

What Is God Looking For In An Offering?

The Heart of the Matter

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In my multimedia manufacturing days, the company I worked for had several clients across multiple industries that would send us a master recording and of course request anywhere from a couple hundred to a couple hundred thousand copies of that program that they would in turn sell to those looking for or subscribing to that particular content. And we did things from workout videos to hunting videos to religious videos. And while I was somewhat interested in a small portion of the content that we produced, somehow the religious videos always piqued my interest. This was in no way a reflection of the content being inspiring. On the contrary, many of the videos provided somewhat of a comedic relief to my ordinary day.

I had never been introduced to the Pentecostal religion, and so when I saw people doing somersaults and cartwheels or some type of dancing down the aisle because the Holy Spirit had grabbed hold of them during the service, well, that was kind of a bit of a shock to me. There were people speaking in tongues and there were people who would, you know, receive the Holy Spirit as the guy waved at them. They would fall backwards, and I thought, of course, that was interesting, to say the least. I remember Joel Osteen becoming almost a household name as his Lakewood Church grew into thousands of followers, and it was interesting to see the worship service packed with a live band and singers performing basically a Christian concert every Sunday for those who were in attendance.

Now, outside of that job, I also remember way back when I was young, a televangelist named Oral Roberts saying that God was going to take his life in something like three months unless his followers sent him \$8 million. Now he supposedly locked himself in this prayer tower waiting for the money to flow in, and I vaguely remember seeing at least part of the show with him in that prayer tower thinking, *he is going to be up there for a long time*. But he indeed ended up receiving actually \$9 million in contributions and he eventually came down.

Fast forward to the present, and I continue to be interested in various things that these worldly ministers or pastors, as they call themselves, are up to these days. I have recently seen several videos that I do not believe are AI since there are also corresponding news articles about them regarding church leaders who are making very interesting requests, I would even say demands, of their followers.

In a now viral video from 2024, Marvin Sapp of the Chosen Vessel Church told the ushers to close the doors until everyone had given \$20. He even did the math for them saying that there are 1,000 people in here, there is 1,000 people out there. If everyone gives \$20 well, that is \$40,000. He told them that he wanted to see them walk forward and place the cash in the basket, and if you were using an app to pay—I mean "donate"—you could simply do the gesture as you are hitting send on the payment into the basket.

And last October 20th of 2025, also in a now viral video, Pastor Marvin Winans of the Perfecting Church of Detroit invited his members that were able, to give their sacrificial seed of \$1,000 plus 1 to come down the center aisle so that they could give their donation. Now he repeated the \$1,000 plus 1 several times, and most understood the assignment was not \$1,000 but actually \$2,000.

Now several apparently gave the \$2,000 and then a particular lady came down the aisle. Mind you, this is right in the middle of the church. From the video she says, "I'm giving in faith and standing in unity with the vision of Perfecting Church, sowing the seed of \$1,000 plus \$235, and receiving the blessings to come," she stated. Now Winans quickly corrected her, saying, "That's only \$1,200." When she acknowledged this, he pressed her further: "You're not listening to what I'm saying. If you have \$1,000 plus \$1,000," to which the woman responded that she was working on the remaining \$800. But Winans continued to berate her, saying, "Well, that ain't what I asked you to do."

As recently as January of 2026, another man called Prophet Todd Hall, founder and overseer of the Shabach Church in Apopka, Florida, also in his very own now viral video told the people at his church that God spoke directly to him, saying, "The Lord said, 'I want to make a multi-millionaire

out of someone, but they have to sow \$10,000 and they have to do it in the next 90 seconds." Talk about having your pen and checkbook ready! He went on to say, "I wish it was me. No, no, I'm saying I wish it was me because I got it. That's what I'm saying," clearly implying that he had the \$10,000 to give. But apparently God said that it would not be him, it would be someone in the audience.

He goes on to mention that he would not stop until 30 people stepped up with \$1,000 each. So he was looking for slightly less than Marvin Sapp's \$40,000. He was asking for a cool \$30,000 in payment, I mean "donations" that day.

Finally in February of 2026, Paula White, another televangelist and pastor of City of Destiny Church, who incidentally was also appointed to the current administration as the leader of the White House faith office, in her very own, you guessed it, now viral video, is quoted as making a request for \$100,000 to come in for the kids. And apparently, when only three envelopes came forward, she is quoted as saying, "There's only three envelopes. I'm not moving, I'm not going to lay hands on people till you're obedient. Get out of your seat, come on, come bring up a seed, come bring up a seed, come bring up a seed."

In these real world examples we see that there are indeed wolves in sheep's clothing who have crept in, those who have crept in viewing the church as a revenue stream rather than the building up of the body of Christ.

Now today, I would like to consider what God is looking for in an offering. These examples primarily highlighted what is called the prosperity gospel, or I would say, quid pro quo. That one can sow a seed of money to somehow gain riches and healing, among other things, from God. Many of us probably have not heard these examples in God's church, but do these sound familiar?

Brethren, as we begin, if you have not already done so, do not seal your offering envelope.

I personally heard a minister, this is well over 20 years ago in the greater church of God, that stated during an offertory, I think it was at the Feast, that at least some of, if not all, the ministry had mortgaged their homes to support

the starting and early operations of the church. And then there was the healthy competition during the Feast where they would tell us how many people were in attendance and then tell us how much the offering was spread across everyone and we would have a nice average offering that was given by the people so that you would know whether or not you were above average or below average.

Now as we begin another iteration of God's holy days, His special appointed times for His people to gather together and draw closer to Him, and even this very first service on the first day of Unleavened Bread, where we will all be giving an offering, I thought it fitting that we ask ourselves, what is God looking for in an offering?

Please turn to Genesis 4. In Exodus 23 and then again in Leviticus chapter 23, we see the command to bring an offering of our firstfruits to our God at His appointed times, these feast days. Let us see, I believe, the very first recorded offering to God and what we can glean from it.

Genesis 4:1-7 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord." Then she bore again, and this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. In the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was angry, and his countenance fell. So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."

Now from these verses, there is certainly a lot that is not stated, but we can understand that Abel's offering was indeed respected and Cain's was not. Cain obviously did not do the right thing. God tells us, "If you do well, will it not be accepted?" There are clear indications that Cain not only brought the wrong offering, but the way in which he brought it forth was equally incorrect.

Please turn to Mark 12. Let us look at another well-known snippet of an offering as we look to answer this question, what is God looking for in an offering? We will read verses 41 through 44.

Mark 12:41-44 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

Now these two examples are clearly different types of offerings, but I personally do not think that that matters as we think about what God is looking for in an offering. Jesus Himself is watching all of these physically rich people dropping money into the box, as it were. And then a poor widow, a woman who no longer had a husband to care for her, probably had a difficult time taking care of, you know, food and other staple items needed to sustain oneself, gave an offering that impressed Jesus: "out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

So we have these two examples of offering: one of Cain and that was incorrect and rejected and one of the widow that impressed Jesus because of *how* it was given. So let us start drawing some conclusions. You do not have to turn there for the sake of time, but Deuteronomy 8, verse 2 states, and this is Israel coming out of Egypt. This is Moses speaking,

Deuteronomy 8:2 "And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what is in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

And of course offerings are part of His commandments when we come before Him.

So we can see that one of the main purposes of the wilderness journey was to know what was in their heart. Now let us add to this. Again, you do not have to turn to,

Exodus 25:1-2 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they may bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering."

This indicates that the offering is personal and must be given with a willing heart, an offering that we desire to give to God.

Now turn with me to I Chronicles 29. This is when David took up an offering from himself and the people so that the Temple could be built by Solomon. Listen closely to how he words this prayer or prays to God. We will read verses 9 through 19.

I Chronicles 29:9-19 Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the Lord; and King David also rejoiced greatly. Therefore David blessed the Lord before all the assembly; and David said:

"Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, and You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You. [I have always found it interesting that when it comes to tithes and offerings, what we give to God is a small part of what He has given to us. He literally gives us the

offering that we can in turn give back to Him. It is fascinating if we think about it.] For we are aliens and pilgrims before You, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow and without hope.

"O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have prepared to build You a house for Your holy name is from Your hand, and is all Your own. [so he says it again] I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart, I have willingly offered all these things; and now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to You.

"O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the intent of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and fix their heart toward You. And give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do all these things, and to build the temple for which I have made provision."

Again, I recognize this offering was specifically for the Temple. However, we are answering the question, what is God looking for in an offering? And so this very much applies to any offering that we would bring before God. We see that God is testing and looking at what is in our heart when we give. How are we giving? Are we giving with an upright and willing heart? Are we acknowledging that everything that we have comes from God?

For some food for thought, let us go to Deuteronomy 14, verse 24, because I would like to add this in. We will be breaking into these are the tithing principles and specifically the instructions on what to do with them.

Deuteronomy 14:24-26 "But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the Lord your God has blessed you, then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses. And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar

drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household."

Now we will probably revisit this as we get closer to the Feast, but even though there are some examples of here of what your heart might desire, ox and sheep and wine, have we ever thought that as God gives us the power to get wealth and then spend it, that God is looking to see what our hearts truly desire? What do we choose to spend that money on? How do we use the power that God has given us in this physical form? Is God not testing us to see what is in our hearts?

The last scripture, and I will just read this one because we know it well.

Matthew 5:23-24 "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar and then remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

Now there are many scriptures that we do not have time to go to where God chastises and even mocks Israel about the tithes and offerings that they bring before Him. Because for at least a couple of reasons, they are not at the appointed time or their hearts are not in the right place because they are not keeping God's Ten Commandments correctly. He states in the Scriptures that their offerings are essentially worthless. It is at least interesting to me that in the section in Matthew where Jesus is speaking about murder, that He brings up this instruction regarding offering gifts, telling us to be reconciled first. Is He telling us that our offerings will not be accepted if we have a problem or some unresolved issue that is causing us to not be at peace with our brother and our heart to be evil? He tells us to be reconciled first for a reason.

Today we will be taking up an offering and I will not be asking the ushers to close the doors. No one will ask you to line up and bring your offering up to the lectern and announce what you were giving in an offering to God. If you are sick or need anointing for some reason, no one will tell you you must first give an offering. I am extremely confident the ministry will pray for you free of charge. No one will ask you to mortgage your home or tell you what your offering amount should be. That is between you and God that He might know what is in your heart.

What is God Looking For in an Offering? by Ryan McClure (<https://www.cgg.org>)

God is looking for an offering that is given cheerfully and willingly, with a humble heart that is at peace with the Body of Christ and recognizes that everything has been provided by Him.