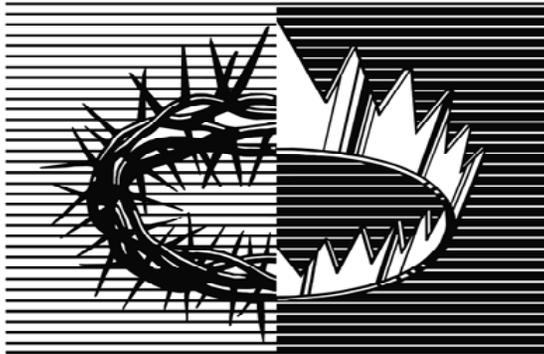


TITHE AND OFFERING READINGS



ATTENTION!

Dated material to be adapted,
translated and distributed to
Seventh-day Adventist churches
before December 2010.

2011

Faith, Promises, and Blessings

By G. Edward Reid

Elder G. Edward Reid is the stewardship director of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. He is an ordained minister and licensed attorney. He is certified as a teacher and counselor by Crown Financial Ministries and by the Christian Stewardship Association. He has served the church for just over 40 years and has been teaching stewardship for 25 years. Ed has done considerable study on the topics of Christian Money Management and Eschatology. He has written and taught extensively on these subjects. His books, *It's Your Money, Isn't It?*, *Even At The Door*, *Sunday's Coming* and *Ready or Not* have all been best-sellers at the Adventist Book Centers. He has recently been the general editor for the new *Faith and Finance* stewardship resources. Elder Reid is married to Kathy Randolph Reid who is a registered nurse, a secretary, and a homemaker. The Reids have two adult children, Andrew and Melissa.

The blessings of financial faithfulness highlight God's promises and faithfulness in providing for our needs. God has done everything possible for our salvation and in providing for our needs in this life. Our response to God's faithfulness is to be faithful to His commands to us. We therefore cheerfully and willingly bring our tithes and offerings to God.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions for future authors and themes for the **Tithe and Offering Readings.**

(For your convenience, pages i-v are repeated at the end of the readings.)

SABBATHS WITHOUT DESIGNATED OFFERINGS

There are **six Sabbaths** in 2011 that do not have designated offerings. Each Division Committee is to designate these offerings for use in their Division, Conference or Union. The Sabbaths are: March 12, May 14, June 12, July 9, September 10, and November 12.

The titles of the readings of these non-designated offerings are noted as "**Scheduled Offering: Division.**"

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERINGS FOR 2011

Southern Asia Division	March 26
Euro-Asia Division	June 25
Inter-American Division	September 24
North American Division	December 24

SCHEDULED SPECIAL OFFERINGS

SABBATH	TITLE	DATE
11 th	Adventist World Radio	March 12
15 th	World Mission Budget	April 9
20 th	Disaster and Famine Relief	May 14
28 th	World Mission Budget	July 9
37 th	World Mission Budget (Unusual Opportunities)	September 10
46 th	Annual Sacrifice (Global Mission)	November 12

Sabbath 1
January 1, 2011
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

We begin the New Year with the first verse in the Bible: *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”* (Genesis 1:1). The very first thing that the Bible establishes about God is that He is the Creator of everything. This forms the basis of everything else the Bible says about God, about who we are, and about how we should relate to God.

God is the Creator. We are his creatures.
 God is the Owner. We are His managers.

We have the privilege and the responsibility to manage what God has entrusted to us. When we bring our tithes and offerings to God we are acknowledging the special relationship that we have with Him.

We do not give because we have too much or because God needs the money. We give because of experienced grace and thankfulness that our Creator provides for us and sustains us throughout our lives.

Appeal:

Let us begin this New Year with an acknowledgement of God’s ownership and His provision for us by responding with our gifts of love to support His work in our home area. Let us bring our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

Prayer

Sabbath 2
January 8, 2011
Offering: Division

The gospel of John begins by establishing that Christ is God incarnate—the very Creator God. *“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made”* (John 1:3). *“God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it”* (Isaiah 45:18 KJV). He established the Church also, Ephesians 5:25 tells us that, *“Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.”*

Jesus entrusted His beloved church with the task of taking the gospel to the entire world. His last words before leaving this earth are recorded in Acts 1:8, *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”* Jesus saw His church encompassing the entire world—far beyond the local church setting. The local church forms the foundation but we have the great privilege and responsibility of being part of something bigger—much bigger!

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to God today, let us remember the work of God throughout our Division. Let us thank God that His work is growing around the world and for the opportunity we have to be a part of it.

Prayer

Sabbath 3
January 15, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

King David declared, *“The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein”* (Psalm 24:1). We have the joy of managing God’s property on this earth to make provision for our families, to help others, and to support the work of God.

“Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God’s children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. It is a defense for the oppressed, and a means of help to the sick. But money is of no more value than sand, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and advancing the cause of Christ” (Christ’s Object Lessons, 351). God provides for our needs plus enough to help others and advance His cause.

We can be a part of God’s answer to those who pray for assistance and spiritual knowledge that they are seeking.

Appeal:

We acknowledge God’s blessings to us today by bringing our tithes and offerings. As we live our lives let us also remember those who have special needs and the advancement of the cause of God. The needs of our local church are the focus of our offerings today.

Prayer

Sabbath 4
January 22, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

The Psalmist asked the question that each of us feels at times, *“What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward Me?”* (Psalm 116:12). When we stop to ponder how we can respond to God’s continuous blessings to us we surely wonder, “What can I do to show my gratitude to God?” David responded to his own question by stating, *“I will take up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord...I will pay my vows to the Lord, now in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem”* (vss. 4, 18, 19).

“The Lord does not need our offerings. We cannot enrich Him by our gifts... Yet God permits us to show our appreciation of His mercies by self-sacrificing efforts to extend the same to others. This is the only way in which it is possible for us to manifest our gratitude and love to God. He has provided no other” (Review and Herald, December 6, 1887).

Our offerings are a response to God’s giving to us. They are an implementation of our partnership with God—working from God’s abundance rather than our scarcity.

Appeal:

As we recall God’s benefits toward us, let us be faithful in showing Him our thankfulness and gratitude by supporting His work with our tithes and offerings.

Prayer

Sabbath 5
January 29, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

It usually only happens once or twice in our lifetimes, but some of us have had the privilege of being involved in building a house for God. It is really a solemn thought that we humans could build a house for God and yet He asked, *“Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them”* (Exodus 25:8).

King David assembled, prepared, and paid for most of the materials to build what would later be called Solomon’s Temple. He wanted to build a representative house for God. After all the building materials had been assembled at the building site, David called the leaders and lay people together to praise God. And before all the congregation he prayed in thanksgiving to God that so much material had been provided. *“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”* (1 Chronicles 29:13, 14).

The way we build and maintain our churches lets the community around us know what we think about our God and His house.

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to God today, let us remember to support the work of God here, where we live. We are God’s representatives, His ambassadors to our community.

Prayer

Sabbath 6

February 5, 2011

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

It is a familiar situation around the world. Local church leaders wish they had more funds to deal with their needs. We have some good counsel on how to deal with this problem. *“Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High. Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me”* (Psalm 50:14, 15). God says if we will be faithful with Him, we can call on Him in our day of trouble and He will deliver us!

We have an amazing promise: *“If all the tithes of our people flowed into the treasury of the Lord as they should, such blessings would be received that gifts and offerings for sacred purposes would be multiplied tenfold, and thus the channel between God and man would be kept open”* (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 474). If we would all be faithful in returning our tithes to God’s treasury, we are told that God would bless us to be able to give 10 times more in offerings—that’s 1,000% increase! There is no recession in heaven. God is eager to bless us as we work to advance His kingdom.

Appeal:

Let us claim these promises from God. If we will work together in financial faithfulness to God, He will bless us beyond our needs. We show our trust in His word by bringing our tithes and offerings to Him.

Prayer

Sabbath 7

February 12, 2011

Offering: Division

Our church organization, as a collective group of believers, has accepted the challenge of the “great commission” of Matthew 28:19, 20. Jesus has commanded us, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

Just the large cities of the world, would alone, be an overwhelming challenge. Without the help of God it would indeed be an impossible task. But He has promised to help us and be with us always. In fact God’s blessings come first as part of our covenant relationship with Him. *“He who gave His only-begotten Son to die for you, has made a covenant with you. He gives you His blessings, and in return He requires you to bring Him your tithes and offerings”* (Counsels on Stewardship, p. 75).

Our division of the church is a huge territory. But we serve a big and awesome God. He will bless us with the resources as we actively carry on His work.

Appeal:

As the managers of God’s resources let’s apply ourselves with wisdom and diligence to share the word in our division. We will fulfill the commission by His grace and our faithfulness in our tithes and offerings.

Prayer

Sabbath 8
February 19, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

The Bible indicates that as part of our worship experience that there are four elements that form the basis of our worship to God. They are prayer, Bible study, music, and our tithe and offerings.

God commanded Israel through Moses, “*They shall not appear before me empty-handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you*” (Deuteronomy 16:16, 17). So as part of our worship experience, we bring our tithes and offerings to God in proportion to the blessing of the Lord. The poor bring smaller portions and the wealthy bring the largest gifts—every man as he is able.

Today we are emphasizing the needs of our local church. This includes the maintenance and operation of the physical facilities, the services of the church, and the outreach to our community. There is a good deal happening at our local church and in order to function properly it must be supported financially by our members working together.

Appeal:

Our church, like our individual families must operate as a small business. If it is not funded properly and systematically it will soon be out of business. Let us work together and with the blessing of God we can meet our needs and share with those in need.

Prayer

Sabbath 9
February 26, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

The first mention of tithing in the Bible is found in the 14th chapter of Genesis. The setting is the story of the rescue of Lot after the invasion of the city of Sodom by four Elamite kings. These invading kings took all the wealth of Sodom and Gomorrah as plunder. They also took all the healthy people to be their slaves. This included Abram’s nephew, Lot, and his family.

When Abram learned of the capture of Lot and his family he armed his own trained servants and set out to rescue the hostages and the goods of Sodom. By the blessing of God, Abram was successful and brought the people and the goods back. The king of Sodom expressed his gratitude by offering to give all of the rescued goods to Abram. Imagine being offered the wealth of two cities!

Abram refused the offer of wealth for himself, but gave a tithe or tenth of it to Melchizedek, God’s high priest. Abram’s example of faithfulness to God earned him the title “Father of the Faithful.” We can note as we read through the Bible that the faithful people obey the commands of God.

Appeal:

As we support the work of our church let us join the faithful of all the ages in returning our tithe and offerings to God.

Prayer

Sabbath 10
March 5, 2011
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

There is a reflex action to giving. In Luke's account of Jesus' well-known Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes this concept plain: *"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you"* (Luke 6:38).

What a promise! Jesus says that if we use a large measure to give our gifts, He will use a large measure to bless us. Of course, we don't give to get blessings. We give from the blessings that God has already given us. God is so faithful and generous that He blesses us first. None-the-less, the blessings are promised.

When we think about our local church, there is much for which to be thankful. We have a Biblically based message and a church family that provides fellowship and support. We have a church organization that is focused on taking the gospel to the world. And, most of all, we have a God that keeps His word to provide for our needs.

Appeal:

In the words of the old gospel song, "count your blessings—name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done." As we return our tithe and offerings today, let us thank God for His faithfulness in providing for our needs.

Prayer

Sabbath 11
March 12, 2011
Offering: Adventist World Radio

Historically, Adventist World Radio has focused its broadcasts on the hardest-to-reach places of the world, carrying the gospel to people who would not have the opportunity to hear God's message through any other mean.

AWR has added a new delivery system that enables ALL of its radio programs to be automatically repurposed as Internet podcasts. Now listeners can access AWR's programs in any corner of the world where there is Internet service.

It hasn't taken long for the responses to begin coming in. AWR received an e-mail from an Ethiopian man living in Dallas, Texas (USA). He had moved there for work and also brought his family, but they spoke very little English, especially his mother. He wrote:

"I was excited to find the Amharic program of AWR the other day. I have been listening to it almost every day. As well, my mother has been enjoying the program. She would like to pass on her humble greetings. She appreciates all your programs, for they are the best one can find. Thank you for the well-planned and articulated programs that you present every day. Keep up the good work."

Appeal:

With your help, AWR can keep adding new languages and reach ever-further into untouched territories. We invite you today to partner with AWR in this vital ministry.

Sabbath 12
March 19, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

In Proverbs, the book of wisdom, the counsel is given, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths”* (Proverbs 3:5, 6). And following up on that advice Solomon adds, *“Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine”* (vss. 9, 10).

When we acknowledge God “in all our ways” that includes every aspect of our lives. We desire to please Him because we know that He has both the desire and the ability to bless us and to provide for our needs. God asks us to honor Him with our possessions and put Him first so that He can bless the rest—that which remains in our possession.

The followers of God can give testimony to the fact that God fulfills His promises. This wonderful promise is for our benefit.

Appeal:

Let us remember Proverbs 3 as we return our tithes and offerings today. When we support our local church we are supporting the work of God at its most basic level.

Prayer

Sabbath 13
March 26, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

The Bible indicates that God observes the offerings given by His people. In Mark 12 and Luke 21 the Bible records that Jesus watched as the parishioners brought their gifts to the Lord’s treasury. Many were placing gifts in the offering box that required of them no sacrifice. Then a widow woman put two little pennies into the box. It was all she had. *“To make her offering, the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life, trusting God to supply her needs for the morrow”* (Acts of the Apostles, 342).

Jesus commended her act of self-sacrifice. It is significant to us today for two reasons. First, her sacrificial gift has been an inspiration to others for centuries. And second, she loved God and His church in spite of the corruptness of the church leaders. To those who question whether or not to support the church when there are questions about its human leadership note that she gave everything she had to a church that was just about to kill Jesus – and He commended her for doing it. *“Those self-sacrificing, consecrated ones who render back to God the things that are His, as He requires of them, will be rewarded according to their works. Even though the means thus consecrated be misapplied, so that it does not accomplish the object which the donor had in view—the glory of God and the salvation of souls—those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward”* (Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 519).

Appeal:

Let us respond with our tithes and offerings today.

Sabbath 14**April 2, 2011****Offering: Outreach/Church Budget**

Every person and every family has basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Sometimes when the money is in short supply, we worry and fret over these necessities. Jesus said, *“Do not worry, saying ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or what shall we wear?’... But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”* (Matthew 6:31, 33).

It just seems natural to worry about our need. But we are told, *“Worry is blind and cannot discern the future, but Jesus sees the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief”* (*Desire of Ages*, p.330).

King David stated near the end of his life, *“I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendents begging bread”* (Psalm 37:25).

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to God let us honor Him as the one who provides for the birds and flowers and has promised to provide for us as well. Let us put Jesus first, last, and best on our lives today.

Prayer**Sabbath 15****April 9, 2011****Offering: World Mission Budget**

Did you know that there are more than 13,000 spoken languages in the world? And that there is no Adventist work of any sort in more than 12,500 of them?

Did you know that there are more than 1,400 groups of 10,000 or more people who don't have a single phrase of Scripture written in their mother tongue?

Twice a year the offering taken during our church service goes to support mission work around the world.

It helps fund missionaries, hospitals, clinics, schools, and churches. And it helps print literature and prepare broadcasts so that people who may otherwise never know of Jesus can hear or read about Him in their own language.

Appeal:

Today we have a special opportunity to share words of hope and love. Your help is appreciated. Thank you for supporting the World Mission Offerings and reaching a world in need.

Prayer

Sabbath 16
April 16, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

In the book of Acts Jesus is quoted as saying “*It is more blessed to give than to receive*” (Acts 20:35). How could this be? Could we really be happier giving a gift than receiving one? A study of the setting lets us know.

“Nearly all the Macedonian believers were poor in this world's goods, but their hearts were overflowing with love for God and His truth, and they gladly gave for the support of the gospel. When general collections were taken up in the Gentile churches for the relief of the Jewish believers, the liberality of the converts in Macedonia was held up as an example to other churches... Unselfish liberality threw the early church into a transport of joy; for the believers knew that their efforts were helping to send the gospel message to those in darkness. Their benevolence testified that they had not received the grace of God in vain. What could produce such liberality but the sanctification of the Spirit? In the eyes of believers and unbelievers it was a miracle of grace” (Counsels on Stewardship, 171, 172).

The church family was happy and excited about the spread of the gospel and felt that indeed it was a blessing to sacrificially support the work of God.

Appeal:

It is exciting today to see the work of God moving forward around the world. Let us join with the Macedonian believers to experience the happiness of giving to the on-going work of God with our tithes and offerings today.

Prayer

Sabbath 17
April 23, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1 2). Of all the things we are stewards of, the mysteries of God must be the greatest responsibility. God has chosen us, His church family, to be stewards of the gospel message. We are given the responsibility of sharing the good news about Jesus with the entire world!

Jesus could have used angels to do this most important work, but instead, He has given us this task. It is for our own good and well-being that God is using us. We get to participate with Him in His work for the salvation of mankind. Once we realize and accept this stewardship privilege we must be faithful. This means that we are steady and trustworthy in sharing that which we have been given with the entire world.

This task is even more challenging when we realize the time factor involved. We are living and working in the very end of time. Our faithfulness now will mean the salvation of many people around the world.

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to God today, let us do so as faithful stewards of the gospel that we love so dearly. Let us respond with joy to the needs of God's cause.

Prayer

Sabbath 18
April 30, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

Since the end of World War II much of the world has experienced considerable prosperity. We have witnessed the further development of the automobile, color televisions, computers, cell phones and much more. As one would expect, with this prosperity, our tithe has increased dramatically. But unfortunately, our offerings have actually decreased as a percentage of income over this period of prosperity.

Since God has given us a percentage (10%) for the tithe but not a percentage for the offerings, apparently some members have felt that offerings were less important to God. However, a careful reading of Malachi 3:6-11, points out that failure to bring our offerings to God along with our tithe is also considered robbery of God. Our offerings are given from the 90% that remains in our possession after our tithe is returned to God. This is where our generosity begins.

Instead of giving us a percentage for offerings, God gives us a measurement that is based on His blessings to us. He says, "*They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. Everyman shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord which He has given you*" (Deuteronomy 16:16, 17).

Appeal:

Let us bring our offerings to the Lord in proportion to the blessings He has given us. The poor will bring smaller offerings and those more prosperous larger gifts.

Sabbath 19
May 7, 2010
Outreach/Church Budget

Matthew 13:44 is one of the shortest parables of Jesus in the Bible. "*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*"

This parable illustrates the value of the heavenly treasure, and the effort that we should make to secure it. The man who found the treasure was ready to part with all that he had, ready to put forth great efforts, in order to secure the hidden riches. In the same way, we who have found the heavenly treasure will count no labor too great and no sacrifice too dear, in order to gain the treasures of truth.

The value of this treasure is far above gold or silver. The riches of earth cannot compare with it. The good news of the gospel gets even better when we realize that we don't have to hide it. We can share the joy with others as we witness to the wonderful gift of God to each of us. The offerings we give to support our local church, plant and nourish a witness for God in our community.

Appeal:

As we present our tithes and offerings to God today, let us remember the value of the treasure that we have been given. Let us be joyful in the knowledge that others may learn of the treasure as a result of our gifts to God's cause. We support our local church so it can be a light, where we live and worship, to show others the treasure.

Prayer

Sabbath 20

May 14, 2011

Offering: Disaster and Famine Relief

(Program provided for NAD only)

“More blessings come from giving than from receiving.”

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is working to improve the lives of millions of God’s children around the world, regardless of age, religion, ethnicity, or political affiliation. Thanks to ADRA’s commitment to saving lives, many communities who have been affected by armed conflicts, droughts, diseases, and natural disasters are finding hope for the future.

With your support ADRA brings light to the darkness, hope to the hopeless. Your gifts make it possible for ADRA to plan and respond effectively. Every cup of water, every morsel of food, every life-saving medicine that is given to one of God’s precious children in need happens because of your support. And while you may not have the opportunity to bring hope and compassion face to face to each individual, you are there when you enable ADRA to do these things.

Appeal

Today we have the opportunity to be agents of blessing. Jesus said, *“And if anyone gives even a cup of water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward”* Matthew 10:42 (NIV). Your generous gift allows ADRA to save lives and to provide short-term relief and long-term rehabilitation, to children, women and men in the greatest need. It will also give each of us the opportunity to wrap our arms around the world’s most vulnerable, sharing our blessings with them and showing them the love of God.

Sabbath 21

May 21, 2011

Offering: Church Budget

The Lord says, *“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now in this Says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field”* (Malachi 3:10, 11).

As God frequently does, He gives us the command to tithe coupled with a promise of great blessing! He says that if we will be faithful to bring all our tithe to the storehouse, not keeping some of it back for other purposes or an incorrect amount, then He will open the windows of heaven on our behalf. He says that the blessing will be more than enough to meet our own needs. Entire books of testimonies from families who have experienced God’s promised blessings have been written.

In verse 11 of this passage God says, *“I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes.”* We know that things wear out, they break down, and weather problems can harm our crops, but God says we will be able see His protection and provision on our behalf if we are faithful to Him.

Appeal:

As we return our tithes and offerings to God, let us accept the challenge and make it a part of our covenant with God. He invites us to do so!

Prayer

Sabbath 22
May 28, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

Sometimes we get attached to our possessions. We get a certain satisfaction from owning things. Some of our possessions can even become idols in the sense that we think about them frequently. In his first general epistle John wrote, *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever”* (1 John 2:15-17).

There are repeated warnings in the Bible that we should not get too attached to things of this earth. For example, *“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”* (Matthew 6:33). Do we want a heart for this world or do we desire a place in God’s eternal kingdom? If we put our treasures in God’s work and His kingdom, then our hearts will be there too.

We need many of our possessions to live on this earth but we must be careful not to put our total focus on them. As we are told of projects that support work in our conference, we can become involved by supporting it.

Appeal:

We all know that, “the world is passing away” along with all of our possessions. It is time now to act on that knowledge and use our resources to advance the cause of God while we can. Many people are eager to learn what we know.

Sabbath 23
June 4, 2011
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

Our offering today will be used to support our local church. We have building projects, maintenance, utilities, educational materials, and much more. When the sanctuary was being build in the days of Moses, God told him to accept offerings from the people with “willing hearts.” The Bible record states, *“This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, ‘Take from among you an offering to the Lord. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the Lord’...[And so] The children of Israel brought a freewill offering to the Lord, all the men and women whose hearts were willing to bring material for all kinds of work, which the Lord, by hand of Moses, had commanded to be done”* (Exodus 35:4, 5, 29).

There was no coercion. The need was explained and the people with willing hearts brought their gifts. You will remember from reading the story that the people brought more than enough to finish the work and Moses had to ask them to stop giving! (Exodus 36:4-7).

When the needs of our church are brought before us, we can respond willingly and with joy for the opportunity of being involved in the work of God on this earth.

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to the Lord, let us do so with willing hearts and in sufficient amounts to fill the needs of our church. Let us follow the example of God’s faithful people in the past.

Prayer

Sabbath 24
June 11, 2011
Offering: Division

We belong to a unique and special church. We are a prophetic movement, with a prophetic messenger, and a prophetic message. We understand that in the count-down of the ages, God has asked us to give this special message, His last warning message, to the entire world. And we are to turn the attention of the world back to God as the creator of everything. Our message is so important that God sends them via angel messengers in the Bible.

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water’” (Revelation 14:6, 7). Our church has divided the world into 13 divisions of the world. We have done this in order to provide leadership, planning, and personnel to complete this world-wide task.

We can truly thank God that by the powerful aid of the Holy Spirit the work is going forward in many places. But there is much to be done.

Appeal:

We return our tithes and offerings to God today in support of taking the message He has given us to the entire world. Our division oversees a vast territory and the leaders need our support to carry on the work.

Prayer

Sabbath 25
June 18, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

The story of the Rich Young Ruler is so significant that the Bible records it in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This earnest, decent, hardworking, young professional asked Jesus what he could do to inherit eternal life. Jesus started reciting the 10 Commandments, to which the young man said, *“All these I have kept from my youth”* (Luke 18:21).

Then Jesus delivered His bombshell bottom line: *“You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me”* (vs. 22). Notice that Jesus didn't tell the young man to give 10% to the poor. Neither did He tell him to set up a trust fund, keep the principal in tack, and give the interest to the poor. The young man would likely have been willing to do either of those things. But Jesus stopped him dead in his tracks by tell him to give up everything and then follow Him.

Jesus did not and does not ask all of His disciples to liquidate their possessions, give away all their money, and pull up stakes and become traveling missionaries. But Jesus knew that money was the rich young man's god. Jesus also knew that no man can enthrone the true God unless in the process he chooses to dethrone his other gods. If Christ is not Lord over our money and possessions, then He is simply not our Lord.

Appeal:

When we contemplate this fascinating story let us take time to make sure our priorities are in line with God ideal for us.

Sabbath 26
June 25, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

Our Church is organized for service. The conferences and unions provide communication to the members in the form of newsletters, emails, satellite meetings and much more. These organizations also provide assistance to each local church by providing assistance with educational facilities and materials.

The coordination of public evangelism is frequently handled by the conference and mission fields. This can be done by providing materials for lay-led meetings, personnel to conduct public meetings, and give counsel to anyone who desires to become involved in any type of personal or public evangelism. The conference also pays the pastors from the tithe that is sent in and provides for their care.

It is also common for the conference which heads up a sisterhood of churches to have some facilities for youth camps and or conference retreat centers. By working together to support the work of the conference local churches can enjoy benefits that would not generally be available to each church on its own.

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to the Lord, we can thank Him for outlining the detailed responsibilities of His church in the wilderness. By supporting our conference we help ourselves by being able to access the services provided.

Prayer

Sabbath 27
July 2, 2011
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

The early New Testament church was characterized by its liberality. Passages like Acts 2:44, 45 and Acts 4:32-35 speak of total financial commitment to the cause of God to the point that “no one thought that any of his possessions was his own.” They cheerfully brought their assets to the apostles for the benefit of others and the cause of God.

“Unselfish liberality threw the early church into a transport of joy; for the believers knew that their efforts were helping to send the gospel message to those in darkness. Their benevolence testified that they had not received the grace of God in vain. What could produce such liberality but the sanctification of the Spirit? In the eyes of believers and unbelievers it was a miracle of grace” (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 344).

If we keep our possessions for our own selfish purposes, it will be to our own eternal loss. But if we help others and the cause of God we are both a blessing to others and we will be blessed ourselves. Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (Luke 6:38).

Appeal:

As we return our tithes and offerings today, let us do so in the spirit of the early church—with cheerfulness and liberality.

Prayer

Sabbath 28
July 9, 2011
Offering: World Mission Budget

Did you know that there are more than 6600 distinct people groups in the world that have few or no Christians living among them?

For more than 130 years mission has been the heartbeat of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We've helped thousands come to know God and to experience His love. Yet, as you can see, huge challenges remain. We know that with God's help we can fulfill His commission to share the gospel with every kindred, tongue, and people. And today we have a special opportunity to support this work.

Throughout the year your generous Sabbath School offerings help fund the worldwide mission work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But today's offering, taken during our church service, provides crucial additional support for all aspects of world mission, including cross-cultural missionaries, building churches, operating schools and medical clinics, and large city evangelism. Thank you for your support.

Appeal:

Let us continue to be faithful stewards in sustaining the Lord's work.

Prayer

Sabbath 29
July 16, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

The book of Proverbs was most likely written in the middle portion of Solomon's life. Therefore, he had the benefit of many years experience in trusting and believing in God. In addition, he had the knowledge of God's dealings with his father David. Like many of the early proverbs, chapter three begins with the words "My son." The counsel therefore comes for an experienced father to a youthful son.

Solomon admonished his son and us as well, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones" (Proverbs 3:5-8).

With this foundational wisdom in mind, Solomon adds, "Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine" (vss. 9, 10). This passage is similar to the counsel given by David, Solomon's father. "Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me" (Psalm 50:14, 15).

Appeal:

So the counsel from both David and Solomon is the same. In times of financial difficulty, put God first and He will take care of you. Let us do so now with our tithes and offerings.

Sabbath 30
July 23, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

As Christians we have some secrets for a contented and satisfying life that many in the world are just discovering. Recent scientific studies indicate that an active religious life and a habit of giving combine to provide a longer and happier life. Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Douglas M. Lawson noted, "The influence of religious devotion has been documented in two studies of Mormons and Seventh-day Adventists. Researchers found that the risk of cancer among active members of these groups was only about 50% as great as that of the average person; the risk of heart attack only 35% of average. Both groups frown on smoking, drinking and overeating, but they also place a great emphasis on practical charity. It may well be that the practice of brotherly love contributes to their members' greater life expectancy as much as do their lifestyles" (*More, Give to Live—How Giving Can Change Your Life*, p. 32).

As Adventists, it is just part of our lifestyle. We enjoy giving to help others and to advance the cause of God. And God has blessed us with an abundant life. When we face challenging times it is then that we realize the value of our relationship with our Creator and Savior.

Appeal:

Today we support the work of our conference and union as we bring our offerings to the Lord.

Sabbath 31
July 30, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

Tucked away in the story of Elijah's encounters with King Ahab is a fascinating story of sacrifice and commitment. It is the story of the Widow of Zerahath. It is recorded in 1 Kings 17:9-16.

When Elijah first encounters the widow she is gathering sticks to build a fire. He called out to her and asked for a drink of water. Then as she is going to get the water he calls out to her again and asks for some bread. She explained that she was planning her last meal and that she expected that soon she and her son would die of starvation. Then Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid, make me a cake first and bring it to me and then make one for you and your son. For thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.'"

Should we ask a single parent in this condition to support the work of God with tithe? Note this report, "The widow of Zerahath shared her morsel with Elijah, and in return her life and that of her son were preserved. And to all who, in time of trial and want, give sympathy and assistance to others more needy, God has promised a great blessing. He has not changed. His power is no less now than in the days of Elijah" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 131).

Appeal:

As we return our tithes and offerings to God let us recall the story of the widow and take hope that God will supply our needs as well.

Sabbath 32**August 6, 2011****Offering: Outreach/Church Budget**

Bringing a gift to God who needs nothing could seem rather absurd to someone unfamiliar with the Bible. What does God lack? What does He desire? Since God is the Owner of everything and doesn't need help from us when He is hungry, what could we possibly give Him that could satisfy any need?

King David asked the same question: "What shall I render to the Lord for all of His benefits toward me?" (Psalm 116:12). He answers the question by accepting the gift of salvation and pledging himself to be faithful in his vows—tithes and offerings—that he paid in the presence of God's people in the Lord's house.

But there are three good reasons that we bring our offerings to God. First, since He doesn't need the money, God uses our gifts to support projects and people that are dear to Him—like helping the poor. In fact, He says that when we help the poor, we are actually helping Him.

The second reason Jesus needs our gifts is to advance His work on the earth—to support His church. The church is very dear to God. He spent much of His personal capital providing leaders for His church and giving gifts to support it. The third reason that God accepts our gifts is so He can bless us. "Give and it shall be given to you" (Luke 6:38).

Appeal:

As we return our tithes and offerings let us thank God that we can have a part in His plans for the earth. We are working together with God!

Sabbath 33**August 13, 2011****Offering: Division**

Just before Moses died he gathered all Israel together and gave them three sermons or public presentations. He reviewed the blessings and providential leadings of God and then encouraged the people to be faithful to God's laws that were given in the form of statutes or commandments.

Then Moses outlined God's plan for a central sanctuary and storehouse where they were to gather three times a year for worship and the presentation of their tithes and offerings. "But when you go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit..., then there will be the place which the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes,...and all your choice offerings which you vow to the Lord" (Deut. 12:10, 11).

At Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, all the men of Israel would journey to Jerusalem to worship God and bring Him their tithes and offerings. God told them, "They shall not appear before the Lord empty handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you" (Deut. 16:16, 17). From that central storehouse the tithes were sent out to the Levites for their support.

Appeal:

So let us bring our tithes and offerings to the Lord and challenge Him to open the windows of heaven and pour out His blessings upon us.

Sabbath 34
August 20, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

We have probably all thought at some time about how different our lives would be and how generous we would be if we had “lots and lots” of money. Ever wonder what the Bible says about wealth? The general theme is that, though it is God’s desire that we all prosper, we must recognize that wealth carries a tremendous responsibility and in many cases will be the eternal downfall of its possessor.

In fact, 2 Timothy 3:1, 2, indicates that selfishness and materialism heads the list of vices in the last days. Ellen White stated, “Whatever shall draw away the heart from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. The love of money, the desire for wealth, is the golden chain that binds them to Satan” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 44).

The wise man said, “Give me neither poverty nor riches—feed me with the food allotted to me; lest I be full and deny You and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:8, 9). So let us be content with what God has given us and give as He blesses us.

Appeal:

Our goal as committed Christians is to take what God has given us in time, talents, body temple, and our treasures, and trade with them with the perspective of bringing profit to His kingdom.

Prayer

Sabbath 35
August 27, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

An interesting and amazing story is recorded in 2 Chronicles chapter 20. King Jehoshaphat of Judah was facing a fearful crisis. A great multitude of enemies was coming to make war on his little kingdom. The king had prepared for many years by strengthening his army and fortifying his cities. But in this crisis he did not depend on this own strength but in the power of God.

So Jehoshaphat set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast in all Judah. The people gathered together and the king prayed, “We have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us, nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”

Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon a man of God who said, “Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s... You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord” (2 Chron. 20:15, 17).

The next morning the king admonished his people, “Believe the Lord your God, and you shall be established, believe His prophets, and you shall prosper” (vs. 20). Then the choir began to sing and their enemies destroyed one another and no one escaped.

Appeal:

We face great challenges today. The enemy is trying his best to make things difficult for us and for the work of God. Let us put our confidence in God and give to support His work in this world.

Sabbath 36
September 3, 2011
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

God has stated that our offerings are part of our worship and praise experience. But why are there so many offerings? To some it seems like the needs are unending. The good news is that there are many great opportunities right now at home and around the world to advance the cause of God.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is unique among Protestant Churches in its commitment to a worldwide work. We take the Great Commission seriously. We can be thankful that we have brothers and sisters around the world that support the work of God as we do.

In every country where we are working, the local church is the contact point with its local community. It is at the local church community where we interact with others. Many are longing for something better and will gladly hear the Word of God explained.

Our Sabbath School Expense offering provides for our own needs and our Mission offerings bless the ever expanding work around the world. Today at offering time we emphasize the needs of our local church. Our local church budget helps us maintain our facilities and provides the funds for our outreach to those around us.

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to God let us also thank Him for the privilege we have of being a part of a local church and the worldwide church.

Sabbath 37
September 10, 2011
Offering: World Mission (Unusual Opportunities)

Surprises happen every day all around the world. God opens doors, minds, and hearts. And suddenly exciting opportunities exist for mission that was impossible before.

Today's World Mission Offering for Unusual Opportunities will give us the ability to respond quickly when God leads. Your gift may be used to send missionaries to a just opened area where no one knows about God.

Perhaps it will build a school to train young people to be Bible workers where such schools weren't allowed before. Or it may print Bibles or literature for people who have never before studied the Scriptures in their own language.

However it is used, it will bring hope to millions who may have never heard about the carpenter who died because He loved them and is coming soon to take them home.

Appeal:

Your offering can help us take one step forward in telling the world about Jesus. Thank you for your generous support.

Prayer:

Sabbath 38
September 17, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

The key to a right use of money and possessions is a right perspective—an eternal perspective! This means a worldview with a Biblical perspective—seeing life from God’s point of view. The Bible devotes twice as many verses to money than to faith and prayer combined. Jesus said more about money than both heaven and hell. Apparently Jesus knew the strong power that money would have to distract His people.

When an earnest, decent, hardworking, professional young man asked Jesus what he could do to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me” (Luke 18:21).

Jesus did not and does not ask all of His disciples to liquidate their possessions, give away all their money, and pull up stakes to become traveling missionaries. But Jesus knew that money was the rich young man’s god and that his money stood between him and eternal life.

Appeal:

As we bring our tithes and offerings to Jesus we thereby acknowledge God’s ownership and we put Him first in our lives. Giving is God’s plan to combat selfishness.

Prayer:

Sabbath 39
September 24, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

On a regular basis Adventist churches support the work of God beyond our local needs. We are therefore working together to fulfill the great commission. No individual member, no single congregation, not even a mega church could take the gospel to all the world. But by working together as a sisterhood of churches, with God’s blessing, we have developed an structure from which to work and to evaluate the needs and plan for the work of God.

When Jesus said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth...Go therefore...I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20), He was this side of the crucifixion and the resurrection. He was standing just a step away from His heavenly home. He was now the risen Savior. These words were the announcement that His sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete.

We are told, “*To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off*” (Gospel Workers, p. 465).

Appeal:

As we return our tithes and offerings today we are joining with our brothers and sisters around the world to advance the cause of God. Let us join cheerfully in helping to fulfill God’s commission to us.

Sabbath 40**October 1, 2011****Offering: Outreach/Church Budget**

The first 10 verses of Luke chapter 19 tell the story of Zacchaeus. We learn that he was a rich tax collector who was short of stature. But he wanted to see Jesus. Apparently, the Holy Spirit had been wooing his heart and he had begun to make some changes in his life.

Zacchaeus learned that Jesus was coming to Jericho where he lived. He went to the busy street where Jesus was to pass by and could not see for the crowd. He ran ahead and climbed up into a tree. Then Jesus stopped under this tree and called him by name and asked him to come down because he wanted to eat with him that day.

The story ends with Zacchaeus saying he would pay back four times over to those he had cheated and then he would give half of his goods to the poor. Just one encounter with Jesus changed his attitude toward money. Then Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9). Jesus judged the reality of this man's salvation based on his willingness, his cheerful eagerness, to part with his money for the glory of God and the good of others.

Appeal:

As we return our tithe and offerings today let us, like Zacchaeus, have that encounter with Jesus that will lead us to be honest with others and generously support the work of God.

Prayer**Sabbath 41****October 8, 2011****Offering: Division**

God has charged His remnant church with taking the gospel message to all the world. However, in our everyday world we have a tendency to trust in our jobs or our bank accounts for security. So in times of uncertainty we become quite concerned. But Jesus tells us, "Do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:31-33).

Jesus announced, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). When we study the characters of the Bible we see than many made wrong decisions about money. The rich young ruler traded all of eternity for a life on this earth. The rich fool traded a plush retirement for a home in heaven. Lot entered Sodom a wealthy man and came out with absolutely nothing. When we only think of ourselves we lose a lot. When we think of God and others God blesses our families.

We can have the joy and satisfaction of knowing that we are in partnership and covenant relationship with our Creator and Redeemer.

Appeal:

As we return our tithes today let us also be generous with our offerings to God's cause to show our thankfulness to Him for His provision in our lives.

Sabbath 42
October 15, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

As you read through the Bible you quickly note that when God's people trusted and obeyed Him, He blessed and protected them. But when they turned away from God and depended on their own resources, they got themselves into serious problems.

A good example of this is recorded in 1 Chronicles 21:1-4. It is the story of David's numbering of Israel. The story begins, "Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel." Notice it was Satan's idea to tempt David to count the number of Israel's men who were ready for fighting. He tempted David to trust in his own strength rather to depend on the providence of God. David paid a terrible price for yielding to Satan's suggestion.

When we face financial problems in our lives, Satan is ready to tempt us to trust in ourselves rather than God. When we are financially faithful with our tithes and offerings we demonstrate our spiritual commitment to God. This is by far the most significant spiritual factor in life management for the Christian.

Appeal:

It is in times of trial and adversity that our characters are developed and demonstrated. Let us show God and the world that our trust is in Him. Let us claim the many promises of God as we return our tithes and offerings to Him today.

Prayer

Sabbath 43
October 22, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

When Jesus returns to this earth, the Bible says that the righteous excitedly say, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isaiah 25:9). And Jesus responds to this group, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord" (Matthew 25:21).

We all want to hear the words "Well done." We can see from the Bible that these words are only spoken to those who manage their money Christianly. We must use the "talents" that God has given us to His glory.

We are told, "The parable of the talents has not been fully understood. This important lesson was given to the disciples for the benefit of Christians living in the last days. And these talents do not represent merely the ability to preach and instruct from the Word of God. The parable applies to the temporal means that God has entrusted to His people...God requires those who have possessions here, to put their money out to usury for Him—to put it into the cause to spread the truth" (Testimonies, vol. 1, p.197).

Appeal:

In the parable of the talents we see that those who are unfaithful servants lose their eternal life. The reason for the serious consequences is that the way we use our money shows where our heart is. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).

Sabbath 44
October 29, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

When stewardship is reduced to its basic definition, it is the management of another's property, finances, or other affairs. It is almost beyond our comprehension to recognize that God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, trusts us to manage His property and affairs on earth. It is indeed a high honor and a serious responsibility to manage for Him.

Stewardship involves life-management for God. Healthful living is stewardship of our body temples. We manage our time by keeping the Sabbath holy and setting aside time for our families, others, and God's work. We are also stewards of the mysteries of God—the gospel. That is really the highest level of stewardship.

We must realize that our highest aim in life is to be ready for heaven. When it comes to money Jesus asks us. "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36, 37).

Appeal:

May we, by God's grace, live our lives in such a way that soon we shall hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant...Enter into the joy of your Lord." Let us manage what God has entrusted to us in time, talents, and our treasures so that we can bring glory to His name.

Prayer

Sabbath 45
November 5, 2011
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

Sometimes when we see the mistakes of other members and even church leaders, we are tempted to withhold our financial support for the church. Ellen White was asked about what to do in this situation and here is her response: "*Those self-sacrificing, consecrated ones who render back to God the things that are His, as He requires of them, will be rewarded according to their works. Even though the means thus consecrated be misapplied, so that it does not accomplish the object which the donor had in view—the glory of God and the salvation of souls—those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward*" (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 519).

Our local church, as a service organization to its members and the community at large, needs money to function. When we follow the Biblical model of church finance, our local needs are met primarily from our offerings of church members. Our tithes are used for the salaries of church workers. We give our offerings, not on a set percentage like the tithe, but as God has prospered us. (Deuteronomy 16:17; 1 Corinthians 16:2) Sometimes if there is a shortfall of funds in the local church, some members suggest the use of tithe for local expenses or building programs. However, this would be in violation of God's expressed commands and would not lead to His blessings.

Appeal:

Let us be faithful with our tithes and offerings and claim the promises of God to provide for our other needs.

Sabbath 46**November 12, 2011****Offering: Annual Sacrifice (Global Mission)**

Every day we are bombarded by bad news. But we have a special hope. We know that a loving God wins in the end. We know that sadness, death, and pain will be history. But what about the millions who don't know? What about those who live in fear and despair?

Did you know that there are more than two dozen countries or regions of the world where there isn't a single Adventist church for people to hear God's end-time message? That there are still millions who have never even heard of His love?

The challenge is huge. But God's power and grace are bigger! His commission to reach every kindred, tongue, and people is a promise that if we let Him, He will use us to do more than we could ever imagine.

Today's offering will help Global Mission carry the gospel to the unreached people and areas of the world. Every penny will be used to help start new groups of believers.

Appeal:

Your offering today will bring hope to someone in need. It will share the best news ever with those living in a bad-news world. Thank you for your generous support of Global Mission.

Prayer**Sabbath 47****November 19, 2011****Offering: Church Budget**

Our worship experience each Sabbath is a time to praise and honor God. We do so with our music, our testimonies, and our offerings. We are told, "*The greatest praise that men can bring to God is to become consecrated channels through whom He can work. Time is rapidly passing into eternity. Let us not keep back from God that which is His own. Let us not refuse Him that which, though it cannot be given with merit, cannot be denied without ruin. He asks for a whole heart; give it to Him; it is His, both by creation and by redemption. He asks for your intellect; give it to Him; it is His. He asks for your money; give it to Him; it is His. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."*" 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20" (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 566).

Isaiah records, "If you are willing and obedient you will eat the good of the land" (1:19). God is capable of doing whatever He says He will do. For example, there were many promises made to Israel on their way to the promised land. And Joshua who took the people into the land of Canaan was able to record, "The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass" (Joshua 21:44, 45).

Appeal: God has made many promises to those who are faithful to Him with their tithes and offerings. We can claim them with confidence as we bring them to God.

Prayer

Sabbath 48

November 26, 2011

Offering: Conference/Union

The first 14 verses of Deuteronomy 28 outline the blessings that God has promised for those that obey Him. “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord Your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God” (vss. 1, 2). And then follows twelve verse worth of blessings,

The blessings conclude with these words, “The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only and not beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them” (vss. 12, 13).

These are some of the most profound and practical promises made in the entire Bible.

Appeal:

God is faithful and He loves to fulfill His promises to us. We can claim the promises if we diligently obey and carefully observe all of His commands to us. We now bring our tithes and offerings from His blessings to us.

Prayer

Sabbath 49

December 3, 2011

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

Many Christians give from their abundance. We usually give from the surplus of our means. We know that the work of God at the time of the apostles and the early church and even at the time of the beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist church was characterized by real sacrifice. We also know that the work of God will end on this earth in an environment of sacrifice.

We can define sacrifice when we look at the three legitimate uses of money. We are told, “*Money has great value, because it can do great good...But money is of no more value than, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and advancing the cause of God*” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 351). God always blesses us first—before we return our tithes. The balance of funds in our possession are then use to provide for our families, bless others, and advance the cause of God. Sacrifice is most likely to occur when we are willing to allocate funds from that portion that we would normally spend on ourselves to use toward the advancement of God’s cause.

Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matthew 16:24).

Appeal: As we plan toward finishing the work of God in this world let us sacrifice together to this end. We will now return our tithes and offerings to our Savior and Lord.

Prayer

Sabbath 50
December 10, 2011
Offering: Division

One of the greatest challenges held out to the church today is the benefit of faithful tithing. We are all familiar with the one in Malachi 3:10. But we are also told, *“If all the tithes of our people flowed into the treasury of the Lord as they should, such blessings would be received that gifts and offerings for sacred purposes would be multiplied tenfold, and thus the channel between God and man would be kept open”* (Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 474).

It's just one sentence, yet so filled with significance. Think of it. The promise is that we would be so blessed for our faithful tithing that our gifts and offerings would be multiplied tenfold. Ten times more! That is 1,000% increase! Under these circumstances we would never have to say “no” to any need at home or around the world.

There are only two conditions: (1) All the people tithing, and (2) the tithe flowing into the treasury of the Lord as it should. These are the same conditions of prosperity that are outlined in Malachi 3: 6-11.

But the opposite side is true as well: *“If only half of the people do their duty, the treasury will not be supplied with the necessary funds and many parts of the work of God must be left incomplete”* (Counsels on Stewardship, p. 47).

Appeal: Let us determine to uphold the line of faithfulness where we stand. Let us claim this greatest of all stewardship promises. We will now receive the tithes and offerings for God.

Prayer

Sabbath 51
December 17, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

We give our offerings in response to experienced grace. *“The Lord does not need our offerings. We cannot enrich Him by our gifts. Says the psalmist: ‘All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.’ Yet God permits us to show our appreciation of His mercies by self-sacrificing efforts to extend the same to others. This is the only way in which it is possible for us to manifest our gratitude and love to God. He has provided no other”* (Counsels on Stewardship, p. 18).

Offerings are meaningful only when they reflect who we are in relationship to God. They express our worship and praise to God and our willingness to admit that He is the Owner—that all we have comes from Him. The Psalmist challenges us: “Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth” (Psalm 96:8, 9).

Regular and systematic offerings reflect our partnership with God. The tithe comes first, and God says it is His. The returning of tithe is a test of our loyalty. The offerings come next as a test of our gratitude.

Appeal:

Let us show our loyalty and gratitude to God by bringing our tithes and offerings to Him as part of our worship experience today.

Prayer

Sabbath 52
December 24, 2011
Offering: Conference/Union

Near the end of each year we begin to think of gifts for our family and friends and our gifts for Jesus. We are motivated by God's greatest gift to us. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). There is a reason that verse is the most well-known in all the Bible. It tells us of God's great gift to us and the great sacrifice to Himself.

We are told, "*In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift*" (Steps to Christ, p. 21). When we consider the magnitude of God's gift we then begin to see our giving as more than paving parking lots or buying choir robes. We bring our gifts of love in response to what God has done for us.

The church, then, whether at the local, conference, or world-wide level uses our gifts to advance the cause of God—which make Him very happy. There is joy in heaven because the church is being a light on a hill—reflecting the Light of the World.

Appeal:

Though we could never repay God for what He has done for us, we are still constrained to do what we can to tell others about the good news. We don't give our gifts to boast, but rather as a testimony to what we think of God and His great gift to us. Let us now bring our gifts to God.

Prayer

Sabbath 53
December 31, 2011
Offering: Church Budget

Perhaps the greatest deterrent to generous giving is that many Christians have succumbed to the illusion or belief that this earth is our home. As a result, many people aren't concerned about their heavenly home. Instead they are always looking for something bigger and better on earth.

Into this world of earthly thinking Jesus comes and gives us a proper perspective on things. He captures the heart and soul of following Him in a single-verse parable in Matthew 13:44, "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

In this simple parable, Jesus takes something that we value, a temporary earthly treasure, and uses it as an analogy to what we should value—the eternal heavenly treasure. Should we feel sorry for the man in the parable? In order to buy the field and get the treasure it cost him everything he had. No, we shouldn't pity this man. We should envy him because what it cost him paled in comparison to the value of what he obtained—the greater treasure. When we invest in the kingdom of God, it is all a matter of cost-benefits ratio. Of course, there is a cost but the benefits far outweigh the cost. There is no joy, therefore, like the joy of giving.

Appeal:

We all know that earthly treasures don't last so let's focus on the things of eternity with our tithes and offerings.