

THE POWER OF FIRSTFRUITS

Hebrews 11:4, Genesis 4:3-5

- **In *The Power Principle* Emphasis we're focused on becoming stronger Christians as we learn and apply life-changing principles to our lives.**
- *"It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed His approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith." (*Hebrews 11:4)
- **Abel's offering still speaks because he gave God his first and best.**
- *"Cain brought some of his crops, but Abel brought the best portions of the firstborn of his flock."* (Genesis 4:3–5)
- **God Himself modeled this when He gave us His own "firstfruits" - His Son, Jesus.**
- *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16)
- **Because God gave His best, we must give our best back to Him.**

To Experience the Power of Firstfruits We Must Remember:

THE <u>REASONS</u> WE GIVE GOD OUR FIRST AND BEST

- *"Christ is also the head of the church, which is His body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. **<u>So He is first in everything.</u>**"* (Colossians 1:18)

We Should Give God Our First and Best:

- **Because God deserves it**
    - *"The Lord of Heaven's Armies says to the priests: 'A son honors his father, and a servant respects his master. If I am your Father and Master, where are the honor and respect I deserve? You have shown contempt for My name!'"* (Malachi 1:6)

    - *“Give to the Lord the glory He deserves! Bring your offering and come into His courts.”* (Psalm 96:8)
- **Because God gave His first and best to us**
    - *“Since He did not spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won’t He also give us everything else?”* (Romans 8:32)
    - *“God showed how much He loved us by sending His one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him.”* (1 John 4:9)
- **Because giving our first and best shows faith**
    - *“Abel’s offering testified to his faith.”* (Hebrews 11:4)
    - *“And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him.”* (Hebrews 11:6)

To Experience the Power of Firstfruits We Must Remember:

THE <u>WAYS</u> WE GIVE GOD OUR FIRST AND BEST

- *“And now, O Lord, I have brought You the first portion of the harvest You have given me from the ground.’ Then place the produce before the Lord your God, and bow to the ground in worship before Him. Afterward you may go and celebrate because of all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household.”* (Deuteronomy 26:10-11)

God Should Get The First and Best Of:

- **Our Worship**
    - *“I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all He has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice - the kind He will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship Him.”* (Romans 12:1)
- **Our Service**
    - *“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.”* (Colossians 3:23–24)
- **Our Skills**
    - *“Come, all of you who are gifted craftsmen. Construct everything that the Lord has commanded.”* (Exodus 35:10)
- **Our Ministry**
    - *“God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.”* (1 Peter 4:10)
- **Our Money**
    - *“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in My Temple. If you do,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, “I will open the*

windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put Me to the test!" (Malachi 3:10)

- **Our Gratitude**
    - *"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."* (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
    - *"Make thankfulness your sacrifice to God, and keep the vows you made to the Most High."* (Psalm 50:14)

To Experience the Power of Firstfruits We Must Remember:

THE <u>RESULTS</u> OF GIVING GOD OUR FIRST AND BEST

- **When we give God our first and best, it always brings results.**
- *"Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then He will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine* (Proverbs 3:9-10)

When We Give God Our First and Best We Should Expect:

- **God's Favor**
    - *"The Lord accepted Abel and his gift."* (Genesis 4:4)
    - *"For God loves a person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need."* (2 Corinthians 9:7–8)
- **God's Blessing**
    - *"The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed."* (Proverbs 11:25)
    - Jesus - *"Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full - pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap."* (Luke 6:38)
- **God's Multiplication**
    - *"For God is the One who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, He will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you."* (2 Corinthians 9:10)
- **God's Glory**
    - Jesus - *"In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."* (Matthew 5:16)
- **God's Power**
    - The Lord - *"I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts. Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts."* (Malachi 3:11-12 ESV)

- **Abel's offering still testifies: God deserves our first and best.**

- *“It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel’s offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed His approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith.”* (Hebrews 11:4)
- **Jesus is God’s first fruit offering to us - He gave His Son so we might have eternal life.**
- *“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”* (1 Corinthians 15:20 NIV)
- **When we give our worship, service, skills, ministry, and money as first fruits, God responds with favor, blessing, multiplication, and glory.**
- ***Will you give God leftovers like Cain, or your first and best like Abel?***