

5th Sunday First Fruits April 30, 2017

Now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O LORD, have given me.' And you shall set it down before the LORD your God and worship the LORD your God. And you shall rejoice in all the good that the LORD your God has given to you.

Deuteronomy 26:10-11 (ESV)



This spring our stewardship emphasis day happens to fall on the 5th Sunday and gives us, as a church body, a great opportunity to enjoy some fun alliteration AND to ponder what the concept of a First Fruit offering means for New Testament believers who also embrace the traditions of the Old Testament based on God's first fruit gift to us in Jesus Christ our Savior. What are First Fruits? Who brings them? When are they to be brought? Where do we give them? Perhaps most importantly, why do we give First Fruit offerings? Here are some quick answers to those questions. Our prayer is that you will look for answers yourself and will ponder what your First Fruits are.

- What is a First Fruit?

A "first fruit" offering expresses our gratitude for God's good gifts, and our confidence that He will provide for us. In the Old Testament, this is literally the first portion of the harvest. For us, this means a portion of our income that we dedicate to God before other needs or wants. There are many opportunities for us to find ways to give First Fruits in addition to our income such as prayer time, volunteer work, and fasting.

- Who brings the First Fruits?

We do! As New Testament believers, we give back to Him in obedience and thankfulness that He gave His first-born Son to save us. In Old Testament days, the Israelites brought their harvest fruits in faithful obedience and that faithfulness is what ensured His blessing.

- When should I give my First Fruits?

We encourage you to bring choice offerings to God and His church on April 30th. We also encourage you to begin giving your First Fruits regularly (if you do not already) in obedience and gratitude. In addition, there are also many non-monetary First Fruits we can give to God each day!

- Where can I give my First Fruits?

"Set it down before the Lord your God." Give to His church. Place your First Fruits in the offering plate on April 30th. There are also online giving options available. www.fbchsv.org/give If you would like to become involved in volunteer work through the church, speak with the minister who is over your area of interest. They will be happy to plug you in! Not sure where to start? Call the church office – 256-428-9400.

- Why give our First Fruits?

Everything belongs to God. We know God supplies our needs and we are thankful for His abundance. We want to remember our promise to God and desire to give and support His work through the church. If you are behind on your giving or want to give generously beyond your regular tithe, 5th Sunday First Fruits is a great opportunity to “start-up, catch-up, or double-up”!