

30 Days of Prayer

Day 5

Exodus 23:19

19 The choicest of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

Isaiah 58:11

¹¹The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

God of abundance,

You have always been faithful to your children. You have promised to provide for my needs, and I have never been disappointed. I am given the opportunity regularly to make promises to you, too... a promise to read the Bible, a promise to pray regularly, a promise to give out of the abundance you have blessed me with. Help me to learn to make giving a priority. Help me tune out the noisiness of the financial questions that fill my head. Make the joy of giving a sweet, sweet song that my life sings.

As I make plans for supporting Shepherd through giving, hear the many ways I can make my financial life a blessing to others... *(take all the time you need to list the ways your financial decisions can be a blessing to you and to others).*

I trust in your faithfulness, O God, and willingly respond in joy and in faith. In the name of Christ,

Amen.

As we begin to consider our plan for giving for 2009, we consider our own financial health. Am I paying my bills on time? Do I have a manageable amount of credit debt? Have I made wise choices about my spending? Will I have enough income next year to meet my needs? As these questions roll around in our heads, questions about stewardship and giving to the church can seem far from a high priority.

On the other hand, God asks us to give of our first fruits, which means the first and the best of what we earn goes back to God. Giving is a spiritual discipline and a biblical principle that can help us put all the other questions in perspective. When I am making God and my faith life a priority, and when my relationship with Jesus Christ is strengthened because of it, then I know God will provide for all my needs. This might mean I need to rethink what is a need and a want, but God will always be faithful to his promises. "The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places."