

## Worthless sacrifice

*“But King David said to Ornan, ‘No, but I will surely buy it for the full price; for I will not take what is yours for the LORD, or offer a burnt offering which costs me nothing.’” 1 Chronicles 21:24 (NASB)*

Our weekly Bible study meets in a *paillote* (PIE-yote), which is an open, round, thatched hut in the center of the village. After the study, we sing and give an offering, placing it on an open Bible. In Africa, we “give” our offerings. In America, the expression is to “take” the offering, and it is often a quiet event.

Common practice in Africa is to make change from the offering plate. At the close of one meeting, some asked me if I could make change for them for market the next day. As I counted out coins, one lady said, “I don’t want this one. It is too worn; they won’t accept it in the market.” Silence fell as the realization hit. Someone had offered this useless money to God. We saw more coins worn smooth until the markings were no longer visible. I said, “Someone gave these worthless coins to God. What does the Bible say about that?”

In 1 Chronicles 21:24, David said he could not offer to a holy God a sacrifice that cost him nothing. We cannot fool God by going through the motions of giving. What value do we place on the gifts we lay before the Lord? What did our gift cost us? I have to admit I was beginning to feel a little “preachy” until the Lord convicted me that I, too, was guilty. I hadn’t given worn coins, but I had given less than my best. I am sometimes content to give the leftovers of my time or energy. May I never again offer to God any worthless sacrifice.

—GAYE, WEST AFRICA

*Falbez, MAY I, TOO, NEVER AGAIN OFFER TO YOU ANY WORTHLESS SACRIFICE. FORGIVE ME WHEN I DIDN'T GIVE TO YOU THE BEST. Amen.*