

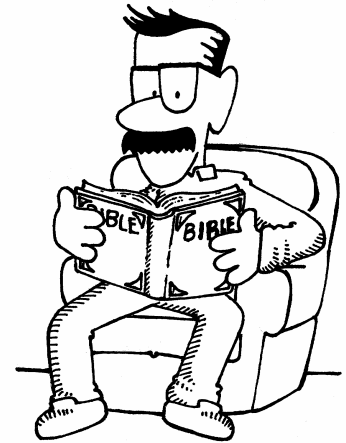
STEWARDSHIP DEVOTION

“Firstfruits Giving”

Scripture Readings:

“Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the Lord your God” (Exodus 23:19).

“I give you all the finest olive oil and all the finest new wine and grain they give the Lord as the firstfruits of their harvest. All the land’s firstfruits that they bring to the Lord will be yours” (Numbers 18:12-13).



Thoughts:

Firstfruits giving means that we give to God first rather than as leftovers after our own needs are met. When we give our firstfruits, no matter what the gift, we acknowledge that God is first in our lives and that He is the giver of all that we have. Firstfruits giving expresses the special relationship that we have with Jesus Christ.

Firstfruits giving had its origin in the Old Testament. Because the culture in the Old Testament was agricultural, the people brought crops and animals for their firstfruits offering. Acknowledging God as the owner of the harvest, Old Testament believers willingly returned to Him their firstfruits. *“On the day of firstfruits, when you present to the Lord an offering of new grain during the Feast of Weeks, hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work” (Numbers 28:26).*

The children of Israel were required to bring to the Lord their firstfruits. When the Lord is honored, He promises to bless. *“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine” (Proverbs 3:9-10).*

God gave us His first and best when He gave His one and only Son. Jesus took human form and was born of the Virgin Mary for our salvation. As His people, we receive with humility and respond with generosity. We give our firstfruits because God has given us life and all of life’s resources. Firstfruits giving calls on us to set aside our offerings to the Lord first before handling our other obligations. Love for the Lord makes our firstfruits giving possible. When we give off the top as a priority, we confirm our trust in God.

Discussion Thoughts:

Why was God pleased with Abel’s gift and not with Cain’s (Genesis 4:2b-7)?

What does firstfruits giving teach you?

As Christians, how are we to view the money we have left after we give our firstfruits?

Where should our firstfruits go?

Prayer: Lord, You are the source of all that we have. Give us wisdom to acknowledge You as our creator and provider and hearts that willingly give all that we have to You. Through Jesus we pray. Amen