

## **Open Hands: Stewarding with Kingdom Vision**

### **The First Fruits Principle: Honoring God with the Best**

Heavenly Father,  
We come before you today with hearts full of gratitude and humility.  
Thank you for unchanging nature  
We confess our faith that is not merely theoretical, one that actively works, transforming our lives and impacting the world around us for our glory.  
We pray that faith truly works.  
Help us with struggles, external pressures, difficult circumstances, understanding and isolation.  
Give us supernatural perspectives to see these moments not as obstacles to our comfort.  
Let perseverance finish its work in our lives so that we become mature and complete, lacking in nothing.  
Grant us your divine wisdom, generosity and reproach  
Help us to ask in faith without doubting.  
Guide our hearts and minds for being double-minded and tossed to.  
Establish our minds firmly on your truth and promises.  
We recognize that we are tempted when we are lured by our own evil desires.  
Deliver us from deception.  
Remind us that you are never a source of evil or temptation.  
Strengthen our resolve to resist the devil, flee from temptation and draw near you.  
Help us confess our sins and purify our hearts and minds from every ungodly thought and intention.  
We pray from deeper reception to your world.  
Help us humbly accept the word planted in us that can save us.  
Do not let us be hearers and deceive ourselves.  
Help us keep unstained from the world.  
Grant us discernment to recognize and courageously step away from environments, relationships and influences that would pull us away from your truth and towards sin.  
Give us hearts of impartiality and genuine love for all people including the poor, marginalized, broken and those people struggling towards sin.  
In Jesus name, Amen

First Fruits Principle is a biblical concept of honoring God by giving him the first and best of one's resources, such as crops or income. The Fruits Principle demonstrates faith that acknowledges God as the source of all provision. The first fruit principle involves giving priority to God ensuring He receives a portion of one's increase before other expenses or needs are met. The principle emphasizes putting God first in time, place, and order. It is an act of thanksgiving. honoring God with the first fruits leads to an abundance of blessings on the rest of one's resources. The first fruit principle is often applied to giving the first part of one's income to God, or giving the best of one's time, talent, and effort to him. This can involve giving the first of one's paycheck or dedicating the first thoughts of the day in prayer to God.

These are the questions you need to ask in your journal.

1. What does my giving reveal about my priorities?
2. When I look at my time, talent, and treasure, do I see them as my own, or as gifts from God?
3. What areas of my life am I still trying to control instead of surrendering to God?
4. Am I giving out of obligation or genuine worship?
5. How can I demonstrate greater trust in God's provision?
6. What would it look like to intentionally give God the first fruits of my paycheck, my day, or my efforts?
7. How does the principle of "first fruits" challenge my desire for self-sufficiency?

8. Am I holding onto the best for myself, or am I honoring God with it first?
9. How can I intentionally put God first in the first minutes of my day?
10. What is one way I can use my talents to honor God as a "first fruit" this week?
11. In what specific area—time, money, or effort—can I start giving my best to God, not just what's left over?
12. How can I approach my giving as an act of worship, rather than just a religious duty?

*"Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God."-Exodus 23:19*

The verse is part of a larger section that outlines the three annual Israelite festivals: the feast of unleavened bread, the Feast of Harvest, and the feast of gathering. These feasts required all men to appear before God and bring offerings. The command to bring the firstfruits was an act of worship acknowledging that all God's provisions came from him. It was a way to train the heart to trust and rely on God for future blessings. God separated Israel from the surrounding nations and their idolatrous practices. The firstfruits command directs how Israel should worship and give through their harvests. The second command establishes a principle for ethical and moral conduct, rejecting cruel and superstitious practices. When you are at home and have nothing to do, you can use that time to plan a schedule for prayer time, study and understand the bible, and serve the community by volunteering at a soup kitchen or food pantry every week. Even if you are a working person, you can use your lunch hour to plan your daily schedule for prayer time, you can volunteer at a soup kitchen or food pantry, and read the bible. We need to set the same schedule for ourselves like the Star of Hope Mission allows clients to do like I did in 2023 in the Spiritual Recovery Program. They have quiet time for people to pray and meditate for thirty minutes before the lights go out in the dorm, prayer before clients eat breakfast, lunch and dinner by reciting prayers everyday, worship with each other to help clients grow with strong faith in God. I noticed that the staff at Star of Hope Mission in Houston did help people overcome mental health and anger programs. The Spiritual Recovery Program helped me improve myself with a person that never had mental health and anger problems. Star of Hope Mission in Houston helps people with mental health problems and I believe people with mental health and anger programs including rage need to be in a facility like that. I will continue to say people in the world today that are crazed, bipolar, schizophrenic, depressed and oppressed need to find themselves spiritually. People that continue to be a person with the devil in them and continue to be demonic will go straight to hell when they die on earth. It means they will be in hell tormented by the devil forever. There is no way out of hell. You would be stuck. It is several hell that people that continue to be sinful and wicked that could end up after they die on earth. For example, upper hell, lower hell and deepest hell. The upper hell is the first five circles of sin that involve lust, gluttony, greed and anger. I believe people like the person that killed Charlie Kirk in Utah will be in lower or upper hell because he killed Charlie Kirk out of anger because he did not support where he stands on many issues including LGBTQ and homosexuality. I believe people with mental health and anger problems that provide rage will end up in upper hell because of their continuous anger to themselves and other people. I believe women that continue to disobey God by supporting abortion and reproductive rights from the Democrats will go to the upper hell when they die on earth. I believe people in the LGBTQ community that continue to have sex and commit adultery will end up in the upper hell when they die on earth. That is why the congregation has the LGBTQ to Straight Recovery Program to prevent people from ending up in hell. That's why I say women need to make positive and good choices for themselves when they are at parties, gatherings, clubs and bars acting fast to sleep with men. It is the same for men doing the same with women at parties, gatherings, clubs and bars. It is a lower hell for people with sins of violence and fraud. The deepest hell is the frozen lake for treachery. The bible uses three different greek words to translate hell and interpret different levels of punishment, such as hades, gehenna and the abyss. The hades are called the underworld. The gehenna is a place of fiery punishment and lake of fire. The abyss is the bottomless pit. We need to use our abilities and skills for God purposes, not our personal gain. That is why I say that pastors should not be serving in public office or elected office. Religious leaders should be serving Christ Jesus as their personal savior and serving in the community with their spiritual gifts using their abilities and skills. I am still thinking about running for mayor of Chicago in 2027 to challenge Brandon Johnson by moving back to Chicago early next year. I have been doing good for myself serving in the community with my spiritual gifts in shepherding, wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, exhortation and teaching. I have been doing good service in the

community and my volunteer work in Detroit, Chicago, Birmingham, Brooklyn, Louisville, Atlanta, Houston, Dubuque, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Baltimore. When I serve in the community, I do God's work, not my own personal gain. I have respect for Raphael Warnock, but I strongly believe he does not need to provide any recognition for himself to run for elected office or serve as US Senator of Georgia. I pay tithe to my congregation and attend other church services as a man of God and Bishop. We must understand that offering your firstfruits is a physical and spiritual expression of thanks for all that God has given you. We must understand and acknowledge that good things come from God through his grace, not the world. That's why we must not love the world and commit ourselves to sin in the world that can lead us to bondage, temptation, evil, abomination and idolatry. People that attacked Charlie Kirk will go to hell after they die on earth as well because of anger celebrating his death. We need to stop harming our bodies, which is called gluttony. It means we need to stop overeating, making food an idol or a primary source of comfort, having a longing for food, using food to cope with stress. We need to stop doing things to distract ourselves from God and his kingdom. We need to trust God in our life daily and stop on the world to be our source. Turn to the person next to you and say God is your source. The act of giving the first harvest is an act of faith. Turn to the person next to you and say God is your provider. We need to honor God with your entire life to acknowledge sovereignty from the kingdom, prioritize your relationships and activities to God's will and his kingdom.

*"When you have entered the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and settled in it, take some of the firstfruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land the LORD your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name and say to the priest in office at the time, I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the land the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us. The priest shall take the basket from your hands and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God. Then you shall declare before the LORD your God: "My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, subjecting us to harsh labor. Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, LORD, have given me." Place the basket before the LORD your God and bow down before him. Then you and the Levites and the foreigners residing among you shall rejoice in all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household."-Deuteronomy 26:1-11*

The scripture is a farewell sermon from Moses. Moses is instructing the Israelites to give his firstfruits to God. That's every month we need to put God first. God is always good to me and it is the reason why God is good to me and moving me to the Westside of Detroit God is good to me because he continues to guide me and surround me with spiritual and positive people that do not have continuous drama and mental health issues that we see today in the world that act they are crazed, live in rage, haters, instigators, envy and jealous towards others. That is why we need to have our own twelve disciples like Christ Jesus did in the bible. Our twelve disciples can help guide us spiritually and have a righteous heart by living with his grace. The scriptures explain that living for God with thanksgiving is an act of worship. I am thankful to God for trying to help me settle someplace, so I can stop traveling and moving around from place to place. I understand it is my time to settle and my time is now by moving on the westside of Detroit that can give me access to get back and forth to Oakland County, Michigan where church operations are. In this scripture, Moses was giving his farewell during a ceremony to tell the Israelites that dependence needs to come from God. When Moses gave his address to the Israelites, the ceremony included a recitation that reminded people of their history of trauma and God's deliverance, thanksgiving, act of worship and dependence on God. The scripture emphasizes that giving and remembering God's faithfulness fosters a deep sense of community and gratitude.

1. gather the first fruits
2. Present the offering
3. Recite the confession
4. Give thanks and rejoice to God.

I want to share with you a difficult situation when I lived in a poor and bad living situation. I feel like God is rescuing me right now when Christ Jesus directed me to another landlord to move me out of the

shared room living situation that I am now away from the other person at the house located on eastside of Detroit that have bad mental health issues, do not respect and obey authority from landlord and his wife they tell the person stuff. For example, he acts slow and disrespectful when do not listen to them and the landlord has to talk to him over and over again. Their words go in one ear and out the other. He acts crazed and is in rage on a daily basis. He is not friendly. He is schizophrenic, hater, instigator, envy and jealous of other people that have more success than him. That is why I continue to tell our children that they need to stay in school and work hard towards their success by setting reeling goals for themselves. Our children do not want to grow up demonic and living with mental health issues with rage, envy, idolatry, bondage, evil. Our children need to avoid ending up in the upper, lower and deepest hell after you die on earth forever. I was in a difficult financial situation for some months while I lived in Atlanta in 2020 and 2021. After I paid rent, I had to think about what bills I wanted to pay under my strict budget at the time. I prayed to God for his help and I was able to receive blessings from God to get the money for other expenses in the household, such as getting extra money from my family in Chicago by Western Union or Cash app. I thanked God for the blessing for coming through for me. I want to say that I left Pittsburgh because I felt trapped at a homeless shelter out there and the homeless shelter case manager did not let me succeed based on their rules being too strict and ridiculous.

Firstfruits of my labor as a man of God that I did personally:

1. Helped a long-term dealing with grudges and homeless with food to eat every week when I had the money to give.
2. Help him and send him money for his mental health prescription during his bad economic times
3. Help friend in Baltimore with money for food and transportation
4. Help the homeless single parents get something to eat in Chicago in 2015.
5. Help the same homeless people in Chicago in 2015 and 2016 with money to buy something to eat to avoid food insecurity daily
6. Help the needy in bad times with their personal finances and get out of poverty.

*"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."-Malachi 3:10*

The verse instructs people to bring the full tithe into the storehouse. The storehouse was a place in the temple where tithes and offerings were collected to support the priests and provide for the needy. God promises to respond by opening the windows of heaven. The verse includes a direct invitation to "put me to the test. This verse is part of Malachi's message to the people of Israel. We need to practice cheerful giving because it is part of worshiping God. Tithing shows us our strength and faith in God. The safe and spiritual thing is to support the church and the needy. We must not live our life as a tax collector and mammon. The verse is unique because God invites people to test him in this way because he blesses those people that are cheerful givers and obedient to God. God has done this to me. I feel like I got a breakthrough from Christ Jesus every time. I trust God's way to guide my life, not the world. I put my faith in God when I tithe in this congregation and other churches. My faith in God will continue to remain strong. I encourage people that I do talk to follow my lead to put their faith in God into action with obedience to his kingdom. Tell the person next to you and say God is my one priority. A spirit of generosity is what matters most. When you give, it should be from a willing heart that trusts God to bless the rest of what you have. God promises an overflowing blessing to those who are faithful in their giving. When you give generously, you are not just benefiting the church or those in need; you are also cultivating a heart of trust and joy in your own life.

I want to tell a true story about the last time I was in Chicago. I got a blessing from a member of Salem Baptist Church of Chicago when I unexpectedly got money from him as a blessing. My giving and helping others have improved my relationship with others that I am still friends with and speak to today. My giving to others shows my compassion and care for others. I may not have it at the time, but I easily remember the next time and am able to help them out next time around. It is time that I surrendered my finances when I lived in Detroit, Atlanta and Houston to put God first. I received cash from people like other workers in Atlanta that dropped off donations to the Goodwill I was working at as a temp with People Ready temp agency in 2021. Some of the people that dropped off donations appreciated us as

workers handing their donations from their vehicles and sorting donations in the production area of the store.