

**TITHE AND OFFERING
READINGS**



2003

ATTENTION!

Dated material to be adapted,
translated and distributed to
Seventh-day Adventist churches
before December 2002.

A Matter of the Heart

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Unless otherwise specified, the New International Version is used for all scriptural references.

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 2003 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: January 11, February 8, June 14, August 9, October 11, and December 13.

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

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERINGS FOR 2003

South American Division	March 29
South Pacific Division	June 28
East Africa Division*	September 27
Euro-Africa Division	December 27

*Possible adjustment due to reconfiguration of African divisions

Special Offerings

RECOMMENDED, To adopt the Calendar of Special Offerings—World 2003, as follows:

JANUARY

4.....Outreach/Church Budget
11.....Division
18..... Church Budget
25..... Conference/Union

FEBRUARY

1.....Outreach/Church Budget
8.....Division
15..... Church Budget
22..... Conference/Union

MARCH

1.....Outreach/Church Budget
8* +..... Adventist World Radio* +
15..... Church Budget
22..... Conference/Union
29..... Church Budget

APRIL

5.....Outreach/Church Budget
12+..... World Mission Budget+
19..... Church Budget
26..... Conference/Union

MAY

3.....Outreach/Church Budget
10* +..... Disaster and Famine Relief* +
17..... Church Budget
24..... Conference/Union
31..... Church Budget

JUNE

7.....Outreach/Church Budget
14.....Division
21..... Church Budget
28..... Conference/Union

JULY

5.....Outreach/Church Budget
12+..... World Mission+
19..... Church Budget
26..... Conference/Union

AUGUST

2.....Outreach/Church Budget
9.....Division
16..... Church Budget
23..... Conference/Union
30..... Church Budget

SEPTEMBER

6.....Outreach/Church Budget
13+..... World Mission Budget+
(Go One Million)
20..... Church Budget
27..... Conference/Union

OCTOBER

4.....Outreach/Church Budget
11.....Division
18..... Church Budget
25..... Conference/Union

NOVEMBER

1.....Outreach/Church Budget
8* +..... Annual Sacrifice (Global Mission)*+
15..... Church Budget
22..... Conference/Union
29..... Church Budget

DECEMBER

6.....Outreach/Church Budget
13.....Division
20..... Church Budget
27..... Conference/Union

*Reading provided by corresponding entity
+Worldwide Offering

SCHEDULED SPECIAL OFFERINGS

SABBATH	TITLE	DATE
10 th	Adventist World Radio	March 8
15 th	World Mission Budget	April 12
19 th	Disaster and Famine Relief	May 10
28 th	World Mission	July 12
37 th	World Mission (Go One Million)	September 13
45 th	Annual Sacrifice (Global Mission)	November 8

Sabbath 1

January 4, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

As the New Year 2003 begins, we find ourselves in a paradox in our time in history.

--We spend more and have less.

--We buy more and enjoy it less.

--We have bigger houses and smaller families;

--more conveniences but less time;

--more medicine but less good health.

--We read our Bibles too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but in the process we have reduced our values.

Jesus has given us time, earthly goods, and choice. Three things to be cherished and valued. Three gifts that we can use and return to the One who provided it all for us in the first place.

Appeal:

As we begin this New Year, let's enter into partnership with Jesus Christ. Let's show Him how much we love Him by giving Him a greater portion of our time, a more generous offering from that which He has entrusted to us, and return to Him the faithful tithe He owns. Let us choose to make Him first every day of our lives this year!

Prayer

Sabbath 2
January 11, 2003
Offering: Division

An old parable tells the story . . .

There once was a man who plotted to kill the king. The king, rather than put him to death, rewarded him by putting him in a beautiful palace surrounded by every conceivable comfort. Every day a servant dressed in a white jacket waited on him hand and foot.

And each day the servant came and said, "You may choose anything you want today—any food—any pleasure—any entertainment." The man thought life was delightful and daily he sampled all the delicacies and experiences imaginable.

But one day he became bored and called the attendant to say, "I'm tired of all this. I need something to do. What kind of work can you give me?"

The servant shook his head and replied, "I am sorry, sir. That is the one thing I cannot do for you. There is no work for you."

Then the man replied that this was not heaven on earth; he had been relegated to a living hell. "That is correct," the servant replied.

Appeal:

You and I have the privilege of sharing in the work of spreading the gospel to every nation, kindred, language, and people. To live a self-centered life may seem to satisfy for a moment; but the greater joy comes in sharing in the work of spreading the name of Jesus. How wonderful to be a heart partner with Jesus Christ!

Prayer

Sabbath 3
January 18, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

Mother Teresa of India told her supervisors one day that she had experienced a dream the night before.

“I have three pennies and a dream from God to build an orphanage.”

Her superiors gently chided the young woman, “You cannot build an orphanage with three pennies. With three pennies, you can’t do anything.”

“Of course, I can’t!” she replied. “But with God and three pennies, I can do anything!”

The Gospels tell us the story of Jesus feeding 5000+ people with two loaves of bread and five fishes.

When God is our partner, He will take what to us may seem a little and multiply it to His glory.

Appeal:

When we commit what we have to Jesus, it may seem like a very small amount. But in the hands of the God of the universe, our gift will grow to “feed” the gospel to thousands of hungry people.

How encouraging to know that when we are in partnership with God, our small portion will do great things! A generous heart combined with even small means can accomplish much!

Prayer

Sabbath 4
January 25, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

The great author C. S. Lewis once walked into the room during a British conference on comparative religions.

As the attendees held forth in great discussion, Lewis asked what all the fuss was about. The chairman of the conference said they were discussing Christianity's unique contribution among world religions.

"That is very easy," Lewis commented, "It is grace!" The conferees had to agree.

The notion that God's love comes free of charge, no strings attached, goes against every instinct of humanity.

The Buddhist eightfold path, the Hindu doctrine of karma, the Jewish ceremonial observances, and the Muslim code of law—each one of these offers a way to earn approval. Only Christianity dares to make God's love unconditional. God's grace is never based on what we give in return.

Appeal:

Our gracious God gives and then gives to us over and over again. Today we ask Him for one more gift—the gift of a generous spirit. If our heart is generous and open to God, it will be the true test of our relationship and acceptance of Jesus.

Prayer

Sabbath 5

February 1, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

Sometimes more is less. The words “God so loved the world” are only five short words, but those five words give the whole reason for our existence today. “God so loved the world.”

Also, note the next three words, “that He *gave*.” He gave you and me the very best He had—His son Jesus. He GAVE Jesus!

When you think about giving, do you think about it within the framework of a *love* relationship? Reverse this famous passage and replace your name for God’s. “For _____ (my name or your name) so loved God that _____ gave!”

Jesus wants my heart. I want to give it to Him. And my gifts will follow my heart, just as God gave you and me the *very best* He had to offer!

Appeal:

Right now, won’t you ask God to give you a heart like His? Ask Him to come so completely into your life that everything you possess is given over to His control.

Prayer

Sabbath 6
February 8, 2003
Offering: Division

Recent history has given us many stories of heroes. A fireman rescues a man from a burning building. A school principal boldly removes the gun from the hands of a troubled teenager. A woman gives her kidney to save a stranger.

How do you explain these acts? Some psychologists state that most people are basically selfish and the only reason they give is to get something back. Some secular biologists believe that because of evolution we are all on our own.

You and I know better than these secular theories. We know that God created us individually with the ability to choose. We can choose to give of ourselves because of His character in our hearts, or we can selfishly choose to hoard what we have so freely received.

Today we experience the gift of the Sabbath. We experience the gift of fellowship with friends who also have the desire to reflect Jesus in their lives. We experience the love of a Heavenly Father who waits to enter and live within our hearts.

Appeal:

Now we each have the chance to experience the joy of returning and receiving the blessing that is guaranteed to a generous heart. Don't you want a heart like that?

Prayer

Sabbath 7
February 15, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

One entire book of the Bible is called Numbers. As a matter of fact, the whole Bible is full of numbers.

In Mark 4:20—the parable of the soils—Jesus states that the good news sown in the right spiritual ground will produce spiritual fruit, “thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times” as much as had been planted.

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) we are told that faithful disciples will double their spiritual investment. In the parable of the lost sheep we learn that just *one* percent missing from the total group is too much loss. And in a conversation with Peter we are told to forgive at least 490 times.

Thinking about numbers ...how much of your heart and your possessions belong to Jesus? If we will let Him manage our lives and our investments we can see our “good news” funds produce 100 percent return for the Kingdom, just like the parable!

And, if He has 100 percent of our heart, that is the best number yet!

Appeal:

Wouldn't you like to experience having Jesus live in 100 percent of your heart? Why don't you partner with Him right now?

Prayer

Sabbath 8
February 22, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

This morning, Lord ... if I had breakfast,
Help me to remember and be generous to the hungry.

This week, Lord ... if I was able to go to work,
Help me to remember and be generous to the jobless.

This morning, Lord ... if I woke up in my own bed,
Help me to remember and be generous to the homeless.

This morning, Lord ... if I was without pain,
Help me to remember and be generous to the suffering.

This morning, Lord ... if I awakened,
Help me to be grateful and thankful and generous to You,
Lord of my life, who made it all possible.

For if we are generous with these ...we are generous
with *You!*

Appeal:

When you look at your life this morning, can you
count all the blessings God has granted you? If you really
thought about them, you could spend the entire Sabbath
making a list of your benefits. Won't you remember those
who don't have as much as you do?

Become the proud owner of a generous heart. This
is another gift from God.

Prayer

Sabbath 9

March 1, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

During the offering appeal one Sabbath morning, a little boy dug deep into his worn coveralls and pulled a shiny coin from a dirty pocket.

Proudly he clutched it in his hand as he waited for the deacon to approach his pew. A very well-dressed gentleman sitting beside the lad never moved to prepare his offering.

After a moment, the child could contain himself no longer. "Please sir," he insisted as he pressed the coin into the man's hand, "put my nickel in the plate. I can crawl under the seat to hide."

Jesus says that we can learn much from and should see the gospel through the eyes of little children. To think of facing the representative of Jesus without an offering was beyond the comprehension of the small boy.

Sometimes, the sophistication of our adulthood crowds out the simple generosity of a child.

Appeal:

This morning, may we each become as little children who understand the need to be participants in the fellowship of giving. Won't you open your heart like a little child and let Jesus show you how to have a generous spirit?

Prayer

Sabbath 10

March 8, 2003

Offering Appeal: Adventist World Radio

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32).

Hassan* is the only Seventh-day Adventist in his family. In fact, Hassan is the only Seventh-day Adventist in his clan, his city, and as far as anyone knows, the only one of his nationality in his home country. You see, it is illegal to believe in Jesus as Saviour in the Middle Eastern country where Hassan lives. But that’s not stopping him from believing.

As you can imagine, in a country like this, it is impossible to do missionary work on the ground. So how will the people of Hassan’s land learn about Jesus Christ? The same way Hassan did—through the broadcasts of Adventist World Radio.

For the last 31 years, the Adventist Church has used radio to take the gospel to places where missionaries just can’t go. This week alone AWR will broadcast the story of Jesus and His soon return in more than 50 languages for over 1,200 hours by shortwave, national radio, AM/FM radio networks, and by satellite to hard-to-reach people all over the world. AWR’s signal can be received by 70 percent of the world’s population.

Appeal:

Adventist World Radio is one of the boldest and most effective evangelistic outreach methods the Adventist Church has ever employed. By supporting AWR today, you will give the millions of Hassans in our world what could be their only chance to hear about Jesus.

*Hassan is a pseudonym.

Sabbath 11
March 15, 2003
Appeal: Church Budget

One day as the great peacemaker Gandhi stepped aboard a train, his left shoe slipped off and landed on the track. He was unable to retrieve it before the train moved out of the station. To the amazement of his companions, Gandhi calmly took off his right shoe and threw it back along the track to land close to the first.

Asked by a fellow passenger why he threw back the other shoe, Gandhi replied, "The poor man who finds the shoes lying on the track will now have a pair he can use."

How many times have we held back a portion of our heart or a portion of our means only to have it become of no use to us?

Someone else could be blessed by hearing the whole gospel, by experiencing the full fellowship of a church service or by giving their entire heart to Jesus because we gave the "other shoe" that we really did not need.

Appeal:

Today, Jesus desires that our hearts and lives be totally His and that our worldly goods be shared with those in need.

Won't you give Him your heart and the entire management of your resources to His bidding?

Prayer

Sabbath 12
March 22, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

In just a moment a deacon will offer each person fellowshipping here this Sabbath day, an opportunity to share a portion of his or her blessings.

We have shared by singing, praying, worshipping together, and now we will share by giving.

The one thing we must remember, however, is that these offering baskets will collect and contain only a portion of our thanksgiving. Our offering of love will be just the “first fruits” to begin anew an entire week of giving.

The remainder of what we give this next week will be ... through deeds of loving kindness to those around us, through service in the name of Christ, through exercising our faith and hope in Jesus, and through praying that His plan for our lives will be carried out in each minute of our week.

Appeal:

Today you can begin a weekly spiritual journey with Jesus. Begin by committing 10 percent of your increase to His kingdom. Your weekly journey, which begins tomorrow, can start right now by making Jesus Christ Lord of everything He has given you.

Prayer

Sabbath 13
March 29, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

It is the season of year when we remember the weekend that Jesus died for our sins, and we celebrate His resurrection which assures our salvation.

As Jesus hung on the cross, the Jewish leaders were furious that the Roman soldiers refused to change the sign above his head to indicate that Jesus only *claimed* kingship. They refused to acknowledge that He was their true king.

But some faithful disciples chose to stay with Jesus to the very end ...

--John, the "disciple Jesus loved,"

--Mary, who loved Jesus as her Saviour and her son,

--Salome, who had grown spiritually after Jesus rebuked her for asking for special family treatment.

--Mary Magdalene, the woman who knew that the first person to ever really love her was Jesus,

--and Clopas's wife, about whom we really know nothing.

It was dangerous to identify yourself as a friend of a Roman criminal. Yet these faithful risked their lives to stay close to their Saviour at that very moment.

Appeal:

In our own minds and hearts, let us stand before the cross of Christ and ponder what we would have the sign read. May our giving today reflect that He truly is our King.

Prayer

Sabbath 14

April 5, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

In the time of Christ, it is reported that whenever an interpretation of a passage from the Torah was needed, someone would cry out, *“Is there a carpenter in the house?”* This was because so many carpenters were Pharisees, experts in Torah study.

This morning in many parts of the world people are symbolically crying out, *“Is there a carpenter in the house? We need someone to tell us what Christianity means—someone to help us understand Jesus and know Him better.”*

On this Sabbath day, every one of us can become a “carpenter in the house.”

As we dedicate our hearts to Jesus, we can be a part of explaining this gospel to all the world.

Appeal:

By seeking Christ as the foundation of our whole life, each one of us can be a builder of our own character. Our heart is what He seeks, and everything we do will follow His bidding. Let us answer the call to become “carpenters” for spreading His gospel.

Prayer

Sabbath 15
April 12, 2003
Offering: World Mission Budget
(East Central Africa Division)

Due to the growing needs in Africa, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists recently voted to form a new division: the East Central Africa Division.

Today's special offering will enable the existing churches in this new division to complete their current church/evangelical projects and will provide funds to create *brand new* meeting places of worship.

Appeal:

As you worship in your local church this morning, take time to praise God for your place of worship. Your contribution to this offering will allow our brothers and sisters in the new East Central Africa Division to benefit from the same blessings.

Prayer

Sabbath 16
April 19, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

Today we are talking about local church budget. So, let's reflect for a moment about Jesus' advice on budgets.

In Luke, Chapter 14, Jesus says that everything costs something—even discipleship. He says that if we want to follow Him completely we must be willing to give up three things— earthly relationships, decisions about our own life and death, and our possessions.

And, He says these are not projects you give up on half way through! They are lifetime commitments!

How do you feel about that advice? How do you think Jesus would have you apply His counsel to your own life?

Do we have what it takes to follow Him? Jesus does not stress possessing a lot of resources. For each of us it is simply a question of holding back or committing.

Appeal:

This morning we again have the opportunity to follow Jesus Christ and commit our hearts and possessions to Him. How does your heart stand on this matter?

Prayer

Sabbath 17
April 26, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

By most people's standards, Zacchaeus had it made! He lived a life envied by his neighbors and even most of his hometown was jealous. His family was treated respectfully and he was held in esteem—or in fear and loathing.

Earthly possessions were not his problem. Or were they? You see, Zacchaeus had everything in his life but Jesus.

But Zacchaeus was astute. He sensed that among the collection of all his earthly belongings, something much more valuable was lacking.

So, when the opportunity came, Zacchaeus risked his position and wealth for just a glimpse of Jesus Christ, never knowing that the Saviour would welcome him so generously.

Jesus slipped into Zacchaeus' heart that day. And when Jesus comes into our hearts, possessions no longer matter. Zacchaeus knew that Jesus wanted his heart, but he gave Christ both his heart and his possessions.

Appeal:

Won't you let Jesus come into your heart today?
Like Zacchaeus, give Him both your heart and your possessions!

Prayer

Sabbath 18

May 3, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

In Luke 16, Jesus retells a story that was familiar to His listeners—the story of the rich man (no name) and Lazarus, whose name literally means “God helps.”

The rich man’s sin was not that he was rich, and there is no indication that he was especially cruel or had dishonestly acquired his wealth.

His error was that he failed to use these blessings to help others. *He was not seeing with the eyes of his heart!*

Lazarus must have known where to come for a crumb or handout and, possibly, he had even received something at the gate location in the past.

God was looking out for Lazarus (the person whom “God helps”). He was also looking to “no name” rich man to share his good fortune with the beggar.

Appeal:

This morning there are thousands of Lazarus—“God helps”—people waiting at our gates. We only need to see them with the eyes of our hearts. Is your heart opening your eyes to the generous spirit God is looking for?

Prayer

Sabbath 19

May 10, 2003

Offering: Disaster and Famine Relief

Wahidela and Nagoda are young children, yet all they've known is famine and war. They have no memories of even *one* day when they had enough to eat or when it was safe to play outside.

Each morning in Afghanistan they wondered if today was the day they would die. To survive, they traveled on foot across mountainous terrain in biting, cold weather. Heading for the nearest border, they joined more than 25 million other children uprooted from their homes by disaster and famine.

After an earthquake turns homes to mere rubble, drought ruins a country's food source, or children watch their parents die in war and are forced to flee and live as refugees, your church is there. Through the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), your arms are wrapped around them to extend a hand of hope and love.

Drawing on our "Disaster and Famine Relief Fund," ADRA bandages the wounded, and provides food, water, tents, blankets, and hygiene kits. Later, these funds are used to provide long-term rehabilitation to disaster survivors.

Appeal:

To enable ADRA to continue being arms of aid, love, and hope to disaster survivors worldwide, please give generously to today's Disaster and Famine Relief Offering.

Prayer:

Dear God, You have blessed us with homes, clean water, a place to worship, and a free country. We awoke this morning with health and food to eat. In gratitude for these, we choose not to hoard the blessings you give us, but to share them with those in desperate need of help. For these blessings and the opportunity to share them, we thank you. Amen

Sabbath 20
May 17, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

An old mountain story is told about Homer and Emmy-Lou, two lovers who were courting. Homer was so much in love with Emmy-Lou, but he just couldn't seem to make a permanent commitment.

One day, while sitting on the porch swing, Homer said, "Emmy-Lou, if I had a thousand eyes, they would all be looking at you. Emmy-Lou, if I had a thousand arms, they would all be embracing you. Emmy-Lou, if..."

Emmy-Lou looked at Homer and replied, "Homer, stop complaining about what you don't have and use what you do have. Stop talking and start acting!"

Jesus uses the illustration of the bride and groom in some of His stories, and perhaps we can take a lesson from the hearts of Emmy-Lou and Homer.

When we truly love God's church and His message with all our hearts, we will stop talking about love and start acting like we do love.

Appeal:

We will truly commit both our hearts and our *actions* to reflect how much we love and care! Show your love for God's church by returning some of what you do have. Show how much love there is in your heart! Begin with action!

Prayer

Sabbath 21
May 24, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

An international newspaper reporter told the story about a 13-year-old boy who saved his brother's life by driving him to the hospital in the family car.

Although the youngster had never been behind the wheel of a car before, his explanation was simple, "I just did what I saw my father do."

Jesus has empowered us through material blessings to give from what we have—just as we have seen our Father in heaven give to us.

Jesus gave His life because He loves us, and He desires our hearts. We have the material blessings to help save many lives by following His example of generosity. *"Just doing what we see our Father do!"*

Appeal:

Are you following in your life and actions what you have seen Jesus do for you? Each of us has the potential to save another for the kingdom simply by following the example of Christ—a heart and a life of service and giving.

Won't you give your heart and your service and your resources to Him today?

Prayer

Sabbath 22
May 31, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

History tells that when Martin Luther was a poor student with 30 francs, he spent 27 and gave three to the church. As his income increased, he still spent 27 and gave the rest to the church.

Whether this story is true or apocryphal, it illustrates an important point. It is not where our heart is that shows where our treasure is; rather, the place where our treasure is reveals the true location of our heart.

Too often we hold on to our possessions with the thought that “we might need them someday.” But if our heart has been given entirely to Jesus, He promises that He will sustain us through the tough times.

Appeal:

Most of us are much more increased with goods than we have been in times past. Our material wealth increases, but we really don't *need* as much as we have.

Are we giving more to Jesus than we did a year ago, a month ago, a week ago? More importantly, is our *heart* more fully His than it was a year ago, a month ago, or a week ago?

Prayer

Sabbath 23

June 7, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

The letter of Hebrews, Chapter 12, tells about a small community of Jewish Christians who were set “on fire” by the good news of Jesus. They were faithful and enthusiastic.

They were financially generous with each other and their neighbors. Then, they suffered great persecution—which at first energized them—but now they were tired.

They were tired of serving, tired of being peculiar and whispered about, tired of the spiritual struggle, tired of trying to keep their prayer life going, and tired of giving.

But the author of the letter encourages them by reminding them to fix their eyes on Jesus and consider the terrible opposition He faced. He reminds them not to grow weary and lose heart.

It is when you and I lose heart that we stop being generous with God and each other. Are we, like the Hebrews, tired of waiting for Jesus and the promise of a better life? Are we tired of struggling with church needs beyond our imagining?

Appeal:

When we are weary, we must again consider Jesus and not lose heart. Remember the small group of Hebrews 12. For if our heart is focused on Jesus, we will never weary of well-doing or well-giving. Is your heart focused on Jesus today?

Prayer

Sabbath 24
June 14, 2003
Offering: Division

Jesus once said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a wealthy person to enter the kingdom of God. Then He quickly reminded the people that what seems impossible to humans is always possible with God.

Biblical scholars tell us that the “eye of the needle” was the name for a small opening in the wall that circled many biblical cities.

This “eye of the needle” opening was so small that if a camel was going to get through, it would have to have its burden removed and then literally kneel down to squeeze through the opening. It was difficult, but with effort the camel could get through.

God can always make something happen when we lay down our burdens and put our hearts in the right place. This morning, each one of us can ask the Lord to remove whatever burdens we are carrying that keep us from dedicating all that we have to Him.

Appeal:

Right now each one of us is carrying a burden that we need not bear. It could very well be the burden of not dedicating to Him those things with which He has blessed us. We keep it all in selfishness. Wouldn't you like to squeeze through the small opening into a better relationship with Jesus by making Him your partner in all things?

Prayer

Sabbath 25
June 21, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

It is easy for us to judge Judas for betraying Jesus and selling Him to the mob for silver coins. Judging someone else makes us look better in our own eyes. Could it possibly be that we have betrayed Jesus ourselves for silver, or gold, or power, or privilege?

Sometimes we have come to church with little understanding and less interest in being transformed.

Sometimes we, like James, John, and Peter, have fallen asleep when we have been needed to bear witness.

Sometimes, we, like the soldiers and the crowds, have turned angry when our expectations have not been met. Sometimes we, like the high priests and the council, go looking for excuses to condemn.

Sometimes we use all of these excuses for a heart that has not been totally committed to Jesus Christ.

Appeal:

Are we selling out on Jesus this morning? Are we so eager for monetary security that we are missing a relationship with the one Person who has guarantee that He will take care of us—that He will provide for all our needs?

Just now, let us give Him the gift of our means and, especially, our hearts!

Prayer

Sabbath 26
June 28, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

The body of the church has many parts—each one providing a vital function for creating a healthy body that represents Jesus Christ.

The bones are the structural framework around which other body parts attach and move.

Are you a solid part of the framework? Are you a body part that provides a proper foundation or are you one of the “troubled” bones? There are four main bones in every church organization:

The wish bones. They wish somebody else would give everything that is needed.

The jaw bones. They only talk and never participate in the giving.

The knuckle bones. They criticize every church project to discourage giving.

The back bones. These are the ones who carry most of the load, cradle the lungs, and protect the heart.

Appeal:

What kind of bone are you? Are you a supportive bone that faithfully returns tithes and offerings? Are you a healthy, functioning part of the body because Jesus lives in your heart?

Have you come today planning to return gifts to Him? Jesus needs your heart, but He also needs you to be a vital, active, participating part of His body, the church.

Prayer

Sabbath 27

July 5, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

Winston Churchill once said, *"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."*

If we think about this concept within the context of our personal lives, some of us may find that we are greatly concerned about "getting"—making a living and having something. Perhaps we are not quite so zealous about what we "give"—making sure that we are sharing our material wealth to the benefit of the church community.

Most of us have spent many years "making a living"—trying to secure our own sense of plenty and reserve in the area of finances and assets.

Jesus spoke about "making a life" when he said *"I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly."*

Appeal:

We can truly experience the abundant life that Jesus promised when we make a life by what we give. This morning we can begin a new, abundant life of "giving." Won't you give your heart to Jesus—then everything else you have will be put within the proper perspective!

Prayer

Sabbath 28

July 12, 2003

Offering: World Mission Budget

The offering today is for World Missions. This is your chance to support world-wide missions and to participate in Christ's command, "Go ... and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:10).

Our offerings today will provide funds for all of our Seventh-day Adventist divisions and world institutions to help support the on-going operations of our world-wide work in the broadest sense.

Our contributions will support all kinds of work—educational, medical, evangelism, publishing, and others—for all age groups, all races and cultures, and all geographical areas.

Appeal:

Truly, your participation will help spread the everlasting gospel to "Every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6).

Prayer

Sabbath 29
July 19, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

Luke, Chapter 17, tells the story of ten men suffering with leprosy who cried to Jesus for help. Jesus healed every one of the ten men.

The Bible doesn't say where nine of them went—back home to families, back to their jobs, back to their old lives. But one man did come back, threw himself at Jesus' feet and praised Him for giving Him a new life.

We could each recount all the ways Jesus has blessed us when we have asked. He has healed us from illnesses, broken hearts, and severed relationships.

But more than this, He has given us a new life on this earth and the promise of a better life in a new earth.

On this Sabbath day, we have the opportunity to express our heart gratitude and thankfulness. We have the opportunity to tangibly thank Him for what He has done for us.

None of us wants to be among the group who receive the blessing from Christ but do not return to express our gratitude to Him.

Appeal:

Wouldn't you like to tangibly return a "thank you" for everything He has done? If Jesus Christ owns our hearts, we will realize that He owns the rest as well.

Prayer

Sabbath 30
July 26, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

“A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor” (Proverbs 22:9).

A story is told about a Christian farmer who prayed every day that the poor in his country would be supplied with food. However, when anyone in need asked for corn, he would tell them that he had none to spare.

Day after day the man’s son heard his father pray for the needy. One day after the morning prayers, the little boy wistfully said, “Father, I wish I had your corn.”

“What would you do with it?” asked the father.

The small lad replied, “I would answer your prayer.”

Appeal:

Are some of us praying this morning that God will supply all that is needed when we have the resources in our own checkbooks and bank accounts to make a difference for so many people?

Where is our heart? Are we truly “practicing what we are asking” when it comes to giving and sharing? Jesus wants our heart, and when we give it to Him, we will also give Him our bounty.

Prayer

Sabbath 31

August 2, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

People give money for all kinds of bad reasons. Some give money out of guilt, some give money out of fear, some give money out of pressure.

The Bible says that the person God loves is a “cheerful giver.” What does it mean to be a “cheerful giver”? It means that we give for the right reasons.

1. *We give out of gratitude.* Think about the moments of grace you have experienced and give for these reasons, not to fulfill an external need.

2. *We give as an expression of faith.* Jesus asks for the “first fruits” and promises that He will bless us accordingly. We don’t give “leftovers.”

3. *We give in a way that reflects both the need and the ability to give.* Each one of us is influenced by different areas of the church’s life and the needs of that particular ministry. And, each of us has different abilities to give beyond our returned tithe.

Appeal:

This Sabbath morning, as you contemplate what Jesus has done for you, what is your true reason for giving?

Is it because you want that special heart relationship with Him? Is it because you want Him to be such a part of your life that you would cheerfully give of your blessings because He has given so much for you?

Prayer

Sabbath 32
August 9, 2003
Offering: Division

In the book, *The Blue Mountain of China*, Rudy Wiebe wrote a synopsis of what it would be like if we lived the way Jesus would:

“Jesus says in His society there is a new way for people to live:

You show wisdom by trusting people.

You handle leadership by serving.

You handle offenders by forgiving.

You handle enemies by loving.

You handle violence by suffering.

You handle money by sharing.

In fact, when you live in the Jesus’ society, you have a new attitude toward everybody because you repent not by feeling bad, but by *thinking differently*.”

Appeal:

For a moment, quietly focus on what would change in your life if you completely gave your heart to Jesus. How would you manage your life? Do you think differently about your money and your blessings today than you did before you knew about Jesus?

Prayer

Sabbath 33
August 16, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

Do you really believe that God owns everything, or do you think that God owns some and you own some?

The apostle Paul taught the people, “You are not your own ... you were bought with a price” (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

David said, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1).

You and I belong to God. We are sometimes seduced by our culture into believing that things belong to us. But we are truly only stewards or trustees—for a brief time—of jobs, homes, automobiles, children, families, bodies, and material possessions. The truth is that everything we think we own is really owned by God.

Not only do we really not own these things, but we owe a great debt to Jesus Who, in a spiritual sense, restructured our long-term debt portfolio by paying the debt for our sin with His own blood at the cross. He freely offers us forgiveness and eternal life as unmerited gifts of grace.

Appeal:

Who do you think owns the material blessings you enjoy? Jesus asks for your heart. If you truly believe that He is the owner of everything, won’t you give Him your heart, and let the rest of what you manage follow His bidding?

Prayer

Sabbath 34
August 23, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

What is the purpose of giving an offering to God on Sabbath morning?

There is really only one true motivation for giving—and that is gratitude.

We don't give in order to earn God's love.

We don't give because God needs the money.

We don't give because the church is a worthy organization and wants it.

The true motivation for giving and returning is in response to God's gift to us in Jesus Christ. There is really no other true motivation. You see, the purpose of giving is for spiritual growth. Giving helps us draw nearer to Jesus—to focus on making Him the center of our universe.

Appeal:

On this Sabbath morning, don't you want to respond to God's gift by seeking the opportunity to grow in spiritual stature? Won't you take this moment to contemplate your motivation and relationship with Jesus?

Prayer

Sabbath 35
August 30, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

One day a man went to a reject shop and tried on a suit. As he stood before the mirror, he noticed the vest was a little uneven at the bottom.

“Don’t worry about that,” said the salesman, “Just hold the short end down with your left hand and no one will ever notice.” As the customer proceeded to do this, he noticed that the lapel of the jacket curled up instead of lying flat. “Oh that’s nothing,” said the salesman, “Just turn your head a little and hold it down with your chin.”

The customer complied and as he did, he noticed that the inseam of the pants was a little short and felt too tight. “Oh, don’t worry about that,” the salesman replied, “Just pull the inseam down with your right hand and everything will be perfect. So, the customer agreed and purchased the suit.

That afternoon, he wore his new suit. As he limped through the park with his chin holding down the lapel, one hand tugging at the vest and the other grasping the inseam, two bystanders watched.

“Look at that poor crippled man,” remarked the first. The second replied, “Yes, but he is wearing such a nice suit.”

Appeal:

Is our local congregation trying to “make do” with something that really should be done properly? Is it because we think that God’s house can “make do” with poor quality or poor care? If our heart is filled with Jesus we will want the very best we can provide. Won’t you give Him your heart and your offerings?

Prayer

Sabbath 36
September 6, 2003
Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

The tithe envelope is an interesting little thing. We might think of it as simply a little commitment about doing our “share” of church’s work—or “returning our tithe.”

However, this small envelope is actually a representation of where our life is in Jesus Christ.

When we dedicate a share of our earnings for the furtherance of the gospel, we are actually giving a part of ourselves to the task.

These gifts are more than dollars slipping through our hands. They are the means of sharing this gospel with our neighbors, friends, and associates within the borders of our town.

This is more than a piece of paper. It is a reflection of my relationship with Jesus and a matter of where my heart is turned. It is a matter of what frequency I am listening to.

But most of all, it is a symbol of life. It is the symbol of how I am going to live my life—for Jesus or for self.

Appeal:

What does this little piece of paper mean to you?
What does it reflect about your heart relationship with Jesus?

Prayer

Sabbath 37
September 13, 2003
Offering: World Mission Budget /Go One Million

The implementation of the exciting *Go One Million* plan has received an enthusiastic response. There are now one million Adventist lay people trained, equipped, and sharing the good news about Jesus!

Picture a retired school teacher in Romania who holds meetings in a local hall. Forty children attend. Bible studies take place in her home. Nine of the children are baptized. Her love for the children touches the hearts of the parents. Two of these are baptized and they help with *Go One Million*. Twenty adults now attend Sabbath worship services with their children.

Picture one million church members around the world who are studying the Bible with interested people. Hundreds and thousands of people are responding to the invitation to come. They too need Bibles, study guides, and materials to equip them to share the "good news."

Appeal:

Today's offering will help provide these additional materials for one million and more lay Seventh-day Adventists. Your gift to *Go One Million* will help bring eternal hope to people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

Prayer

Sabbath 38
September 20, 2003
Scheduled Offering: Church Budget

There are certain personality types of people when it comes to dealing with money:

The Mindless: These people avoid thinking about money and therefore are financially irresponsible. They do not plan how money will be given or spent. They do not come to worship God with a planned spiritual offering on Sabbath morning.

The Entitled: These people believe that they deserve to be taken care of by others without returning from their own blessings. They consume, believing that this will somehow fill the emptiness in their lives.

The Worriers: Every decision begins with money—if there will be enough and what will happen if they don't have enough. They will not release the worry to experience the generous blessings of God.

The Obsessed: These folks have extreme worries and are not generous because they think they have too little to share. They do not trust banks or God to handle their finances.

Appeal:

Good stewardship means using money responsibly by involving God as a partner in matters of the heart and the pocketbook. Won't you turn your heart over to God and let Him be the money-manager?

Prayer

Sabbath 39
September 27, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

“We imitate whom we adore,” pontificates Augustine—some powerful and true words and a paraphrase of the words of Jesus. You see, if my adoration is for the values of society or culture, I will strive to fit into and mirror those values. However, if my adoration and Lordship is to Jesus Christ, to His bride, the local church, and to His kingdom, my life and my attitudes will reflect those values and goals.

Whether we like it or not, ultimately our life will genuinely reflect the mirror of whom our heart is trying to imitate. We may wear a mask and fool ourselves or others for a time, but eventually the Lord we imitate in our hearts will rule our lives. Who is the Lord of your life?

Jesus lived a life imitating His heavenly Father. He gave adoration and praise and His entire mission to doing the will of His Father.

Appeal:

Whom do you adore? Are you imitating Christ in your life? Let your heart reflect and imitate the generous heart of Jesus!

Prayer

Sabbath 40

October 4, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

The Bible talks a lot about money. If you think the local church talks a lot about money, put it in the perspective of how important the topic is in the Holy Scriptures.

Jesus talked about money in 16 of 38 parables. One out of ten verses in the gospels deal with money. Only about 500 Bible verses are about prayer, less than 500 are on faith, but more than 2,000 verses are on money and possessions.

Why do you think that is? Perhaps it is as simple as the principle Jesus taught—“Where your treasure is, there will your heart follow” (Matthew 6:21).

You see, most of all, Jesus wants your heart. He wants your life to follow your heart in its love for Him and His church.

Maybe that is why the scriptures talk so much about money. In reality, God is talking about your heart.

Appeal:

As you study the scriptures and spend time with Jesus, you will see how many of His words dwell on the subject of ownership. Who owns your life? Who owns your possessions? This morning, I urge you to recommit everything you have to Jesus—your heart will follow!

Prayer

Sabbath 41
October 11, 2003
Offering: Division

Stewardship is Lordship. Stewardship deals with the *person* not the *purse* ... the *Master* not the *money*. The question of money is really one of ownership—ownership of your heart and ownership of your life.

Do you consider yourself the steward or the owner? You see, a steward is one who owns nothing but manages everything. For example, if you earn \$100, how much belongs to God? \$100!

But God generously allows us to manage all that He has entrusted to us. What a benevolent Owner He is! He allows us to make all decisions concerning *His* wealth!

Stewardship begins with *loving* not *giving*. We can give without loving—out of a sense of guilt or fear—but we simply cannot *love* without *giving*!

It is so true that if God owns our hearts, He will have our pockets too.

Appeal:

Do you consider yourself the owner or the steward? Look deep within your heart this morning and seriously consider if Jesus is the center point of your life. Who is the true master?

Prayer

Sabbath 42
October 18, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

What is the purpose of money? You might say it is to provide security or to establish independence. Some believe it is to create power and influence.

But what is God's purpose for money? Matthew 6:11 says it is to provide our basic needs—"Give us this day our daily bread."

When the Psalmist says "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him ..." Scripture suggests that God will use the supply of money or lack of it to confirm His direction for the decisions we make in our lives.

The whole of Hebrews, Chapter 11, tells about building faith and vision. In Romans 12:13 "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality," promises that it can unite us as believers.

But perhaps the most compelling purpose of money is to demonstrate who is in control of our hearts. Titus 2:14 says the mark of a true Christian is that he or she wants to do good.

Appeal:

What is the purpose of the money in your control? Are you using it for the purpose God intended? Are you using it to create a closer relationship between yourself and Jesus?

Silently think for just a moment about your relationship with the Saviour. What is your purpose for using what has been entrusted to you? Is it your Saviour's purpose too?

Prayer

Sabbath 43
October 25, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

Proverbs 11:25 says “A generous man will be prosperous and he who waters will himself be watered.” Did you know this is a promise? This proverb is not just a nice rhyme and platitude-sounding verse that predicts a happy ending, but it is a true promise of our all-powerful God. God has promised that if we are generous and water the work that is His priority, we will ourselves be watered.

Did you ever try to wash something in too little water? When you try to clean up something with a tiny bit of water, it is difficult or nearly impossible to get it clean. But if you have lots of water, you can freely wash and clean and know that there is true cleanliness.

How much water have we been giving to God and His work?

Appeal:

Do you need something to quench the thirst that never seems to go away? The thirst that things cannot satisfy? Ask Jesus to water your soul and your life will open up to become a fountain providing the life-giving message of Jesus Christ.

Prayer

Sabbath 44

November 1, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

These days we hear much about recycling. Glass, plastic, water—many things that we want and need to use every day can be recycled. Good stewardship of the earth's environment demands that we recycle.

Sometimes we get so engrossed in recycling that we think what we give to God can also be recycled—or that He will be content with less than our first fruits.

Not so! God wants our hearts, and He doesn't want them recycled. He wants them *born again!* He wants us to begin *new!* A new life and a new master is not a revision or a recycling of the old self.

New hearts mean a *renewal!* New hearts are the beginning of new concepts, new determination, and a new Lord of our lives.

If you have been trying to fit God into a recycling pattern in your life, think again. God doesn't want the discards of our life or our money. He wants the new. He wants the first. He wants the best. He wants our hearts.

Appeal:

Have you been trying to recycle your blessings to God? Have you been giving Him the leftovers and extras? Try a new idea. Make Him first. Give Him the best. Give Him your heart. He will make it NEW!

Prayer

Sabbath 45

November 8, 2003

Offering: Annual Sacrifice (Global Mission)

Daniel is a Global Mission pioneer working in Borneo, establishing a new congregation mainly among animists. Daniel used to behead his enemies during tribal warfare. Today he takes great joy in sharing the love of Jesus.

Roger Jakobsen is a young pastor in a totally different part of the world. His mission field is the secular, postmodern city of Oslo, Norway. He and a team of young Adventists have established a group called Cornelius, and nearly 100 people are now worshipping every Sabbath.

Today thousands of Global Mission pioneers are taking the "Great Commission" seriously and are establishing new congregations throughout the world.

Appeal:

Global Mission faces huge challenges in secular and developing countries. Every cent of the Annual Sacrifice offering goes to front line projects to reach the unreached with hope. Thank you for your support.

Prayer

Sabbath 46
November 15, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

Some people believe that stewardship begins when they come into the house of the Lord.

They give one seventh of their time and their head knowledge tells them how God requires one tenth of our increase as tithes and that we return generous offerings.

Such people think there is something magical about putting on our Sabbath clothes. That they suddenly inspire us to think about giving an offering. What misguided thinking!

Stewardship does not mean devising new ways to ask people for more money to support the church budget. The real issue is how we live our lives and what is really important to us.

Loren Mead once wrote, "Stewardship is not asking for money. It is people having life-transforming conversations with one another."

Stewardship is partly about church, but mostly about us. What kind of people does God call us to become?"

Appeal:

Have you experienced a life changing transformation that converted your selfish heart to a heart linked to Jesus? Not just at this moment, but during the week, won't you plan every day how you can become a closer partner with Jesus so that you can become His faithful child with a heart like His?

Prayer

Sabbath 47
November 22, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

“So here is what I want you to do, God helping you. Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him” (Romans 12:1, *The Message*).

We are about to take an offering. It is a monetary offering and obviously the church is interested in your tithes and offerings.

Jesus, too, is interested in our tithes and offerings. You see, to Jesus it is a reflection of the *real* offering that He so desires—the offering of your heart. Have you embraced what God has done for you and given Him your very best?

Can you think of ways that God has embraced you this week? Can you remember and count the bountiful blessings that were freely showered on you and your family? It is so easy for us to forget or take for granted the magnitude of God’s blessings.

Appeal:

Are you willing on this Sabbath day to place your life—and all the blessings that go with it—before the Lord as an offering? God will help you dedicate *everything* to Him. Won’t you give your heart and your gain to Him as generously as He has given to you this week?

Prayer

Sabbath 48
November 29, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

Micah 6:8 asks us a most important question and then proceeds to give us the answer. "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

Did you know this text is about stewardship? It is about the stewardship of your life. It tells what God's love compels us to do.

If your life is dedicated to:

Doing justice. (Making sure that your neighbors are treated fairly and that they know you as a fair, honest, and upright person),

Loving kindness. (Making sure that your neighbors are spiritually and physically fed) and

Walking humbly with God. (Making sure His priorities and your priorities are in step with each other).

Then you will be living in harmony with the Lord's requirements.

Interestingly, all of these expectations also require some resources. Your local church cannot accomplish God's requirements without the faithful heart response of generosity from the body of members.

Appeal:

Each member of the body of Christ is under these requirements only if they love the Lord. Christians cannot walk humbly with God without granting Him complete control of their hearts, which in turn reflects itself in the control of their assets. Is your heart walking humbly with your God today?

Prayer

Sabbath 49

December 6, 2003

Offering: Outreach/Church Budget

There are three things that we should ponder this Sabbath morning:

1. God has a plan.
2. God has a purpose.
3. God has a people.

The first is not new information for us. We know that God has a plan, and we know the plan. As Seventh-day Adventist Christians we have earnestly studied the prophetic writings of Scriptures so that we may better understand events which will be hallmarks for God's master plan for this world.

The second concept is also not new for us. We know God has a purpose. We have interpreted God's will for His people. And, admirably, we have put together a church structure to accomplish the task of carrying this hope of a better life in Jesus and the comforting news of His victory over evil to every person.

The third is not new information to us ... or is it? God *does* have a people! But does He have a person? Does He have you? He is relying not just on "people" but on an individual heart. He is waiting on your heart.

Appeal:

Does God have your heart? Does He have your person? Does He have everything? His plan and His purpose and His people all depend on one thing—the surrender of your all to Him!

Prayer

Sabbath 50
December 13, 2003
Offering: Division

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My word which goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55).

God has promised that He will send all of the magnificent blessings of heaven to us. He has also promised that His word, when spread according to His will and timing, will not return empty.

It takes a commitment of both heart and resources to send the message of His abundance of love and concern for a terrorized world. It takes embracing a risen Saviour with our lives and possessions so that His promise of a soon-returning King to a love-starved world can be proclaimed.

If we will return the heart that beats within us to the Creator and Redeemer of our lives, it will not leave us empty. It will fill our lives with such an abundance; there will no space for selfishness.

Appeal:

Won't you believe the message of God through Isaiah this morning and give God the opportunity to accomplish His work through the generosity of a Christ-filled heart?

Prayer

Sabbath 51
December 20, 2003
Offering: Church Budget

The Christian writer Ann Morrow Lindbergh wrote in her classic work, *Gift from the Sea*: “I would like to achieve a state of inner spiritual grace from which I could function and give as I was meant to in the eye of God.”

Some of us as struggling Christians can relate to the words of Mrs. Lindbergh. We sincerely want to achieve that fulfilling state of inner peace so we can be in harmony with Jesus Christ and with His will and plan for our happiness.

We want to function as His children and live daily in Him. But we haven't been able to find that true peace.

Perhaps we are not functioning and giving as we were meant to in God's eyes because we have not taken the necessary steps to completely turn our lives over to His will, His care, and His plan for us.

Christ longs for us to experience complete surrender to Him. He aches for our heart to be His. He waits for us.

Appeal:

The Lord longs to have each of us experience that inner spiritual grace which He so freely offers. His eye jealously longs for our hearts to be His.

Won't you give yourself totally to Him today? Then you can give as you were meant to “in the eye of God.”

Prayer

Sabbath 52
December 27, 2003
Offering: Conference/Union

I am only one.
But still I am one.
I cannot do everything.
But still I can do something.
And because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.
-- Edward Everett Hale
Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, 590.

This is the last Sabbath of 2003. It is a time for ending and a time for beginning. It is a time for reflection and a time for hope.

As each of us individually reflect on what the Lord has done for us personally this year, it is sometimes overwhelming to wonder if just one person can make a difference to the work of the Lord on this earth.

Scripture tells us that without Christ we can do nothing and that with Christ one person can change the world.

Each of us has the potential to accomplish something significant for the Lord and for His bride, the church. There is only one requirement—that Christ be the center of our lives.

Appeal:

This morning Jesus is calling for your heart and your life. Don't refuse to do the "something" you can do! You can begin a new life of self-sacrifice and dedication to Him. Isn't that the hope you really want for the New Year?

Prayer