



The following is a reflection from The Rev. William H. Willimon, former Dean of the Chapel at Duke University. I share this with you in light of the commencement of our year-long stewardship celebration.

In the early church, just before the holy meal that we know as the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper, people brought forth food, mainly bread and wine, for a meal. They brought the everyday labors of their hands, what they had at home, and they put it up on the Lord's table in the great offertory procession. You can see these ordinary people, coming forward at the invitation of their pastor, putting what they had on the table. In offering their food, in giving the stuff of their daily life back to God, for the use by God's people, they were participating in oblation. This giving, this oblation, is one of the great movements of our faith. We are not created simply to be receivers, takers, but are also created to be givers.

You and I live with the deep ambiguity in regard to material stuff of life. Some of us are paying too high a price for our accumulation of things. Some of us are neglecting our health, neglecting our families and friends, because we are working ourselves to death. We are spending too much time at the office, giving too much to our labor, thinking that we are going to get a worthwhile return. What are we to do about this over-striving, and over-work, and over-accumulation?

The church says that we can put it all on the altar. We can take this deeply ambiguous money - the root of so much evil, and the source of much good - and put it on the altar. In so doing, our daily work is redeemed. What we are doing, in offering, is transformed from the mere making of a living, to the living of a life. Whatever we do for a living, we now do to the glory of God and for the giving to others. We can put it on the altar.

Watch us, during the offering, and you will see us at our best. We take the stuff of our daily lives, and we give it back to God, for God's work. This is us at our very best."

Peace and Love,
Pastor Doug