

FACTS ABOUT FIRSTFRUITS

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. (ESV)

Lessons from the First Offering

The first offering was that of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4. Cain brought an offering of fruit. Abel brought an offering from his flock. God was pleased with Abel's offering but not with Cain's offering. Why? Abel offered God the first and the fat (best) of his flock.

If it breaks God's heart to bring an inferior offering, it breaks God's heart to bring nothing at all.

In 2 Samuel 24, the prophet Gad told David to build an altar on Araunah's threshing floor to avert a plague. Araunah offered to give David the threshing floor, oxen, and everything needed for the sacrifice. David insisted on paying for the threshing floor and the oxen—

"I will not give God anything that cost me nothing." (2 Samuel 24:24)

David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver. David built an altar and made the sacrifice. The Lord answered his prayer and stopped the plague.

Does God deserve our first? Does God deserve our best?

▪ **Facts About Firstfruits**

1. Firstfruits was a time of thanksgiving for God's provision.

As you harvest your crops, bring the very best of the first harvest to the house of the LORD your God. (Exodus 23:19 NLT)

2. Firstfruits expressed the hope of a greater harvest and trust in God's future provision.

The Hebrew word for firstfruits is bikkurim. It literally means, "promise to come." The Children of Israel practiced firstfruits as an investment into their future.

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3. Firstfruits is not the tithe!

The tithe was recurrent giving—weekly or monthly. Firstfruits was an annual gift connected to the harvest. Firstfruits is an act of faith; tithing is NOT!

4. While firstfruits was an ancient OT practice, its promises are still relevant for the contemporary church.

- **How Much?**

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8 NKJ)

Our Firstfruits Challenge

One Day's Earnings

One Week's Earnings

One Month's Earnings

- **Take Another Look At God!**

1. Honor God as the owner of everything and the source of every good and perfect gift. (Psalm 24:1; James 1:17)
2. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. (Matthew 6:33)
3. Believe that God knows what we need before we ask. (Matthew 6:8)
4. Trust God to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory. (Philippians 4:19)
5. Thank God for giving us the power to produce wealth. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

How BIG is our God?

[God] is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

CONCLUSION—Are you tired of toiling?

In Luke 5, Jesus got into Simon Peter's boat and instructed the people who were on the land. He then told Peter to put out into the deep and let down the nets. Peter answered, "Master, we toiled all night and caught nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." (5)

After obeying Jesus, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. They called their partners in the other boat and they were able to fill both boats.

[God] is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

Though Peter and several of the disciples were fishermen, neither their experience nor their expertise worked. Their obedience led to abundance.

CHANGE NOTHING—NOTHING CHANGES!

The Confession of a Debtor

If I always think the way that I think, spend the way that I spend, and live the way that I live, I will always be in debt. If I change nothing, nothing changes.

You will never have a harvest as long as you mismanage the seed.