

Offerings as Part of Worship

ENHANCING OUR TIME OF GIVING



The Offering should be an integrated part of the worship service. It is our response of gratitude for blessings we receive from God, our Heavenly Father. A word of introduction to the offering is essential for the Offering to be a meaningful time of worship that represents and enhances our relationship with God.

When the offertory introductions are carefully planned, it be the creative “bridge” that keeps the experience of ‘giving’ as an act of worship:

- from hearing the Word → doing the Word,
- from an intellectual → a physical expression of our faith, and
- from emotion and feeling → action

It is important to avoid the offering experience becoming an “intermission” in the worship service.

Focusing the Offering Time

The Offering time is so much more than simply drawing attention to the monies needed to ‘meet the church budget’ (for programs, building maintenance, salaries and more). It is also NOT a time to persuade or guilt members to give as much money as possible.

Scripture reminds us of the central reasons Christians are called to be ‘generous givers’; it is an expression of our love for God. It is a tangible expression of our trust and faith in His grace, which sets us free. Sacrificial giving and generosity need to be affirmed and encouraged over and over again.

Introducing the Offering Time as an act of worship will enhance this portion of your worship gathering. Once you’ve announced WHAT the morning’s offering is for (or offerings), you can then remind the congregation of WHY we give.

Using Clear & Helpful Language

It is also important to use proper language:

- The term “collection” may be associated with the secular world (collection agencies have created some negative feelings)
- Churches do not *take* offerings - Worshippers *give/present* their offerings

Sharing Scripture

Following are some ways to *introduce* offertory Scripture verses:

- *"Hear the Word of the Lord regarding our offering --"*
- *"It is no casual act to relate to God's work with our money. Listen to these words from Scripture--"*
- *"Here are some guidelines for giving from the Holy Scriptures--"*
- *"Priorities figure into our giving. Listen to this--"*
- *"Through our offerings, we affirm the leadership of God. Listen to this--"*
- *"A part of preparation for worship is our preparation for giving. Listen to these words--"*
- *"Our offerings get us into the mainstream of God's work through the church. Listen to these words from the Scriptures--"*
- *"What is right for each of us is ours to decide. Listen to these instructions--"*
- *"We read in the (OT or NT) this instruction for giving our offerings to God--"*

Scripture Verses:

The following Bible verses are from the New International Version. Other versions and translations such as Today's English Version (Good News Bible) or The Message may also be helpful. Clarity in context is essential for effective use of offertory Scripture verses.

-Focusing on 'Stewardship'-

Psalm 24

¹ The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Deuteronomy 16:

^{16b} No man should appear before the LORD empty-handed: ¹⁷ each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.

Proverbs 3:

⁹ Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops;

Matthew 6:

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 12:

⁴⁸ From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.



Acts 20:

³⁵ Remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

1 Corinthians 4:

¹ So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God.

² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

2 Corinthians 9:

⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

2 Corinthians 9:

⁷ Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

1 Peter 4:

¹⁰ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

-Focusing on 'Benevolence'-**Proverbs 11:**

²⁵ A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Matthew 25:

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Galatians 6:

⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.



Hebrews 6:

¹⁰ 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 13:

¹⁵ Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶ And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

1 John 3:

¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

-Focusing on 'Thanksgiving'-**Psalm 100:**

³ Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Psalm 103:

² Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Proverbs 3:

⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

2 Corinthians 9:

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

-Focusing on 'Trust in God'-**Matthew 6:**

²⁵ Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?

Luke 12:

¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."



John 3:

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

2 Corinthians 9:

⁷For God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

1 Timothy 6:

¹⁷Command 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.

-Focusing on 'Living as Imitators of Christ Jesus'-**Matthew 5:**

¹⁶Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Romans 12:

¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.

1 Corinthians 6:

¹⁹Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your body.

2 Corinthians 8:

⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Ephesians 5:

¹Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

1 Timothy 6:

¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.



¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

-Focusing on 'Worship'-

1 Chronicles 29:

¹¹ Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.

Psalm 96:

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.

Psalm 116:

¹²How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me? ¹³ I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD. ¹⁴ I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

Revelation 5:

¹² Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

-Focusing on 'Submission'-

Matthew 5:

²³ Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

Mark 8:

³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

³⁶ What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?

James 1:

²⁵ But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.



Offertory Prayers

Most offerings described throughout the Bible were personal acts of praise and thanksgiving to God. They were presented in a worship setting and were accepted and blessed by the priest. Our offerings during worship are never to be casual activities. They are rather acts of trust in God, which are expressed in tangible ways, and should be accompanied by prayer.

In some churches, the pastor prays before the offering is given. A relevant offertory Scripture verse, or passage, reassuring worshipers of their privilege to give, may be more appropriate and meaningful than a prayer before the offering. Note that it was *after* Jesus received the five loaves and the fish, that He prayed to God to bless the gifts (Mark 6:38-42).

Some guidelines for the preparation of effective offertory prayers are that prayers ought to:

- be spoken or written with a congregation and a purpose in mind,
- clarify what persons are doing when they give,
- highlight what we have received in Christ: redemption and sanctification,
- contain an act of blessing on the gift and the giver,
- be an opportunity to teach, never a time to plead or threaten,
- eliminate the idea that our gifts are dues or taxes,
- speak of the partnership which is at the heart of the gospel,
- be deliberately spoken,
- be direct and brief, and clearly articulated,
- be designed as an expression of gratitude to God,
- be seen as a priestly function, and
- be spoken *on behalf* of the people, not *at* the people.

Offertory prayers must always focus on *God's* redeeming work on earth: i.e. the Bible, the cross, a Communion table, the presence of the Holy Spirit in our worship service, God's mission work in the world. Through this act, there is always a feeling of participation in the work of Christ's kingdom.

Samples of Offertory Prayers

-On Stewardship-

- Lord, it isn't easy to decide how much we each should give. Thank you for the wise counsel of your church and the good examples of our parents who



have helped us understand our accountability. May we not grow weary in our giving. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

- Help us, O God, to be unselfish in our giving so that we may know what it is to trust your love in Christ. Amen.
- At your direction, Lord Jesus, we desire to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. Money does not earn us a place in heaven. Our money does represent an earthly treasure that we return to you. Be pleased to use these gifts to your glory. Amen.
- God, we know that you are the Creator. You made everything. You own everything, but also we know that you give each of us a partnership for a while. We appreciate your generosity, and we also would like to be generous, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
- Thank you, Lord, that it is becoming easier for me to give. Once I had to struggle to find reasons to share, and now it seems so good and right and natural. Am I growing up a bit, Lord? Take my gift today and blend it with all who worship here, that together, we may be a part of building your kingdom. In the name of Jesus. Amen.
- Lord Jesus, before whom all of us will one day give an account, grant that there may be no question about our stewardship. Keep us alert to what we hold in trust for you. As your hand has been open to us, open our hands to others. Amen.
- Lord, who by your grace has made us strong where we were weak and wise where we were confused, illuminate us, your stewards, in the work of the ministry of your Word. Let none be weak or lost because of their unwillingness to give. Let your Spirit translate these gifts into your active love. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
- Dear Lord, it was easy and a joy to give today, for we gave out of the abundance you have permitted us to have. Keep us sensitive, Lord, to the hurts and hungers of those who have little. It is here that we find meaning for our offerings this day. Amen.
- Thank you, Lord, for our lives, for this church, and for the hope that is within us. Save us from all selfish thoughts as we give out of our abundance to bring life and love to your world. Through Jesus Christ, bringer of good news. Amen.



- God, renew our spirits by your Holy Spirit, so that our work for you may not be a burden to us, but a delight; and give us a mighty love for you that our obedience to your will may be our supreme joy. We rejoice in our abundance only because we can generously give to others in your name. Amen.
- Thank you, Lord, for showing your love and grace to us. What we have seen and felt in our own lives we now want to share with those who have not seen and do not know. We now return these gifts for your service. For Jesus' sake. Amen.
- As your stewards, O Christ, give us the full desire to be faithful to the gifts you have given us. We are grateful that a part of this offering goes to support ... (*list special causes supported by your church.*) In Jesus' name. Amen.
- Spirit of God, again today there are many guests and new friends at worship with us. Each week persons such as these give hundreds of dollars that help in the outreach of your church. Let them and all of us know the joy of generosity. Amen.
- Lord, we know that you are the Creator. You made everything. We appreciate your generosity and would like to be generous with your church. We pray that you will accept these gifts as you have accepted us. In the name of the Saviour, Jesus. Amen.
- Lord, I am very conscious of how carefully I hold on to things. I especially like to hold on to money. The more I get, the more powerful I feel. However, in the shadow of your cross, I willingly divest myself of power—that others may eat and others may see and others may know of your love for all of us. Take my power, given in Jesus' name. Amen.
- Suddenly, Lord, we find this hour of worship very personal. You know whether our offering is generous or only another evidence of our selfishness. Forgive those of us who do not take seriously our part in supporting your work in our world. Amen.

-On Benevolence-

- At your instruction, Lord, we are trying to be more aware of the needs of others and less and less absorbed in selfish concerns, so we pray that you will sharpen our minds and dedicate our skills to support these offerings that we bring. Amen.



- Lord, we can't do everything.
We can't feed the entire world's hungry.
We can't clothe all of the naked.
We can't teach all of the illiterate.
We can't help all who are displaced.
However, we can do something, and *that's why we give*.
Strengthen and confirm your church through us. For Jesus' sake. Amen.
- Gracious Lord, your caring for us, as revealed in Christ, causes us to rejoice that a part of our offering today will go to provide food and life's necessities to the people of Africa. Help them to feel loved. Amen.
- Teach us, Lord, that we may not be deaf to those who cry out for bread and hope in this broken world. May these offerings not come from our abundance, but from our brokenness. We do not give because we are forced to give but because we have heard their cries and want to incarnate your love and care. Amen.
- May these offerings be the footprints of our love as they bring hope to desperate people. As your people, we wait for your sensitizing Spirit to keep us alive to specific ways we can be your children in this troubled world. Amen.
- Lord, we read that the love of money can be the root of all evil. We also know that our gifts can be the source of help and hope to the desperate, hopeless people of this world. Grant your Spirit to be upon all who administer the gifts we bring this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
- Almighty and everlasting God, grant unto the people of this congregation all things that are needed for their full participation in the work of your kingdom. May their offerings and sacrifices this day confirm the work of all who feed the hungry, all who protect the children, all who shelter the desperate, and all who advance your truth through their preaching and teaching. We accept your blessing in gratitude. Amen.

-On Witnessing-

- Thank you, Lord, that your church has awakened us to the world you sent your Son to save. Forgive our narrowness and set our love and gifts winging to all people and all nations, that we may be messengers of your peace. Amen.



- Some of us, O Lord, have wandered in the wilderness long enough. We are ready to move into our promised land where we may claim our own responsibilities. Your gifts and guidance have brought us here, and we are grateful. May these, our tithes and offerings, help lead others through their wildernesses and to your presence. In the name of Jesus. Amen.
- Spirit of God, we are so often caught up in our getting and spending. We forget that it is people and human resources that can make a difference in our world. Therefore, with our offerings, we pray that you will multiply our service in your kingdom. Amen.
- Forgive us for taking your love so casually, and your church for granted. We need you, and our world needs your church. May our gifts support your acts of love. For Jesus' sake. Amen.
- Lord, I sometimes wish you would drop leaflets from the sky, but there will be no leaflets, no missionaries, no worldwide witness unless we take our feet there or support the work of others. Let these offerings send the Word. Amen.
- As our lips praise you and our spirits seek your power, so our hands provide the support for your church at work today. Thank you for giving us this privilege. Amen.

-On Thanksgiving-

- God, we have not heard your voice shouting from a cloud, nor have we seen your strong hand reaching down to part the waters, but we have heard your gentle voice through your people and your church. We have seen your power in the hands of others and in our hands. Therefore, we rejoice with loud hallelujahs and with these gifts. Amen.
- We thank you, Lord, that we can have a part in your ministry. We thank you for your church that has brought us together. We thank you for your grace that makes us anxious and able to give. May your Holy Spirit prosper our work and worship. For Jesus' sake, Amen.
- Thank you, Lord, for this beautiful place of peace where truth is alive and well, and where your people find strength in each other and in you. Bless every act of worship, but especially bless these offerings as they express our deep gratitude for life and love and hope. Amen.



- Thank you, Lord, for moments of worship where we are clearly reminded of how much we have been given. Sometimes we forget and think that we are lucky, but here in worship, we know that we are loved, and therefore, we are grateful. Here is our offering. It says clearly how grateful we are to you. Amen.
- In a world tired of hearing words, grant, O Lord, that we may do a little preaching with our offerings. Let them speak clearly of our gratitude for your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.
- Lord, these gifts do not represent our spiritual taxes to run your church. Neither are they our weekly dues for membership. They are our grateful response to your love and mercy. Thank you, Lord, for knowing us and caring for us. Amen.
- We are grateful, O God, that your Spirit is at work within us, nudging and stretching us, and causing us to grow, and to think, and to present ourselves here to worship. As we are surrounded by friends, we sense again that we could never live alone. Let our offerings be an expression of our gratitude, and may they help to spread the Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.
- At your suggestion, Lord, we give evidence of our love and concern for your kingdom. Our partnership with you is important to us. Accept these sacrifices as offerings given in love. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

-As Expressions of Love-

- With our lips, we praise you, O Lord, and with our offerings, we show our true loyalty to you and your church. Amen.
- Lord, we know that when it comes to love, words are sometimes cheap and professions can be superficial. We seek to express our love for you, not by mere words but by an act of self-denial as we place our gifts on this altar. Receive our gifts we pray, as vivid evidence of our love for you. Amen.
- Lord, learning to love is a long apprenticeship. As we stand before the cross, we understand how much we have yet to learn about love. Out of Your love, Jesus came as a gift to our world. May our love for this world and your church be seen in our gifts this day. Amen.
- Lord, we present these gifts not as a tax write-off but out of love. We do care about this church, and we do want to energize your will in our community



and in our world. In the name of the Creator, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

- Dear Lord, love is forgiving, but we are so young in love. Learning to love seems a long apprenticeship. As far as we can know, Lord, we do love you and this great and wonderful world You sustain. May our gifts this day say something of our love for You. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

-On Serving God and His Church-

- God, you have given us all work to do. You have endowed us with potentials to fulfill our God-given tasks. Thank you, Lord, for needing us. Thank you for allowing us to be an important part of your plan to bring in your kingdom. May our gifts presented today clearly indicate our commitment to this task. For Jesus' sake, Amen.
- By your power, O Lord, may these offerings be turned into energy through the work of your church. For the sake of Jesus, Amen.
- We thank you, Lord, for the privilege of supporting a church that teaches our children, supports our youth, enriches our families, and cares for our aged. Amen.
- As the original twelve disciples offered themselves to you, O Lord, let these gifts indicate our desire to be a part of your will and your kingdom in our day. Thank you, Lord, for calling us and sending us. Amen.
- Dear Lord, it is a mystery that you have decided to work through persons like us. However, we believe that you do and that you have empowered us to be helpers. May your strong guiding Spirit bless every act of generosity in this offering. Amen.

-Submission-

- Lord, our gifts are not presented casually. There is sacrifice in each of them. We have prospered, and our gifts are prayers that your will may prosper in the hearts of all who worship here today. For the salvation of the world, we give and pray. Amen.



- Lord, no gift from you is at our complete disposal. Therefore, in this act of worship through giving, we acknowledge our giftedness and our dependence. Amen.

-On Communion Sunday-

- Lord, we believe that you are always listening. Hear now this prayer of your hungry people. We have filled our plates with the fast food and the junk food of this world and have neglected the Bread, which would satisfy. We want to be at your table with the people of God. May these tithes and offerings bring us closer to the table of worship. For Jesus' sake, Amen.
- Lord, as we often lift high the cup and the bread in acts of dedication, we now lift up these evidences of our love and sacrifice. May these offerings bring healing and hope to the world. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- Dear Lord, we have gathered our gifts together in this offering. Alone we are weak. Together we are strong. Let Your Will be exercised through these gifts, which we dedicate in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

