



Teaching on Offerings



This is one of the ways of expressing our love to God! First and foremost offerings and tithes are to God. The heart of tithing was to honor the name of the Lord, teaching us to always fear the Lord God. (Deut 14:22,23) It is about surrender and yielding, not getting and receiving.

Devotion is a key theme here, what we are devoted to we worship. We all live in a world incredibly devoted to money and the pursuit of it. Yet God's original creation purpose was for us to be incredibly devoted to HIM, and the pursuit of Him. Money and wealth are not evil, but putting anything before God or allowing unbelief to tell us that security is in money rather than God, is.

Offerings are supposed to be a thing of beauty and abandonment an act of worship. It is an opportunity to be generous and show our trust and surrender to God. If fear and contempt rise whenever an offering is mentioned then it may be time to check your personal devotions and allegiances. Where the Spirit of God is there is FREEDOM. God doesn't want your money, He has no need of it to complete His works! But He does want your heart, your devotion, your worship and for you to hold NO thing above Him in your heart. He desires our heart free & empowered from lies of the Devil and false faulty allegiances.

There is a difference between tithes & offerings.

Tithe is a tenth of what is produced by you given to God. God sees it as belonging to Him and Holy to the Lord (Lev 27:30). It is His desire that the tithe is set apart for special purposes. The origins of tithing are rooted in the Old Testament and was part of life as early as Abraham (Gen 14:20). In the Scriptures we are told of the following tithes:

- tithe for the Priests and Levites - people set apart to worship, minister to God and administer the Tabernacle/Temple (Num 18:21-24, Deut 14:27-29)

- tithe for the use in the temple and the great Feasts (Deut 14:22,23)
- tithe for the poor (Deut 14:29)

Offerings:

Luke 21:1-4 Gives a great picture on giving:

"While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people putting their gifts into the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two pennies, I assure you he said, this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has." I don't believe this widow was giving out of duty or need, but out of a heart that knew where her security came from, that is from the Lord not by clutching onto money.

The first mention of offerings is in Genesis 4:2-8 when Abel and Cain give offerings to God.

"When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain was a farmer. At harvest time Cain brought to the Lord a gift of his farm produce, while Abel brought several choice lambs from the best of his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his offering, but he did not accept Cain and his offering. This made Cain very angry and dejected. Why are you so angry? the Lord asked him. Why do you look so dejected? You will be accepted if you respond in the right way. But if you refuse to respond correctly, then watch out! Sin is waiting to attack and destroy you, and you must subdue it. Later Cain suggested to his brother, Abel, go out into the fields. And while they were there, Cain attacked and killed his brother."

This passage is **'huge'** with **God showing that our RESPONSE** of offerings to Him matters! Remember both of these brothers gave. We are clearly told that **we must subdue** sin that is wanting to attack and destroy us. That requires an action on our part, we ignore this at our own peril. The Australian expression of 'she'll be right mate' (translated can mean, 'chill out it will all work out ok') just doesn't cut it here. Our attitude, our generosity, our freedom of heart matters. This is ALL directly related to offerings! Again this is not supposed to bring fear or guilt but to show us the way to freedom if we dare to trust God to take us there. Either that or we can put our trust in money and try to hold onto as much as we possibly can. :-)

First fruits: The first fruit feast was one of the key feasts that God asked the people of Israel to observe every year (Ex 23:16,19). The significance of this feast was that offerings given to God were the first of the harvest. It was ALL that was available at this time of the beginning of the harvest. They had to trust God more would come from their crops for themselves. It was primarily a gift given in faith that God is who He says He is our provider.

Practically:

We invite you to ask God, *"How can I love/trust you in this area of my life?"*

Ask Him specifics':

1. Do you want me to tithe? How much? When? To whom? How often?
2. Do you want an offering from me? How much? When? To what? How often?

We have found a great key here is freedom (2Cor 3:17). Look for options that give you joy and peace ie. what sort of 'Works of God/ministries' do you want to invest into? What/who do you believe in? What/who do you want to see blessed?

It is NOT OK for anyone to tell you where your money should go, and the first 10% doesn't have to go to anyplace or institution. This is something that you need to seek God on, look for peace and freedom and joy in this wonderful joyful empowering area of your worship. Once you have worked out what you want to give, it really is fun to distribute this blessing.

This is what the Lord promises as we develop a culture and heart of giving

"Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do." Joshua 1:8

"I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, will receive now in return, a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property, and with persecutions. And in the world to come they will have eternal life." Mark 10:29-30

You can not out give God!

For further reading: This is by no means all, just a tiny selection of verses.

Numbers 18:28 Luke 6:38 1Cor 9:14 Exodus 25:2

James 4:17 Proverbs 28:27 Matthew 6:2