

General Admission

It was Sunday morning and another beautiful spring day down in Pleasant Valley. The church house was full of bright and happy people preparing to worship their God. The kids had just been released from Bible class and the whole place was a buzz. Five-year-old Tommy Porterfield came running up the aisle to his grandpa's pew, "Look what I did!", he said as he held up a crayon colored picture of Moses holding the tablets of stone. Ellis Porterfield looked over at his grandson and said, "Now that's gotta be about the best picture of Moses I've ever seen." He smiled as the little boy crawled into the pew and cuddle up beside him. As the worship service began, the singing was inspiring as always and then came time for the offering to be collected. As the men passed the large brass plates, folk quietly deposited their offerings in a dignified manner. As the man came to Ellis, he stuck the plate down in front of him and just as Ellis was placing his offering into the plate, little Tommy said with a loud voice, "Grandpa, don't pay for me cause I'm under twelve!"

So many times grown Christians share Tommy's attitude when it comes to the collection for the saints. They just don't get it. Our weekly offering is not a payment or our weekly dues that keep use in the club. But our offering is returning to God what He has blessed us with during the past week. We must take note that it is a weekly offering, not a bi-monthly or monthly payment like the car, house or cable TV payment. Paul wrote, "*On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.*" (1 Corinthians 16:2). You've heard this passage read many times just before we take up the collection on Sunday morning, but do we really pay attention to it? Please notice that the instruction is to give on the first day of the week, not every other week or every once in a while. But before you go to explaining that the government only sends your check bi-monthly let's consider something. Note the following passage concerning the Lord's Supper; "*Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.*" (Acts 20:7). How many times have we heard it said that if the disciples "broke bread", partook of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, then isn't it logical that there is a first day in every week therefore we observe the supper every week? Why then are we inconsistent in our thinking concerning the offering on the first day of every week? The Apostle Paul used the same term, "upon the first day of the week", to explain the time of both activities.

Let's consider another example or two. Suppose the church had a debt to pay for some service rendered to repair the building. The church depended upon your contribution in order to pay the bill, but you didn't contribute because it was you "off week". The church would then be late with its payment. Or more importantly, a benevolent case came to light, but because of your refusal to give every week, there wasn't enough money to help the poor soul. As you can see, a weekly offering is a pretty wise schedule; after all, God set it up that way. We all must prayerfully consider our giving and consider "The Giving Principle" found in Luke 6:38. Please take a serious look at your giving and how you can take steps to improve returning to God what he has blessed you with.

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