

How to Make the Offering About Love: An Offering Talk for Sunday

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Instead of simply calling the ushers forward, help your congregation understand deeper meaning and connection inherent in the offering time of worship. Use what I call an Offering Talk to connect the offering to the giver’s relationship to God.

An Offering Talk can help your congregation understand the deep meaning and connection inherent in the offertory. It is an ideal stewardship teaching moment.



Here’s a sample Offering Talk to use Sunday.

Every night a father tucked his daughter into bed and they would repeat their familiar routine. The little girl would say, “I love you” and her dad would say, “I love you first.” One night, however, the little girl interjected a change. After hearing her father say, “I love you first,” she proclaimed, “I love you always!” And that became their new routine. The little girl has grown and is now a young wife and mother, but daughter and father continue to share these words. The exchange continues to affirm their love and connection. One will say, “I love you first” and then wait to hear the response, “I love you always.”

I love you first, and I love you always.

As wonderful a gift as the love between a parent and child, how much greater and more perfect is the love between God the Creator and those claimed as God’s children? This is the image of the God we have come to worship today. A God whose love reaches back into all our yesterdays and stretches into all our tomorrows. A God who always loves and forgives, who is always there to guide us when we are lost, to strengthen us when we are tired, and who overwhelms our hearts with love and grace. We come today to both acknowledge and praise the One who loves us first and who will love us always.

The motivation for giving is love.

Years ago a widow gave her last two coins as an offering to God. Many still wonder what motivated such a sacrificial gift. Surely she did not expect to have her name engraved on a wall or have the street in front of the Temple named in her honor. She clearly did not anticipate her gift would be lifted up as an example for others to follow centuries later. So what motivated her gift? Maybe she was motivated by a heart-felt desire to declare her life had been blessed by a God who had always met her needs. Blessed by a God who loved her first and always. The widow's sacrificial offering was the very best way she knew to express that she loved God first. She would love God always.

Too often the offering is viewed as a time to pay the bills.

Today, many see the offering as a way for the church to collect money to pay bills and fund ministries. Yet at its very core, the offering is so much more. The offering is the time we are invited to proclaim, through faith, that we love God first. We love Him more than our jobs, our assets, our possessions, our hobbies, and even our families.

The offering is the time we proclaim our trust in God, above all else, as we move into an unknown future.

It is in giving we stay connected to what is really important in life and not allow materialism to define who we are; and it is in giving that we gain a deeper understanding of the depth of sacrificial love God has for us. It is in giving that we grow in our own personal journey as a follower of Jesus. It is in giving we say to God and to the world those simple, yet life-defining words: "I love you first, and I will love you always."

An Offering Talk connects the act of giving to a higher purpose.

The offering is not a time to pay bills as mentioned above. The act of giving is at the core of what it means to be a follower of Christ. Consider using this talk in your next worship service, or write your own. In either case, help your congregation see the higher purpose of giving in worship.