

A FAITH PROMISE OFFERING

Oswald J. Smith, Litt.D.*

A Faith Promise Offering is a Scriptural offering; it is a Pauline offering and, therefore, God blesses it (2 Corinthians 8-9).

The Apostle Paul took up Faith Promise offerings. He would get the Church to promise a certain amount and then he would give the Church a year to pay it. Then, you remember, as the year drew to a close, he would send Titus, or someone else, to remind the Church of the promise that had been made, so that he would not be ashamed when he arrived. He wanted to be sure that it would be paid. Then, at the end of the year, he came and collected it.

Have you ever in your life given a Faith Offering, or have you only given a cash offering? It doesn't require any faith to give a cash offering. If I have a dollar in my pocket, all I have to do is to tell my hand to go into my pocket, find the dollar, take it out and put it on the plate. I don't have to pray about it. I don't have to ask God for it. I don't have to trust Him for any definite amount. I just have to give it.

But with a Faith Promise Offering it is entirely different. I have to pray about it and ask God how much He would have me give, and then trust Him for it, and month by month go to Him in prayer and ask Him for the amount promised, and wait upon Him until it comes in. That is the offering that brings the blessing.

That is about the only kind of an offering I have taken up for Missions in all these years, well over a quarter of a century now-- a Faith Promise Offering. I would never go back to the cash offering. With a cash

offering I could only get a very little, but with a Faith Promise Offering I can get much. In our Annual Missionary Convention we never get more than \$7,000 in cash, but we get a quarter of a million or more in Faith Promises.

There is many a church that will not give a Faith Promise Offering. They are not interested in Scriptural giving. They will not obligate themselves for the definite support of their missionaries. They will not promise a certain amount to any one worker. They simply divide whatever comes in, in the way of cash, between various missionary societies. They don't have to trust God

...a Faith
Promise
offering is
entirely
different.
I have to *pray*
about it *and*
ask God....

for anything. If it comes in, they give it. But since there is no need to exercise faith, therefore there is no burden, no responsibility. I have no use for that kind of giving. I believe that every individual church should

**A Faith
Promise
offering..is
between
you and
God. No one
will ever ask
you for it.**

obligate itself in faith before God for a certain definite amount, and pray until that amount has been received.

I do not believe in pledges. I have never taken up a pledge offering in my life. *What is the difference, you ask, between a pledge offering and a Faith Promise Offering?* All the difference in the world. A pledge offering is between you and a church, between you and a missionary society, and some day the deacons may come along and try to collect it, or you may receive a letter asking for it. In other words, you can be held responsible for a pledge offering.

A Faith Promise Offering, on the other hand, is between you and God. No one will ever ask you for it. No official

will ever call on you to collect it. No one will ever send you a letter reminding you of it. *It is a promise made by you to God, and to God alone.* If you are unable to pay it, all you have to do is to tell God. Give Him your excuse and if He accepts it, you are free. You do not have to pay it. That, I say, is a Faith Promise Offering. That is the kind of an offering I preach and teach and take everywhere I go. I want to be Scriptural in all I do.

I have gone to many a church that has been opposed to a pledge offering, but as soon as I have explained the nature of a Faith Promise Offering, all opposition has disappeared, and those who have been most antagonistic to a pledge of any kind, have been perfectly willing to accept the plan of a Faith Promise Offering, and God has accomplished wonders. I believe we could get all the missionary money we need if we would take up Faith Promise Offerings in all our churches.

Have you ever given such an offering? If not, do it and you will be amazed at the way God will bless you.

* Dr. Oswald J. Smith was the originator of the idea of a Faith Promise offering for missions. For many years, he was the pastor of The Peoples Church in Toronto, Canada, where he challenged that congregation to raise \$1 for missions for every \$1 they spent on themselves. That story still continues today with his son as pastor.