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**Dear heavenly Father, we worship You this morning with our tithe and offerings. We pray for the courage to put You first in our lives. In the name of Jesus, amen.**

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**JUNE 26, 2021**

## **When Lucifer refused to put God First**

Putting God first can be difficult. What can we learn from Lucifer, who refused to put God first?

Sometimes we wait until everything is perfect with our finances and our lives before we are faithful in our tithes and offerings. We tell ourselves: "If only the environment was right, I wouldn't struggle to put God first. If I were promoted, if interest rates lower, if I felt closer to God, if, if . . ."

One of the most beautiful and powerful angels lived in the most perfect environment and saw God every day. This perfect setting didn't help him remain faithful, because this is a decision each one of us must make in whatever circumstances we are living through at each moment.

Lucifer became too proud to put God first. His ego was too important for that. Lucifer's needs were more important. He wanted to become his own god. To make his own rules. To get the most out of life, without God interfering with his freedom. Why should God get the best of his worship and his service?

These motives are still at the root of our own difficulty in putting God first in our tithes and offerings. Our ego and our needs always try to get in the way. We think of ourselves and how much more we

may need the money compared to the church. We argue: "God doesn't need this money. The church has enough. I had better use it myself."

On one dimension, this is correct. God and the church aren't desperate for your money. Our giving has less to do with need, much more to do with faithfulness and humility. God is God and we are not. In part, God asks for the tithe for our benefit. Our tithe and offerings are a great antidote to greed and selfishness.

Waiting for the perfect set of circumstances is a sure way to avoid putting God first in our lives. God is calling us to surrender our ego today and allow Him to open the floodgates of heaven in blessings.

Lucifer refused to put God first. The consequences were terrible for him, as well as angels and humans alike. God's love compels us to put His Kingdom first, while Lucifer's example is a warning for us today. As the deacons collect the tithe and offerings, we are challenged to put God first.