

God Is Focused on the Quality of My Offering

by Sandeep Poonen

The quality of our offering to God is not about the quantity, but the quality of our heart and intentions, and we must prioritize loving God's people over our own desires and interests.

Duration: 28:38

Scripture: Proverbs 16:32, Malachi 1:11, Mark 12:41-44, 1 Timothy 1:5

Topics: "Loving God", "Sacrificial Giving"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a deep love for God's family and the need to prioritize loving and caring for His people above all else. It highlights the significance of giving our best to God, not focusing on quantity but on the quality of our love and devotion. The message stresses the need to exercise and strengthen our willpower to rule over our emotions and align our hearts with God's heart for His people.

Transcript

I wanted to follow up on what we just heard. I believe that what you heard just now was, I heard it yesterday, is probably the most remarkable thing I've heard in 2017. I'll put it that strongly.

I want to underline something that Bobby said. He said that if you were to hear God saying to you, well done, good and faithful servant, but your brother comes before you, not your wife, not your children, but your brother comes behind you and doesn't receive that commendation, you will not have the same joy. The essence of that truth struck me very deeply and I believe that the Lord has shown me what a lack I have in my heart to have a love for his body like I should.

I have definitely failed the Lord like Peter has and much more. He failed him three times in one night. I have failed him thousands of times over several years, denying him over and over again in many, many different ways.

But yet Jesus' words to Peter was, if you love me, have that deep love for my family. We are asked, we've been taught by my dad to often think about the judgment seat of Christ. It's the day that is guaranteed.

Today is guaranteed and that day is guaranteed. Tomorrow is not guaranteed. Today is guaranteed and that day before the judgment seat is guaranteed.

So that is why we've been encouraged to think about that day. And I have to ask myself if my love for God is still self-centered because I'm only interested in my holiness or if I'm interested only in my family's holiness, and I'll breathe a sigh of relief because I slipped past and I got the commendation. And this brother of mine who's always annoyed me, but is somehow still sitting in the church, I'm secretly happy when he doesn't get that quite the commendation.

And I don't have the heart of Christ. I've missed it. And so we'll all be quick to say, Lord, I failed you in many different ways.

We're like Peter. We failed him in many different ways. Jesus says, it's okay.

My blood will take care of that. But can you love my sheep? That's what he asked me to do. And then if I fail on that, then he says, you're not really sorry then, are you? And we have to have a revelation of that.

That is the revelation that on which we believe so strongly in the local church. Please join with me to Mark chapter 12. This is right before Jesus got crucified.

Mark 14 talks about how he had the last supper and then he got betrayed by Judas. At the end of Mark chapter 12, verse 41 through 44, he sat down opposite the treasury and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury, and many rich people were putting large sums, and a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins. Which amount to a cent.

And calling his disciples to him, he said, truly I say to you, this poor widow put more than all the contributors to the treasury. For they all put out of their surplus, out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she owned, all she had to live on. Then you go to verse 13, chapter 13.

It says, and as he was going out, one of the disciples said to him, teacher, look what incredible stones and what incredible buildings. And Jesus goes on to say, you know, all these things are going to burn up. It's right in that context.

It's right after that. And Jesus was saying, I was not interested in the amount of money you put in anyways, but this woman put in more than all the everybody else. So clearly it wasn't quantity.

Because he says she put in more and all she put in was two cents. And also she was putting in money that was going to help this building and he said this building's going to perish too. It had nothing to do with the physical.

And it says that, right, he was watching how they gave. But it wasn't quantity. And as we heard, a lot of us are living in a very comfortable part of the world.

But God is looking to see who's giving out of their surplus. And who's giving out of all that they have. God's not looking at quantity.

That is why we don't care about money. You'll have to look around to find the offering box in this church. We're not going to pass a bag.

It's not going to be prominently displayed. You have to look around to find it. I have had more than one person ask me, where is the offering box? We don't care about money.

We don't care about people giving out of their surplus. Because that's what most people give anyways out of it. We're not interested in money.

We're interested in people who are giving all that they have. And it's not about all of the money. But it is what place does God have in your heart? That will decide what you give off of it.

And this widow gave only two, one cent, I think is what it says, two copper coins. And God marveled at it. Have you understood the mystery of that? It's in your Bible, dear brothers and sisters.

Have you understood the mystery of it? And then God says, I'm going to come again in the next chapter. And so, one of the last things Jesus said is, you need to understand the mystery of this woman who disdains, who disregards all these people who come with wheelbarrows full of money and dumps it in the altar. Do you disregard that too? Do you have a holy disregard for people who come with wheelbarrows full of money? Our spiritual eyes and ears and nose spiritually attuned to the poor widows don't care how they look like on the outside, but their heart is fully for Jesus.

This is the story of the Bible that is there from the very beginning. So, you know, very in the beginning of the Bible, you know, Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden. That can be like us.

And, you know, God gave them an off covering. He killed an animal and gave them a covering in Genesis chapter 3, and He forgave them of their sins, gave them a way out. But they were facing the consequences now outside the garden of Eden.

And then Cain and Abel are living the result of their father's and their parents' disobedience. But they know that they need to give an offering to God. But what was the difference between Cain and Abel? First, let me ask you a question.

Who do you think gave more? I believe it's Cain. That's the picture that I had this morning as I was thinking about this, and I was thinking about it in the context of the widow. Cain came with all the fruit from the ground.

He brought all the offerings from his fruit, sorry, from the land. And it says about Abel that he brought the firstling, which is the firstborn, the number one, his most treasured one. When he had no sheep, he had one sheep.

That's all he had. And he treasured that sheep most of all. Then he had other sheep after that, but the first one was the one that had been with him the longest.

And Abel said, I'm going to give that to the Lord, the most treasured one. And Cain brought just fruit from the land. Abel gave his favorite part to the Lord, his best part.

If you were to see Cain and Abel approaching to the altar, Cain came with a wheelbarrow full of fruit. Maybe he had wheelbarrows full of fruit. Bring him all in.

Keep bringing it all in, the corn, whatever it is, the lettuce, the tomatoes, the onions, the carrots. Bring them all in. Bring some fruit.

Yeah, they have some spots on it. It's okay. Bring them in.

Sacrifice it to God. And here comes Abel with one little sheep. Firstborn.

And it says God had no regard for Cain or his offering. God had regard for Abel. He didn't look at quantity. He looked at the quality of what was given. What is the quality of our love for God's sheep? What is the quality of our love for God? It's not about quantity. It's the quality.

You want to know what's the quality of it? Let's put it in the fire. Let it test it. Let afflictions test it.

Sometimes being a little low on money. Sometimes a little sickness in the family. God allows these fires to come into our lives.

Fires of afflictions. Trials. Fiery trials.

And then he says, what's the quality of your love for me? The Lord has had me meditating on this one verse for a long time. 1 Timothy 1.5 The goal of everything you do, Sandeep, the goal of everything you do. You go to Bible studies.

You speak sermons. You write articles. You're raising a family.

You go to work. The goal of everything and the goal of every single message I've ever told you and the goal of everything I've ever done has one, really one thing I'm looking for you. Did you get love out of it? The goal of our instruction was a greater and greater love.

Did you get that? Have you gotten a greater love for God now than five years ago? Honestly, when were you born again? Can you think of a time when you had a love for God and you had a fire for God and it was still pure before people hurt you and before the church hurt you and before circumstances went the wrong way? Did you ever have a love for the Lord that was pure and simple? And now look at it now. Has it changed? Has it decreased? Has it become less? The goal of everything in life was that that love would increase. God forbid if I've missed it.

So some challenges came. Is it death in the family? Was it family not liking you anymore? Is it disappointment in life? All of that. Now your love for God has decreased from what it once was.

We've lost it then. We've missed the way. We're no longer bringing firstborns.

We're bringing wheelbarrows full of things, but it's not the first. It's not the best part. And God always constantly is looking and he's not impressed with the wheelbarrows of great knowledge and light on God's word and all these wonderful revelations we might have.

It's useless because the goal of all of that was that love would come out of it. Do you love him more passionately? And do you love his people more passionately? Do you love his flock more? That God is starting to work in your heart. That God is maybe telling you in your heart, well done good and faithful servant.

But he's not telling your brother that. And it's not sitting well with you that you're okay but your brother's not okay in the faith. My brother in the faith is not okay and it bothers me.

This is the goal of our instruction that we need to have. And we at NCCF have so many different activities. We've got Bible studies.

We've got Bible studies many times a week. We've got WhatsApp group where people are encouraging one another. You're listening to through the Bible.

We're listening to some of the finest teachings that exist. And the goal of all of that was still very simple. Do you have love? Do you have a love for God that you'll bring your firstborn? The best part of it.

That's why you can see we're not interested in 10% of money or this and that. God wants the best part of your heart and your passions and your desires to say Lord I don't care if anybody recognizes me. I don't care if anybody notices me.

This this life with you is what matters. And the church that you've given to me matters. Nobody has to ever say thank you.

This is the position in which Peter was. Forgiven by the Lord after having denied him. Seeing that Jesus was alive and that God had forgiven him.

Jesus says do you love me? It's like Lord I got this kind of love. I used to think I used to love you. But he says if you love me feed my flock.

Take care of my people. At the end of the Old Testament we find that same story in Malachi. These people had sacrificed, left Babylon, the comforts of Babylon because they had a burden for Jerusalem.

So you find them coming to Jerusalem and rebuilding the walls under Ezra and Nehemiah. And then later you got Malachi who comes in and says I wish you just shut this whole place down. Who? He's telling people who left Babylon, the worldliness of Babylon, had built the new Jerusalem.

And God was telling them through Malachi I wish you would shut it down. You know why? Because you're not giving me a pure offering. In Malachi 1.11 Humans had come a full circle.

The spirit of Cain had come back into the church. They were glorying in the fact that they had left Babylon. They had left all those Babylonian churches where people are running after prosperity or all kinds of nonsense that they call the baptism of the Holy Spirit and falling down and levitating and all things.

And they had left all of that and they had come to a pure church that was preaching a pure message. And they glory in that that they just gave an offering. But it lost the pureness of it.

You find that just before Jesus is leaving and he says, sit down with me and let me show you right before I leave. The end is coming soon. I'm going to leave and then I'm going to tell you about the end of days but right before that one of the last things I want to tell you is just let me show you something.

And you're going to remember this picture because it's going to completely turn your world upside down. Let me show you all these people coming and giving you lots of money. Giving the church lots of money.

I care nothing for it. You see this little woman? Everybody despises her. I value her more.

I value her offering more. I didn't count the money anyways. I've got all the money in the world.

I don't need the people's money. My heart? I can't do anything about that. I give them free will.

Then you find at the end of the Bible the same kind of problem is true in the church of Ephesus. You've done all these wonderful things. You've endured persecution with perseverance.

You know how to tell the true apostles from the false ones. You've got great doctrine. You've got endurance.

But you've lost your first love. You've fallen. Repent or I'll take your lampstand away from you.

Repent or I'll shut the gates. It's the same message. The beginning of the Bible, beginning of the Old Testament, end of the Old Testament.

Beginning of the church right before Jesus was to implement his church and the end of the church. It's the same problem. We find that the church goes in a full big circle.

And position is not that important. You can be in an old covenant church or you can be in a new covenant church. You can be in a new Jerusalem.

You can be in a Jerusalem kind of church which is preaching the whole truth. And we can be sitting here and God says, I have no regard for your offering. Because I was looking, if you're bringing the first link.

And that spirit must continue in our devotion to the Lord and our devotion to our brothers and sisters. How do we get there? I think we heard that. I think the secret to this life is to seek God for that heart that says, Lord, I want my joy to be lost if one of my brothers is not walking in the truth.

In 1 John, in 2 John, and 3 John. 1 John, 2 John, 3 John. In all 3 books, John says, make my joy complete by walking in the truth.

By walking in the light. John was saying, I'm losing my joy. If you don't walk in the truth.

I'm taking care of my business. I've been an apostle for 60 years. I'm walking in the truth.

But my joy is still not complete because I'm looking to see if you are walking in the truth too. And I want that heart. I want to covet that heart.

And if we recognize that heart is not there, let us see the corruption in our own heart. Let us say, Lord, I want to covet that heart. Maybe you've been disappointed with church.

Maybe you've been disillusioned with church. I don't know what the problem is. Maybe you're disillusioned with God.

I don't know how we could be disillusioned with a good God, but seek it. Seek for the heart that says, Lord, I want my joy to be lost if my brother is not walking in the light. I want to seek it.

I'm absolutely convinced that there was a spirit of Jesus. Jesus was fine in heaven, but when there was one sin, when Adam and Eve sinned, one sin, He said, you know what? I'm going to come down and the serpent will bruise my heel, but I'm going to crush his head. I am going to take care of that problem.

He said that back in Genesis chapter 3. God said, I'll solve that problem. It only happened 4,000 years ago, but when there was one sin, Jesus said, I'll give everything I have to solve one sin. That was the heart of Jesus.

He left his perfection to solve my problem, and Paul had that same attitude. I wish I could be accursed so that my brothers could know the truth. He said that in Romans chapter 9. And you see John saying, make my joy complete.

All the greatest men of God seem to have this, and I don't have it? Well, I can learn from it then. I can learn from the greatest people who ever lived. Jesus, obviously.

And John and Paul saying that. So let's not look at the wheelbarrows that you're bringing. Let's not look at the number of Bible studies we've been attending.

Let's not look at the amount of hours we're studying listening to sermons. Let's not look at the amount of revelation you received in 2017 or 2016. Do you have a devotion to the Lord? Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.

As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs to be with the people of God and with God. And then let me end with also what we heard from Jeremy. What is the most... Dear brothers and sisters, let me ask you this.

What is the most important muscle in your body? What is the most important muscle in your body? I want all of us who think that we're working out to listen to me carefully. What is the most important muscle in your body? Have you ever seen a guy who lifts in his right arm a lot? He's got a big bulky arm and it's absolutely thin in his left arm? What do you call such a person? Foolish? Here's what I honestly will tell you this from the bottom of my heart. This is how God has trained me to look myself at myself and at other people.

You know what is the most important muscle in your body? The muscle of your will. How are you doing there? How strong is that muscle? That's what the size, number of inches of your biceps. I see on Facebook people, I've benched 300 pounds or 250 pounds.

Finally I ran a mile in six minutes or five minutes. Finally achieved it. I honestly tell you before God, this is the one metric I've asked myself for years.

That that muscle to be strongest. That was the strongest muscle in Jesus' body. His will.

See this verse in Proverbs chapter 16 verse 32. Proverbs chapter 16 verse 32. Proverbs chapter 16 verse 32.

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty. And here it is. He who rules his spirit is better than one who captures a city.

How strong do you need to be to capture a city? How much amount of lifting in the weights are you going to do to capture a city? And God is saying he or she who rules her spirit is in control of all of his emotions. Is in control of all of his bad moods. In control of every one of his funks and whatever grumbings and murmurings.

And tongue. That person is stronger than a person who controls an entire city. Conquers an entire city.

There's a great need for us in this church to really perfect that muscle. If you're still being affected by bad moods I think we were talking about bad moods in 2015. I think I remember saying I don't know which year it was 2015 or 2016.

Let this be the year where bad moods end. Let's do all things without grumbling or murmuring. All things.

Let's make it another repeated reminder that we've heard today. Dear brothers and sisters control your will. Strengthen your will.

That was the expression Jeremy used. Exercise your will. How many times are you going to the gym to exercise your will? That's what I want to know.

That's what this church wants to know. And it is a shameful thing. It is a shameful thing.

When we can sense and we can hear about families where sisters or brothers are not exercising that muscle and you're claiming you're going to the best gym or a great gym coming to NCCF church or you love the teaching. It's pointless. What's the point of enrolling in the best gym and having the best trainers and all of that if the biggest muscle that God says I need to look at is not being worked on.

And that we're not seeing a greatness and strength from one level of glory to another. In your spirit exercise that willpower and seek the Lord to have that. Again this is not something that I'm speaking to anybody else but I'm speaking to all of us.

I'm right there with you. The Lord is convicting me that I don't have the love for all of you that I should. It doesn't bother me like it should.

The spiritual state. I want all of us. I want to speak with faith that I want to see the day when I can say that it will be as much joy.

I won't be a dip in joy but the Lord will get me to that point where joy will be not just my walking in the Lord but all of you. I am absolutely convinced that that's the Lord's word for me. I see it in Abel.

I see it in Malachi. I see it in the widow in Mark. I see it in the church in Ephesus.

Throughout the Bible from the beginning to the end I see that this is what I'm lacking. Let's bow our heads in prayer and I'll let Jeremy take it. Let's really seek the Lord.

I want to start and I want to pray because I'm the one who sees my need and if others see their need let us pour out our heart before the Lord and say God we want to have a love for your people. Look at your house. Look at your job.

Look at all those things that you're building and I hope God will open your eyes to see it's going to break up one day. Like he said, look at that temple. It's all going to burn up.

Don't focus on those things. Are you giving your best to God? Lord I'm in need Lord. I stand here Lord in the front of the line genuinely convicted Lord of my need that I've seen today.

Have mercy on me Lord Jesus. I don't have any track record that I want to come with Lord. I just want to say have mercy on me.

Lord I want to exercise my will Lord. To reject all the wheel barrows that I have come to you with Lord and to seek to give you my best. Lord I want to shift in the second half of 2017 Lord to give my best.

I don't want to look at quantity Lord. I want to look that I'm really seeking to give my best. I want my priorities.

I want my goals to be radically different. Lord I want your Holy Spirit Lord to have free course in my life. I want to surrender to that end.

Lord Jesus I want to be ready for your coming. I don't want to shrink back. I want to stand together with my brothers and sisters here as one man in you Lord Jesus.

Confident Lord that what you have started in this church you will complete. Lord I want to pay attention Lord to how my brothers and sisters are doing and to have a genuine deep burden. Please do this in my life Lord Jesus.

I stand most in need Lord. I'm the one who have the label of elder next to me Lord and I'm so deficient. Father have mercy on me.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/iF0J92Wdl2E.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/sandeep-poonen/god-is-focused-on-the-quality-of-my-offering/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net