



GENEROUS **LIVING**

All of Me in Response to All of Him

4th Quarter 2022
Offering Appeals

We recommend that this booklet be stored in the pulpit.

October 1, 2022 - Bear Fruits
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: John 15:4

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”

We worship God with our resources as a response to the call to bear fruits. John the Baptist appealed to those who were coming to him for baptism: “Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.” (Matt. 3:8). For John, baptism and being part of God’s people were not sufficient. The Gospel of Luke shares some concrete examples of the “fruit of repentance” that John the Baptist gave to those who came to him. He asked the tax collector not to collect any more than was required. He exhorted the soldiers not to “extort money” and “be content with your pay.” And he commanded the crowd to share their second shirt and food with the one who does not have (Lk. 3: 10-14). These examples reported by Luke have something in common; they are related to one’s attitudes towards finances and material possessions. Fruit of repentance comprises being careful about the means used to obtain resources and using our resources to bless others.

The Bible tells the story of a man, Nabal, a son of Abraham who was heavily blessed but did not bear fruit of repentance in his material life. He refused to reward those who protected his flock and would harshly rebuke the servants of David who came to ask for some food. This attitude led his wife to call him wicked and to make the following comment: “He is just like his name—his name means Fool, and folly goes with him” (1 Sam. 25:25). Sadly, the following day, he had a stroke. Ten days later, he died.

As we reflect on the need to bear more fruits of repentance in our material life, let us apply the advice of Jesus: “Remain in me as I also remain in you.” The result would be beyond expectation. This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings we can bear fruits of repentance.

Prayer: Lord, we want to bear fruits of repentance in all aspects of life. Please help us to remain connected with You daily through regular prayer and bible study.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

October 8, 2022 - Union Designated
(Carolina Evangelism) 8002

Appeal: Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”

We worship God with our tithe, offerings, and donations because God loves His Church. The Church, as the community of believers, was founded by Jesus (Matt. 16:18). He “gave himself up for her” (Eph. 5:25). He is the Head (Eph. 1:22) and Chief Cornerstone of the Church (Eph. 1:20), which is His body (Col. 1:25). And she has the beautiful title of the “bride of the Lord” (Rev. 9:7,8). To her, He gave a special assignment, “to serve as the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1Tim. 3:15). Ellen G. White made this affirmative comment about God’s Church: “Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.” —*Acts of Apostles*, p. 12.

In response to God’s love for His Church, the believers of the Early Church supported both the local church community (Acts 2:45) and church communities far away. Following a severe famine throughout the Roman empire, Luke reports the compassionate response of God’s Church: “The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea” (Acts 11:29). In his writings, Apostle Paul regularly appeals for the collection of funds for the Church, the Lord’s people, in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15; Rom. 15:14-32). Besides that, there is clear evidence of believers supporting with wages those “whose work is preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17-18). Paul endorses such practice by quoting Jesus: “The worker deserves his wages” (Lk. 10:7). The Early Church believers applied the general principle of love and generosity by caring for God’s Church.

The church is not without flaw; it has never been, but it is loved and has a unique purpose. This week as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings we can respond to the call to love and support the One that Jesus loves?

Prayer: Lord, we thank You for establishing the church in the world and our local communities. Please help us emulate the love that You have for the church by cheerfully supporting those who are part of it and its mission.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

October 15, 2022 - One Place...One God
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: Lev. 17:5

“This is so that the Israelites will bring their sacrifices they are now making in the open fields. They must bring them to the priest, that is, to the Lord, at the entrance to the tent of meeting and sacrifice them as fellowship offerings.”

We bring our regular offerings and tithe to church because it is part of true worship. Leviticus 17:5 gives instruction about the appropriate place to offer sacrifice in Ancient Israel. There was a central place to give, with no provision for alternatives. One may legitimately ask why the place was so significant. Interestingly, the text focuses not only on the place, the tent of meeting, but also on the One who received their sacrifices, the Lord. For the Israelites, the tent of meeting was the “tabernacle of the LORD,” the place where the Lord resides. Ultimately, the restriction about the place had to do with who they were worshipping. Relocating the place where they brought their sacrifices was typical of idol worship at the time. God designated one place for sacrifice because He wanted to be the sole object of their worship.

Today, the appropriate destination for tithe and regular offerings remains a frequently asked and debated question. The example of King David provides us with an answer: “I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you—” (Psalm 66:13). Ellen G. White applies this principle to God’s people today: “The time has come when the tithes and offerings belonging to the Lord are to be used in accomplishing a decided work. They are to be brought into the treasury to be used in an orderly way to sustain the gospel laborers in their work”—*Manuscript Release*, vol. 19, p. 376. She specifies that place as the church treasury with the appropriate agency to support God’s mission. However, this does not remove our social responsibility towards the poor and needy. We should apportion special donations for this purpose (Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry*, p. 275).

This week we have another opportunity to bring our tithe and regular offerings to God’s church. While we worship at God’s designed place, let us choose once again to make Him the sole object of our worship.

Prayer: Lord, we thank You for the instruction about the destination and usage of our tithe and regular offerings. Help us trust Your wisdom and remain faithful.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

October 22, 2022
Appreciation of Spiritual Blessings
(Carolina Youth) 8001

Appeal: Numbers 18:24

“Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to the Lord.”

We worship God with our tithe and offerings because He has appointed spiritual leaders to minister to His people. The books of Moses mention two special groups of spiritual leaders and how they were sustained. We read in Numbers 18:2 “Bring your fellow Levites from your ancestral tribe to join you and assist you when you and your sons minister before the tent of the covenant law.” This chapter reviews the tasks assigned to priests and Levites. Priests were assigned at the altar and inside the tabernacle; Levites were to take care of everything else regarding the tabernacle. Each group had specific responsibilities although Israel as a whole was “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6). Their ministry brought spiritual blessings.

How were they sustained in their needs? We read in Numbers 18:8b and 24: “All the holy offerings the Israelites give me I give to you and your sons as your portion....” “Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to the Lord.” God gave the holy offerings that were His to the Priests and His Holy tithe to the Levites. This transfer of resources was a means used by God to support the spiritual leaders in Ancient Israel. This provision was connected to the fact that their important ministries required total dedication. Both Jesus and Paul considered that the same principle should apply to support the appointed spiritual leaders of the Church (Matt. 10: 9-10; 1 Cor. 9:3-10; 16:2).

Pastors and other spiritual leaders are a source of blessings. Do my tithe or offerings pay for them? The answer is No. Tithe and offerings once returned become God’s property which He disposes as He wills. Yes, then after given to God, tithe supports the gospel worker. This is another good reason to give in order to partner with God to support the essential work of ministry. This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings we are enjoying the privilege of participating in God’s saving mission.

Prayer: Lord, in appreciation for the spiritual blessings we receive through your Church and designated servants, we bring our tithe and offerings to You. We are blessed to be part of Your plan.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

October 29, 2022 - Beware of Misplaced Hope
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: 1 Timothy 6:17

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”

We worship God with our resources because this protects us from misplaced hope. As humans, we tend to trust in something or someone bigger than ourselves. We do not control all aspects of our existence. In the absence of hope, our lives are overwhelmed by anguish and despair. One natural inclination is to put our confidence in the resources that we have accumulated. They are visible and measurable, leading us to think that they are sure. However, according to Paul, it is safer to place our hope in the Source of wealth than in wealth.

Mark, from South China, was deeply moved by a call for offering, and he brought 30% of his total saving as his offering. Unexpectedly, he experienced a severe financial crisis soon afterward. His new business collapsed, and he fell into debt. Life's uncertainties! During this time, he heard an appeal for a new church building at the cost of 10 million Chinese Yuen. Mark realized that it was a rare opportunity to advance God's mission in his province of over 60 million in population. Impressed by the Spirit, he made a commitment of 400,000 Chinese Yuen, with no idea where the money will come from. Then something amazing happened: the shareholder of his former architecture company invited him to resume work with them. He accepted the offer and was promoted to be an executive officer and board director in a short time. Mark ended up contributing 1 million Chinese Yuen to the church building project. Looking backward at his life's experience, he wrote: “The grace of the Lord is like endless running water.”

Mark demonstrated trust by giving His fleeting resources to worship the God who richly provides for everything. This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings let us make a statement about where our hope resides.

Prayer: Lord, we praise You for being a sure hope for Your children. Protect us daily from the deception of misplaced hope.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

November 5, 2022 - Claim His Promises
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: Psalms 34:8

“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”

We worship God with our resources because this places us in a condition to claim His promises. The Bible is full of promises. Everett R. Storms spent a year and a half counting Bible promises and came up with 7,487 promises made by God to humankind. God’s promises have three characteristics: they are true, all can claim them, and they are often conditional. Paul wrote about his confidence in God’s promises: “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.” (2 Cor. 1:20a). When God says, “Yes,” nobody can say, “No!” Several are conditional to faith and obedience as two essential requisites (Matt. 21:22; Isa. 59:2). About obedience, Ellen G. White writes: “All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises.”—*Christ’s Object Lesson*, p. 145.

An incident in the life of Fred Stirewalt, a farmer from Hollister, California, shows the value of obedience in claiming God’s promises. One afternoon Fred observed that army beetles had covered his field. Immediately, he realized the disastrous outcome awaiting: these small creatures eat until there is nothing green left. Feeling powerless, he had an insightful conversation with his daughter Helen: Helen asked, “Daddy, you pay your tithe, don’t you?” “Yes,” he replied.

“Then why not ask God to keep His promise and drive the beetles away?”

Convinced by these words, they knelt and prayed, claiming the promise of Malachi 3:10, 11: “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, ... I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe...” Right after praying, they saw a cloud of blackbirds descending on their fields. The blackbirds remained for a short time, but there wasn’t a beetle left when they flew away. God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will cooperate with Him. This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings we are placing ourselves in a position to claim His promises.

Prayer: Lord, we are thankful for Your promises of spiritual and temporal blessings. We claim them over our lives. Remove all doubts and unfaithfulness that could be obstacles. *Story of Fred Stirewalt adapted from <http://quidemagazine.org/pdfs/Guide-5-23-20.pdf>. PP. 12-14.*

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

November 12, 2022 - World Budget
(Emphasis: Annual Sacrifice) 500

Appeal: John 6 :12

“When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples,
Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.”

We can worship with our resources when we follow God’s instructions about the economy and savings. In several instances, God has taught the practice of saving to His children. He inspired Joseph, the son of Jacob, to advise Pharaoh not to eat everything during the seven years of abundance but to keep 20% for later. On the night the Israelites had to celebrate the first Passover, before leaving Egypt, God’s first instruction was for them to choose the right size of lamb according to the number of people in each family. At the end of the multiplication of bread and fish, the clear admonition was “let nothing be wasted.” “The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down” (Prov. 21:20).

This same message about penny-wise is pertinent in many places today. We are preparing and eating more than what we need daily, buying more than what we need to wear, and building houses with far more space than what we need to live. This consumption-oriented society influences us to adopt a criterion other than the need to acquire goods: affordability. If I can pay for it with available or borrowed money, there is no problem with purchasing it. This can be socially acceptable but is this good stewardship?

Saving will help us to prepare for life emergencies, realize major financial goals, prepare for retirement, leave a financial legacy, and in some cases, break the cycle of poverty. Furthermore, we will be in a better position to partner in God’s mission. Jesus and His missionary crew were supported by a group of women who used their own means (Lk. 8:3). The Early Church members, whose wealth was in the form of lands and houses, sold their properties to provide for the beginning of the Christians’ mission (Acts 4:34-35). Ellen G. White challenges us to properly channel our resources: “Each should keep a missionary box at hand, and drop into it every penny he is tempted to waste in self-indulgence.”—Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 291.

Is it not time to identify and fix the leakages in our financial lives? This week we have another opportunity to use our savings to worship God by bringing our tithe and regular offerings to Him.

Prayer: Lord, you have designed us to enjoy an abundant life and to partner with You. Please give us the wisdom to manage our resources.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM

November 19, 2022 Regularity Calls for Regularity
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: Lamentation 3:22-23

“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

We worship God through regular giving in response to the abundance and regularity of His care. While going through trials, griefs, and humiliations, the prophet Jeremiah uses the plural form to speak about God’s compassion and mercies. He was the recipient of God’s covenant, love, grace, goodness, kindness, compassion, and much more. Besides being multifaceted, God’s manifestation amid Jeremiah’s crisis was daily and regular, not occasional. He did not have to choose between a huge blessing once in a while or daily miracles. God provided for both. Israel responded to God’s regularity by adopting a regular pattern of worship and giving.

Numbers 28 and 29 report about regularity in worship and giving to God. The Israelites were worshipping daily, weekly, monthly, and during all annual festivals. Concerning their offerings, they brought “two lambs a year old without defect, as a regular burnt offering each day” (Numbers 28:3). Interestingly, what they brought during the weekly, monthly, and annual festivals were “besides” or “in addition to the regular burnt offering.” During the Festival of Tabernacles, they offered the largest number of special offerings, but there are eight mentions in the text, one for each day of the festival, that it was in addition to the regular daily offerings (Num. 29:12-38).

The above example tells us that the best practice is not to be a worshipper only during Easter week, the Christmas season, or special Sabbaths. A God who manifests Himself continually and regularly expects the same pattern of worship from His children. How does this principle translate into our giving practice? It is always a joy to participate in special offerings supporting some good projects or ministries. However, it is appropriate that these occasional gifts and donations are besides and in addition to our regular offerings. The starting point for such practice is to decide in advance the proportion, a percentage, of our income to be dedicated to regular offerings.

Prayer: Lord, we are thankful for Your abundant and regular care. In response, we choose to worship You regularly and set aside a percentage of our income as regular offerings. Sustain our commitment.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

November 26, 2022 - Don't Just Manage ... Produce Wealth
(Carolina Youth) 8001

Appeal: Deuteronomy 8:18

“But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.”

We worship God with our resources because He gives us the power to produce wealth. The parable of Talents tells the story of three servants who received a share of their Master's property and their reports about how they used them to produce more wealth. The three servants had this in common: They faithfully returned to the Master what belonged to Him. However, the first two did something in addition. They produced wealth with what they have received, and they were rewarded for that practice. As God promises the “ability to produce wealth” to all His servants, it is unfortunate that the third servant fails in this area and was deprived of His master's reward.

As believers, we are responsible for what we have received and for what we can produce. Ellen G. White writes these words: “In making a profession of faith in Christ we pledge ourselves to become all that it is possible for us to be as workers for the Master, and we should cultivate every faculty to the highest degree of perfection, that we may do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable. —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 330. Growth in all areas of life and participation in the production of resources is a divine assignment. This responsibility often needs courage, strength, perseverance, and self-discipline. It is a daily uphill journey. However, no one has to be discouraged or to quit. God made a permanent promise: the ability to produce wealth.

The principle of doing “*the greatest amount of good*” is an invitation to reassess our giving. Today, through our faithful giving, we are a source of blessing. This week as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings let us reflect and pray on how to become a greater blessing by growing our resources to their real potential.

Prayer: Lord, we praise You for entrusting us with Your resources. In partnership with You, we commit to grow our resources and become larger channels of Your blessings to humanity.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

December 3, 2022 - Special Provider
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: Psalms 145:15

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.

We worship God with our resources because He often makes provision for our needs even before they arise. In a dream, the Lord informed Pharaoh about the 7 years of severe famines that would strike Egypt. However, before the beginning of the crisis, he provided 7 years of abundance. Under the inspired leadership of Joseph, they could save the surplus and adequately prepare for the crisis. God provided before the need. Joseph told his brothers about the God who acted in anticipation: "But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance (Gen 45:7). Our needs and emergencies of today never take God by surprise or put Him off balance.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, a family had witnessed how God acted in anticipation of their needs. Because they were staying in a foreign country, the wife had to renew her employment authorization. The process took much longer than expected. After some few months of waiting, her current work authorization expired, and she was terminated from her job. The family budget was not balancing anymore. At first, they thought that the authorization would come in a few days. It was not so. Interestingly, exactly 7 months before she lost her job, the week that many companies were closing down and dismissing employees, causing a record high unemployment rate, she miraculously held onto her job. This allowed the family to consolidate their emergency fund not knowing the challenge they would soon face. Regularly, they would check the status of her application. The waiting time grew from 3 months, to 4 months, 5 months, and finally up to 9 months. It was a testing time. During this extended time, their consolidated emergency fund kept them afloat. More accurately, it was the work of God who makes provision even before needs arise.

This week as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings let us show our gratitude to the Provider who already has solutions for our unforeseen crises.

Prayer: Lord we worship because you do not only know the future, but you have also already prepared a way for us. You are our special Provider.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

December 10, 2022 - Adventist Community Services
(World Budget) 500

A man beaten down physically by rains came to our Food Pantry for clothes & food. He was wearing a thin jacket, no shirt or socks, and we were able to serve him. He was so happy to receive the clothes that he put them on in the parking lot. Then he sat in the parking lot and ate an entire 16 oz. jar of peanut butter. He left a little more full, dressed, and hopeful than when he arrived. Thank God for the Better Living Center. (Spokane, Washington)

This is only one story of many that is a result of Adventist Community Services Centers around the North American Division that commit to serving God's children.

Community Services is God's invitation to do amazing things with Him. Hard times come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, and Adventist Community Services is responding to individual needs, developing relationships, and committing to make a difference in people's lives.

ACS supports community outreach programs by funding development projects that make a major impact in your communities. A washer/dryer serves thousands of homeless to bring dignity and value to their lives. A shelter provides protection and offers hope. A portable shower trailer prepares someone for a job interview. And so much more.

"I love this facility (New Life Food Pantry, Fultondale, AL) because their Christian walk shows in their attitude of the volunteers and the way they treat the pantry participants." – Client A

"God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them." Hebrews 6:10

Appeal: By supporting ACS, you can make a lasting impact and know that your dollars are going to something that is making a difference in someone's life.

Prayer: Lord in your infinite grace, you do not look down on what we have brought to you. We thank you for the privilege of participating in your mission.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

December 17, 2022 - He Empowers Giant Killers
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: 1 Samuel 17:37

“The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.”

We worship God with our resources because no one like Him empowers us to face life’s challenges. Saul and his army went out to fight the Philistines. The Philistines had crossed over the border of Israel. With Goliath on the battlefield, the soldiers in Saul’s army faced the prospect of fighting a giant. This challenge was extraordinary. After the first day, the first week, the first month, Goliath was persistently harassing and frightening the Israelites. But David, the little lad from Bethlehem, knew that the Lord could provide rescue against internal, unusual and persistent challenges. Empowered by God, he would be known throughout history as the giant’s killer.

Just like David, a young boy overcame his life’s challenges. He grew up with the dream of becoming a preacher but had to struggle with an acute form of stammering. This handicap was inborn, and the application of several remedial strategies was of no value. The issue dragged over many years. The challenge was internal, beyond ordinary, and persistent. However, empowered by God, he was healed of his broken voice and could live his life’s dream.

We all know the popular formula for a happy life: Parents send kids to school, kids study hard and pass their exams, embrace a well-paid career, get married, and live a long and peaceful life. Unfortunately, real life often fails to match this ideal. Unexpected troubles become lifelong companions. Nevertheless, in God, we can count our victories, those that were the most unlikely according to human criteria. Are they not sufficient reasons to worship God with our best resources? This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings let us recall the numerous interventions of God.

Prayer: Lord, we are thankful for the many rescue operations that you have performed in our lives. Your effectiveness leaves us without a voice. In response, we dedicate ourselves and our best to you.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

December 24, 2022 - Cheers to the Royal Baby
(Carolina Youth) 8001

Appeal: Matthew 2:2

“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?
We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

We worship God with our resources because the royal baby, Jesus, was born on planet earth. The fascination for royal babies has transcended all ages. A search of the name “Archie,” a royal baby born to the Mountbatten-Windsor family in 2019, will give millions of results. The birth of a royal baby often creates a buzz in the media, and people feed on the most minute details out of curiosity and admiration. Likewise, seeing His star, the three magi left everything and everyone behind and embarked on a tiresome, time-consuming, and unsafe journey beyond the boundaries of their homeland. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they disclosed the purpose of their trip: we have come to worship the King, born of the Jews. The description that we have of this act of worship deserves attention.

Do you know any Christmas carols that the Magi sang to baby Jesus? Do you know the prayer that they made to the newborn King? Can you remember the words with which Joseph and Mary addressed them during their visit? Or any souvenir that they brought back home? Nowhere in the Gospel do we find such information. This silence is surprising and possibly significant! The focus was elsewhere: “On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Matt. 2:11). They honored the royal baby by presenting gifts to him.

The celebration of the birth of Jesus remains a major event in most countries and for many Christians. This year won't be an exception. Listening to carols, enjoying some favorite seasonal food, blessing ourselves and our loved ones with gifts, and participating in some uplifting church services define Christmas for many of us. This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings let us remember how the Magi worshipped the royal baby: by giving of their resources.

Prayer: Lord, as we talk, sing, and reflect about the birth of Jesus. Help us dedicate time and energy to seek You and to use our resources to honor You as King.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM

December 31, 2022 - Full Worship
(Local Church Budget)

Appeal: Romans 12: 1

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

We worship God with our tithe and offerings because it expresses our desire to offer our all to Him. In his letters to the believers in Rome, Paul explains extensively that salvation in Jesus is freely accessible to all by faith. Then, he mentions our adequate response to God’s mercy: “to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice.” Christ died for us. In return, we live totally for him. We worship the savior by attending church services and returning our tithe and offerings, but true worship does not end at the doorstep of the church, it only begins there. These words of Jesus deserve our attention: “you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.” (Luke 11:42). Tithing and offering, though essential, are only one component of the life of the worshipper. They are part of a lifestyle of offering oneself to God and others.

Terry from Hong Kong gives us an example of life as an offering to God. In the 80s, he was on track for a brilliant career as an engineer. He graduated from Hatfield Polytechnic, UK, as an Electronic Engineer, and later was selected by the Hong Kong government to specialize in an advanced technology known by very few. In spite of his success, Terry realized that something was missing in his life. He found this missing piece when he met Jesus and was baptized in December 1988. Seven months later he dedicated his life to God’s service. He left his promising future behind to enroll in seminary to study theology. In his own words: “Nothing under the sun is more important than knowing Jesus and inheriting eternal life.” He is known as Evangelist Terry; Dr. Terry Tsui is currently serving as the president of Taiwan Adventist College.

This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings may our giving be an expression of our total dedication to God.

Prayer: Lord, who we are and what we possess belong to You. We pray that You lead us to experience a higher level of dedication as we step into a new year.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM

Tips for a Successful Offering Appeal

1. Pray

Your attitude is of utmost importance. An offering appeal presented with a pre-season of prayer is always more effective. People in the pews will know the difference and respond accordingly. With an attitude of gratitude, calling for the offering is always a privilege for which to be thankful.

2. Practice

Read the script out loud several times and stay with the script until the reading comes naturally. If possible, stand in the church location and read the script with the microphone on. Take courage, you will gain experience over time and eventually come to wonder why it seemed so hard at first.

3. Appreciate your audience

Realize that they want you to succeed. Relax as best you can! We are all in this together.

4. Visualize yourself giving the offering appeal

Smile! Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Visualize the congregation smiling and pleased with your presentation. This will boost your confidence as they approvingly smile.

5. Know and share your material

Make sure you fully understand and share how the designated offering will be used. Give everyone a reason to help support the designated offering.

6. Do not apologize for any nervousness or problem.

Being nervous is natural. No one but you have to know. Do not allow yourself to focus on your anxiety, but rather focus on your message and audience. They will never suspect you are not a public-speaking pro!