

## Video 4 - Offerings for Jesus

Why also give offerings if you are already tithing? Only offerings can support all missionary expenses that the tithe cannot support, as God prescribes.

Offerings express complete surrender to God and strengthen the worshiper's affection toward Him (Matthew 6:21, NKJV). Therefore, the Israelites were instructed not to appear before the Lord empty-handed (Deuteronomy 16:16).

Malachi clarifies that God considers failure to bring offerings and the tithe as having spiritual and moral implications (Malachi 3:8-10).

According to the frequency, offerings can be classified as [1] **Regular** and [2] **Occasional**.

Solomon urges us to honor God with **Regular offerings** as regularly we are blessed with an increase or income. He says, "Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of **all** your increase" (Proverbs 3:9, NKJV). Regular offerings are not primarily given because there is a need, or in expectation of blessings, or even to appease God, but as an act of worship, a grateful response to His blessings every time we are blessed.

**Regular offerings**, as well as the tithe, should be considered the most basic expression of worship through financial stewardship.

But **how much** should we give as a **Regular offering**? A **fixed or random amount**, or a **proportion** of the income?

In the context of helping the needy, Paul suggests the principle that "**how much**" we give should be previously decided, maybe in prayer, and not left to others to decide or to feelings at the spur of the moment. He says, "each one [should] give **as he purposes in his heart**..." 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV).

Therefore, **vows**, **pledges**, or **purposes** about the "how much" may strengthen the decision to put God, His work, and others first and convey consistency to our giving. David understood it when he said, "I will pay my **vows** to the Lord... in the courts of the Lord's house..." Psalm 116:18, 19 (NKJV).

Probably the fairest and wisest way to follow Paul's suggestion to previously "purpose" what we will give is to establish in prayer **a percentage of our income** to be given as a regular offering besides the tithe. God commanded the Israelites that their offerings should be given "**in proportion** to the way the Lord your God has blessed you" (Deuteronomy 16:17, NIV). This

way, the amount given will vary proportionally according to what is earned. (This regular and percentage-based offering is called **“Promise”** today).

What we give is noted in heaven (Acts 10:1-4). But through the Poor Widow’s episode, Jesus clarified that “the value of the gift is estimated **not by the amount**, but **by the proportion** that is given and the motive that actuates the giver.” Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 342. Even giving so little, Jesus considered the Poor Widow as giving “more than all” (Mark 12:43, NKJV) because she gave **“all** that she had” (Mark 12:43, NKJV), or one hundred percent! No one can give more than that.

The Bible indicates God’s storehouse as the appropriate place for offerings (Deuteronomy 12, Malachi 3:8-10), and Jesus did not change this principle. He commended the Poor Widow for bringing her pittance to the right place even though He knew that, at that time, the temple was serviced by a corrupted priesthood, the very ones that would later kill Him.

In addition to our **“Promise”** or regular offerings, it is up to us, also under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to determine what more we should give and what other entities will receive our **Occasional Offerings**, gifts, and donations. Then, in key moments of God’s people’s story, the Holy Spirit may lead us, as He did with Barnabas, to give sacrificially, even from our nonliquid assets, like real estate. We know that all will be lost very soon anyway, and the best way to secure our possessions is to leave them in God’s hands.

Have you already decided in prayer the percentage of your income that you will regularly dedicate to the Lord as your **“Promise”** or **Regular Offering** this year?

As you pray about it, also study the Bible daily and learn more about *Offerings for Jesus!*