



The Offering



How often have we heard, “*All the church cares about is money?*” To such a person, the Offering becomes an opportunity to rationalize their hostile attitude! The Offering isn’t meant for such a person. As a matter of fact, it has been my experience that giving doesn’t come by way of the new convert either. Offerings spring out of the deep—the deepness of abiding in Christ’s grace.

When people mature in Christ, offerings flow more freely. Indeed, the Christian offers his whole life up to God as a response to His mercy (Romans 12:1-2). The Offering only makes sense when seen in the light of Jesus Christ. When He holds the strings to open my heart; He will, in time, hold the purse strings as well.

Please note: the Offering isn’t a momentary (or monetary) pause in the Divine Service in order to collect the mandatory admission price! Neither is it a required payment of your membership dues! The Offering is worship like the hymns and prayers. There are important attitudes that make Christian giving worshipful – such as first fruits giving, cheerful giving, thoughtful giving, and giving in response to God’s blessings!

Behind Christian giving is also this crucial thought: everything that you have is God’s. You merely manage what God already owns (Exodus 19:5).

The question always seems to arise, “*How much do I have to give?*” or “*How much should I give?*” Many want to provide an answer to these questions that places us back under the Old Testament law of tithing; and while tithing is an admirable goal, it is no longer required of the Christian since you have been set free from the Law via the Gospel.



Catechetical Kernel



As with so many things in the Christian life, it is better to ask the right question: “*How much can I give?*” The answer for you is willing, regular, proportional, first-fruits giving. Your gifts and offerings are given on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, etc) and they reflect a response to the Lord for His blessings freely given to you; and, they are the first-fruits of what you receive (not what is left over after all of the bills are paid and our recreational funds are spent).

In the end, the exact amount is between you and the Lord Jesus; and I pray that you are encouraged by Paul’s words to the Corinthians, “*Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver*” (2 Cor. 9:7; emphasis mine).

The Peace of the Lord be with you,

Pastor Jeff Patterson ✝