

The New Rivers of Life Church, Inc.

Jesus Christ, Chief Shepherd / Apostle Kenneth Jones, Pastoral Shepherd

The First Fruits Principles

“When you come into the land which I give you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest.” Leviticus 23:10

The concept of first fruits is rooted in biblical times when people lived in an agrarian society. Harvest time was significant because that was when the hard work the farmers had poured into their crops all year began to pay off. They were literally reaping what they sowed.

God called his people to bring the first yield; the first fruits from their harvest to him as an offering. This was to demonstrate the Israelites’ obedience and reverence for God. It also showed that they trusted God to provide enough crops to feed their families.

The Hebrew word for first fruit is bikkurim – literally translated to “promise to come.” The Israelites saw these first fruits as an investment into their future. God told them that if they brought their first fruits to him, he would bless all that came afterward.

“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops/increase.” Proverbs 3:9

What started as a specific instruction for bringing crops to the temple priest was expanded on later in Scripture. It no longer refers to literal fruit; firstfruits means any income, wealth, or blessings that a Christian has received over the course of the year.

To give a tithe means that you give a tenth of your income to your church. Tithes are generally given throughout the entire year, as your income comes in. Tithes are meant to be given in an automatic sense of obedience after you receive your income; paycheck, commission, bonus, gift etc. A First fruits offering is something different.

First fruit offerings are typically an annual gift to the church done at “harvest time.” Because we’re not actually harvesting crops, the harvest can mean different things to different people. Most Christian churches do this in the beginning of each year...FIRST (first of the year). It can be any “first” you feel urged to give: A first week’s salary, a first month’s, a first day’s income; a special first. Upon prayerful consideration this is between you and God and is generally sown during the month of January and given in belief that God will bless your entire future and year.

Whenever you decide what to give and are about to give a first fruit offering, the important thing is that you do it freely, with no guilt or obligation. This is supposed to be a celebration of all that God has done for you. It’s another kind of worship that you can use to support the work of your church/ministry.

Making a first fruit offering opens us up to allow God to work in our life and favor. When we approach God with open hands, rather than clenched fists, it makes it easier for him to give us more to work with.

Giving of our first fruits reminds us that God is our ultimate priority. It shows God that we are obedient to him and we can be trusted with more. Perhaps most importantly, being generous in this way shows that we are grateful for all God has given to us. The key thing is that you’re giving with an open heart and mind. The process of giving above your normal tithe can help prepare you for God to make a difference in your life. Making a first fruit offering demonstrates obedience to God, rather than your money.

God bless you and your families as you sow your first fruit offerings in 2024.

The “Glory” Apostle Kenneth Jones, Pastor

If you have any questions, please reach out to Apostle Jones at 516-673-5389 or apostlekenjj@aol.com