he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old [is] ready to vanish away.***

Hebrews 7:18-AV ***For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.***

Hebrews 8:7-AV ***For if that first [covenant] had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.***

2Ch 33:8 *Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the **ordinances by the hand of Moses.***

According to the scriptures these ordinances were removed and done away with at the Cross by Jesus.

Col 2:14 *Blotting out the **handwriting of ordinances** that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it **out of the way**, nailing it to his cross;*

The Apostle Paul is very clear about this. Having been a Pharisee he understood quite well the difference between the law and this "**better covenant**" we have in Christ.

Hebrews 8:6-AV *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established upon better promises.*

Hebrews 8:7-AV *For if that first [covenant] had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.*

Hebrews 8:8-AV *For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:*

Hebrews 8:9-AV ***Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.***

Hebrews 10:9-AV *Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He **taketh away the first**, that he may establish the second.*

By this time there can be no doubt as to the fact that at least one portion of the "Mosaic Law" if not all of it has been pre-empted by the "New Covenant". Actually, this "New Covenant" had its start four hundred and thirty years prior to the covenant delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai. This covenant was made **by God and for Abraham** and his **seed**. The Apostle Paul says that this covenant is ours through Jesus Christ and having been confirmed by God cannot be disannulled because it has nothing to do with the "law" which not being confirmed by God has been disannulled.

Ga 3:15 *Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though [it be] but a man's covenant, yet [if it be] **confirmed**, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.*

Ga 3:17 *And this I say, [that] the covenant, that was **confirmed before of God in Christ**, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.*

Hebrews 7:18-AV *For there is verily a **disannulling of the commandment going before** for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.*

Now that we have a correct perspective of our relationship to the law and it to our "better covenant", we can look closely at a now obsolete "priesthood" and its exclusive relationship to the "tithes".

### **How did the priesthood get established and what was its purpose?**

The concept of a "Priest" is contained throughout the Bible.

The Bible contains many references to priestly actions by individuals as far back as Adam. We see Adam's influence on his sons Cain and Abel, in that. We know that Cain and Able were instructed to give an offering to God by someone, someone taught them to offer a lamb as a yearly sacrifice for sin. More than likely it was Adam who taught them and received the offering in God's behalf.

Certainly it was Job's role as **priest** that is referred to in Job chapter 42 verse 8; *Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my **servant** Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you [after your] folly, in that ye have not spoken of me [the thing which is] right, like my servant Job.*

Abraham also, sacrificed a lamb as a burnt offering as worship to God. (Gen. 22:5)

Through out the scriptures we have examples like these. It isn't until the Levite priesthood (under the Mosaic law) that a priesthood becomes structured. God instructs Moses that the Levites (one of the twelve tribes) will now give service at the altar under Aaron. As the population grows the number of Levites that give attendance at the altar also grows and becomes a morning to evening never ending

stream of millions of animal sacrifices along with baked goods and produce of every kind. Gods plan to support this huge number of workers and their families is the "**tithe**".

Nehemiah 12:44-AV *And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the **tithes**, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law **for the priests and Levites**: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited.*

### **Is the priesthood God's ideal or was it a concession to Israel?**

It is evident that even before the "law" certain individuals were already offering up burnt offerings and filling the role of priests as we discussed earlier. Now, with the law in place, God orders a structured priesthood under Aaron. God also institutes an order of sacrifices, offerings and atonements, none of which existed before as obligatory. It appears that God did not institute these for His pleasure or of his will if the New Testament author is correct:

Hebrews 10:1-AV *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can **never with those sacrifices** which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect*

Hebrews 10:8-AV *Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and [offering] for sin thou wouldst not, **neither hadst pleasure** [therein]; which are **offered by the law**;*

Hebrews 10:9-AV *Then said he, Lo, I come to do **thy will, O God**. He **taketh away the first**, that he may **establish the second**.*

Hebrews 10:10-AV *By the which will we are **sanctified** through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all].*

This leaves us to wonder if it was a concession or just a temporary covenant that institutes the priesthood and the tithe. Either way one thing is certain, God's will was to **sanctify** us (set us apart) from that covenant and replace it with a better covenant.

Hebrews 7:11-AV *If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need [was there] that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?*

Hebrews 7:12-AV *For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.*

Hebrews 7:13-AV *For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.*

Hebrews 7:14-AV *For [it is] evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.*

Hebrews 7:16-AV *Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.*

Hebrews 7:18-AV *For there is verily a **disannulling of the commandment going before** for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.*

Hebrews 7:19-AV *For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a **better hope** [did]; by the which we draw nigh unto God.*

Hebrews 7:24-AV *But this [man], because he continueth ever, hath an **unchangeable priesthood**.*

Hebrews 8:13-AV *In that he saith, A new [covenant], he hath made the first old. Now that which **decayeth and waxeth old [is] ready to vanish away**.*

The Apostle Paul uses three chapters to thoroughly explain the why the priesthood is changed (replaced). The Levitical priesthood ends and Jesus' begins.

One of the things we must understand about the priesthood is that no matter what form it appeared in before the cross. It was only a shadow but not like what was to come to replace it.

Hebrews 10:1-AV *For the law having a **shadow** of good things to come, [and] **not the very image** of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect*

Heb 7:12 *For the priesthood being **changed**<3346>, there is made of necessity a **change** <3331> also of the law.*

The word **changed** does not mean to alter slightly. It doesn't mean to leave in place and add something to it. This word comes from the word we get metamorphosis and means to replace with something totally different. Like what happens to the caterpillar that is transformed into a butterfly, no longer a creature that is in bondage to the ground but a new creature a monarch of the sky.

**3346** metatithemi {met-at-ith'-ay-mee} from 3326 and 5087; Strongs' definition:

1) to transpose (two things, one of which is put in place of the other)

1a) to transfer

1b) to change

5746 Tense - Present See 5774

**3331** metathesis {met-ath'-es-is} from 3346; AV - change 1, translation 1, **removing** 1 Strong's' definition:

1) transfer: from one place to another

2) to **change**

2a) **of things instituted or established**

Here are some other scriptures where the same word **#3346** appears.

Jude 1:3 *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort [you] that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.* Jude 1:4 *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, **turning <3346>** (5723) the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Heb 11:5 *By faith Enoch was **translated <3346>** (5681) that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had **translated <3346>** (5656) him: for before his **translation <3331>** he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*

It is a drastic mistake to assume that once something is established by scripture that it cannot be changed somehow attributing everything as God's will. If that was the case the children of Israel would still be in bondage in Egypt and we would still be heathens.

Since the priesthood and the tithe under the law have become an integral part one of another (remember the only purpose of the tithe is to support the Levites) let us take a closer look at the "tithe".

**What does "tithe" mean?**

The word "tithe" Strong's number 04643 **ma`aser** {mah-as-ayr'} or ma`asar {mah-as-ar'} and (in pl.) fem. ma`asrah {mah-as-law'} from # 06240; literally means a **tenth part**. The word does not mean offering, gift or sacrifice as it has come to be known.

**Where did the "tithe" come from?**

We have no known usage of the word biblically prior its use in Genesis chapter 14 verse 20 where Abram returned from a battle against several kings who had kidnapped his nephew Lot along with many of the inhabitants and possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abram was greeted by the king of Sodom and a man named Melchisedec king of Salem, a priest of the Most High God. Abram gave Melchisedec a tenth part of the spoils of the battle (tithe), and then gave all the rest of the spoils (the possessions of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah) back to the king of Sodom along with the inhabitants who had been liberated.

Genesis 14:20-AV *And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him **tithes** of all.*

Hebrews 7:4-AV *Now consider how great this man [was], unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the **tenth** of the **spoils**.*

This gift or offering that Abram makes to Melchisedec is a **one time** event. It cannot be misconstrued as a mandated, ceremonial or traditional (as under the law) form of giving. It is however curiously similar to the type of giving described in the New Testament. Abram was blessed by Melchisedec so he blessed him back by giving him some of the loot.

The **tithe** is not a part of and is not mentioned as one of the commandments that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. It only appears as part of the "Levitical law" the handwriting of ordinances penned by the hand of Moses which was abolished at the cross.

It is only in Leviticus that the word "**tithe**" takes on an entirely new meaning. According to the Levitical law, it was ordained by God to collect tithes of the people to support the priests that served in the temple, and their families. The reason for this was because the Levites unlike the other tribes were not given lands and herds, what God calls an **inheritance**.

Numbers 18:24-AV *But the **tithes** of the children of Israel, which they offer [as] an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have **no inheritance**.*

Numbers 18:26-AV *Thus **speak unto the Levites**, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the **tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance**, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, [even] a tenth [part] of the tithe*

Here in Nehemiah we have a clear statement that **the tithe is for the Levites** and preists, and it is the tithe on that tithe they have received that is for the "**storehouse**" or "**treasure house**".

Nehemiah 10:37 *And [that] we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and **the tithes of our ground unto the Levites**, that the same **Levites might have the tithes** in all the cities of our tillage. Nehemiah 10:38 *And the priest the son of Aaron shall be **with the Levites**, when the Levites take tithes: and **the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God**, to the chambers, into the **treasure house**.**

At this point the "tithe" becomes a doctrine of the law and no longer just another word like "tenth", "fifth", "quarter" or "half". It becomes an obligatory act along with hundreds of other acts required by the law that until Leviticus had no such connotation. Acts like picking up sticks, lighting fires, leading animals, etc. now become a sin and punishable even by death if performed on the Sabbath. Hundreds of normal acts that people did or didn't do before the law now are not allowed or become mandatory under it.

Just because there is a pre-law use of the word tithe, it doesn't establish it as a doctrine of mandatory giving any more than the pre-law use of the word circumcision establishes it as a mandatory practice. In fact according to the Apostle Paul, the fact that something like circumcision which was practiced before the Mosaic Law, once becoming part of the body of the law, now is contrary to grace and not to be observed by the Christian believer. Paul goes on to say that if you observe one law you are a debtor to do the whole law and are fallen from grace.

Ga 5:1 *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and **be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage**.*

Ga 5:2 *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be **circumcised**, Christ shall **profit you nothing**.*

Ga 5:3 *For I testify again to every man that is **circumcised**, that he is a **debtor to do the whole law**.*

Ga 5:4 *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are **fallen from grace***

Ga 5:6 *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*

Ga 5:9 *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

No other New Testament author deals with or mentions the tithe except Paul. He treats the tithe with the same disdain as he treats circumcision. In reference to any command of tithing Paul says he never told anyone to do it and never wrote them to tell them to. The reason he gives is that it hinders the gospel of Christ.

1Co 9:12 *If others be partakers of [this] power over you, [are] not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should **hinder the gospel of Christ**.*

1Co 9:14 *Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

1Co 9:15 *But I have used none of these things: **neither have I written these things**, that it should be so done unto me: for [it were] better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.*

1Co 9:17 *For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation [of the gospel] is committed unto me.*

1Co 9:18 *What is my reward then? [Verily] that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ **without charge**, that I **abuse not my power** in the gospel.*

Again there is no mention of a Christian observance of the tithe by Paul even when he is referring to the support of those that preach the gospel. This is consistent with all the other New Testament scriptures regarding giving and receiving. At the same time Paul reinforces that mandatory giving is not part of our covenant.

2Co 9:7 *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not **grudgingly**, or of **necessity**: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Lu 6:38 ***Give**, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

### **What does the New Testament say about giving and the support of the ministry?**

All the new covenant scriptures uphold one basic principal. This principal is called "**free will**" and is in harmony with every other principal of our covenant. "**Free will**" is the cornerstone of faith. We are saved by a free will act of faith. Nowhere in our covenant does it say that we are obligated to perform any act to fulfill our part of the covenant. In fact it says that Jesus fulfilled everything, he is the "author and finisher of our faith".

Therefore, the type of giving in this better covenant must be "**free will giving**". The strongest reference on giving in the support of a minister or particular ministry is to that of the teacher.

Ga 6:6 *Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that **teacheth** in all good things.*

Ga 6:10 *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

One of the biggest mistakes made by Christian leadership today is to go outside of our covenant and embrace doctrines of the law, or any other covenant. It seems impossible that we did not know that to do so is abusing our power in the gospel. That Paul's words of warning went unheard is beyond reason. Nevertheless ministers, whether knowingly or not are leading their congregations into bondage and condemnation.

We frustrate grace and hinder the very gospel we swore to preach.

I can't tell you how many times my wife and I have invited a guest to church, usually someone we are trying to witness salvation to, just to have some pastor hammer the congregation with Malachi chapter three. No wonder the guest never returned. The gospel they heard preached was quenched along with the Spirit and until this study I didn't understand why even though in my spirit I knew there was something wrong.

Malachi should never be used against a New Testament believer. The entire book was given to the prophet to rebuke the priests and religious leaders that were under the Levitical Law. There is nothing to gain in using it unless the intent is to intimidate and condemn. Let us look for a moment at these all too familiar scriptures.

Malachi 3:8-AV ***Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.***

Malachi 3:9-AV ***Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation.***

Malachi 3:10-AV ***Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, 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].***

Malachi 3:11-AV ***And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.***

**Let us take one verse at a time.**

Malachi 3:8-AV ***Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.***

According to the New Covenant it is God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. Is the payment for sin paid by the blood of Christ or not?

Hebrews 7:27-AV *Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this **he did once**, when he offered up himself.*

Hebrews 9:12-AV *Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in **once** into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us].*

Malachi 3:9-AV ***Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation.***

There is **no curse** for the New Covenant believer. Which nation is being referred to?

Ga 3:13 *Christ hath **redeemed us from the curse of the law**, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree:*

Ro 8:1 *[There is] therefore now **no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, ...*

Malachi 3:10-AV ***Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, 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].***

The word **meat** in this scripture is the word **prey**. The word for sacrificial animals, live animals to kill.

Hebrews 7:27-AV *Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up **sacrifice**, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this **he did once**, when he **offered up himself**.*

Malachi 3:11-AV ***And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.***

God gives **us** the power to rebuke the devourer. Those of the "Law" did not have this authority.

Lu 10:19 ***Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.***

Jas 4:7 ***Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.***

These scriptures in Malachi obviously have nothing to do with Christianity. Yes, they are in the Bible. But not everything in the Bible applies to everyone. The big defense by proponents of the tithe is that it is a

biblical concept. If that is the real reason how come they are not also pushing circumcision, Kosher dietary laws, animal sacrifice, burnt offerings, Sabbath observance, etc. I tell you, I believe it is a smoke screen for the real reason. The real reason is they just won't trust God. Yes, they have no faith that God will really supply all their needs like the scriptures say. Like Abraham when he went into his wife's handmaiden. Just giving God a hand. Sure he promised, but. The end result, children of bondage! There are plenty of wonderful scriptures in our Christian covenant about giving and receiving. One of the truly exciting concepts that the scriptures have is that of giving. A true opportunity to bless and be blessed. When we do give, God is glorified, because he knows we don't have to. We do it because we want to and God truly loves a cheerful giver.

*Post script:*

This book was written approximately two years after I had asked God to reveal to me why a certain ministry my wife and I cared very much about was steadily growing smaller. They were also steadily growing poorer. God showed me why by the many infallible proofs of scripture and compelled me to share this with the Body of Christ. It has never been my intent to offend anyone or prove myself better than anyone else. But by the grace of God I would still be believing something else. I truly believe that this study will break the financial bondage that many Churches are under and that the "Good News" of the liberty we have in Christ will be released. God bless you as you read and study these scriptures and thank you for your patience with me.