

February 26, 2010

Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 31:5-10

Christian life is a response to God. This is an important reminder because we often put ourselves first, not God. The story begins and ends with God. The order is important: God speaks; we respond.

According to Scripture and Christian tradition we respond in many ways. One of the ways to think about our human response is that we give back to God a portion of what we have received. We return a portion of the financial resources God has given us. (See Deuteronomy 8:17-18 for a reminder about where financial resources come from.) We return a portion of time to God for prayer and worship, for study and service. We return a portion of our time and energy, gifts and abilities for God's work in the world.

But too often, we give God what's left over in our lives -- time, money, energy, gifts -- instead of giving God first choice. Today's Scripture reading and many other passages in the Bible talk about returning first fruits to God. A tithe is not just 10 percent, it's the first 10 percent.

Think and pray about the way you prioritize your life and the way you respond to God. Is God getting your best -- the first fruits -- or what's left over. It takes trust to give time, money, energy, attention to God. In prayer, listen for God to speak, and then respond in faith. Ask God to guide you as you put God first in every aspect of your life.