

How To Make Giving More Worshipful



EXPLORING WORSHIP IN GIVING

The history of offerings among Christians has a variety of traditions. In some traditions, the offering has been treated with much reverence and made an essential part of the worship experience. The opposite extreme has been to completely separate the offering from the worship experience and place.

What does the Bible teach about worship in giving? In both the Old and New Testaments, worship is offering. The Hebrews brought what was necessary for the kind of offering being made—a peace offering, a burnt offering, or a sin offering. A worshipper never appeared for worship without an offering. The psalmist said, “Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts” (Ps. 96:8, NASB).

First and second century Christians brought the elements for the Lord’s Supper which replaces the animal sacrifices of Judaism. In time, Christians gave money as their offering in worship, copying later synagogue tradition which equated money offerings with sacrifice. As early as Paul’s writings, offerings of money were spoken of as sacrifices. Responding to the gift from the Philippians, Paul called the money gift “a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God” (Phil. 4:18, NASB).

When a Christian gives but does not worship, an opportunity is missed for a full encounter with God. Giving and worship go together. There is a deep impulse of the human heart to express meaning in tangible ways. Giving helps a Christian both encounter God and express devotion to Him. Worship in giving is a biblical expectation; how a Christian gives is as important as what a Christian gives. Church leaders have an excellent opportunity to provide worship experiences when members give.

IDEAS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

The pastor is responsible for implementing worship in giving ideas. He may assign the responsibility to another person.

1. Print an offertory statement in the worship bulletin.
2. Print a Scripture verse corresponding to the offertory statement in the worship bulletin.
3. Lead the congregation in a responsive reading of the Scripture printed in the worship bulletin.
4. If a children's sermon is used in the worship service, use an offertory statement at the end of the children's sermon to lead into the offertory.
5. Before the offering, note that the offertory prayer will include thanksgiving and blessing for all gifts whether received in Sunday School, in the church office by mail or some other way.