



The Altar

Pastor Daren L. Barron | December 31, 2023

Activate at the Altar

Matthew 5:23-24 New International Version

23 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

The Altar

AL'TAR, noun [Latin altare, probably from the same root as altus, high.

1. A mount; a table or elevated place, on which sacrifices were anciently offered to some deity. Altars were originally made of turf, afterwards of stone, wood or horn; some were round, others square, others triangular. They differed also in height, but all faced the east. The principal altars of the Jews were, the altar of incense, of burnt-offerings, and of shewbread; all of shittim wood, and covered with gold or brass.

2. In modern churches, the communion table; and, figuratively, a church; a place of worship.

3. In scripture, Christ is called the altar of Christians, he being the atoning sacrifice for sin.

We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, who serve tabernacles. Hebrews 13:10.

Altars appear throughout the Bible in many different forms. Some of them are:

- **A place of encounter** – The Lord met Jacob in a crisis and the next day he built an altar at that place (Genesis 28).
- **A place of forgiveness** – The brazen altar of the tabernacle sacrifice was offered as an advance testimony that there would be a once-for-all sacrifice in God's Son.
- **A place of worship** – The most common altar built by people to acknowledge their praise to God was the altar of incense, the holy place where priests would offer worship to the Lord on behalf of the people and themselves.
- **A place of covenant** – An altar was built where the covenant was made between the Lord and Abraham, and the land was sealed as a timeless promise to Abraham and his offspring (Genesis 15).
- **A place of intercession** – The prophet Joel called for intercession by leaders on behalf of the people and their devastated economy.

The Altar

- God intends that something be “altered” in us when we come to the Altar.

The Altar is your place of Worship

- The Altar is a place where praise is given to God
- The Altar is a place where confession is made to God
- The Altar is a place where things are sacrificed to God
- The Altar is a place where things are dedicated to God
- The Altar is a place where prayer is received by God
- The Altar is a place where great things happen for God
- The Altar is a place where God molds hearts and changes lives

The Altar

- Altars look much different today or in the New Testament than they did in the Old Testament.

1 John 4:10 Amplified Bible

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation [that is, the atoning sacrifice, and the satisfying offering] for our sins [fulfilling God’s requirement for justice against sin and placating His wrath].

1 John 4:10 Easy-to-Read Version

True love is God’s love for us, not our love for God. He sent his Son as the way to take away our sins.

- Altars represent the occasion and central place where we have had a personal encounter with God. We may not always be able to make a physical altar, but there can be one established in our hearts.
- The ultimate Altar is established in our hearts; God wants that, we need that.

Romans 5:5 Amplified Bible

Such hope [in God’s promises] never disappoints us, because God’s love has been abundantly poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

- The Altar is where we place our flesh, praying and believing Christ come alive in us.

Is there anything you haven't placed on the Altar?

Genesis 22:1-8 New Life Version

1 Later God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" Abraham said, "Here I am." 2 God said, "Take now your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love. And go to the land of Moriah. Give him as a burnt gift on the altar in worship, on one of the mountains I will show you." 3 So Abraham got up early in the morning and got his donkey ready. He took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac. He cut wood for the burnt gift. And he went to the place where God told him to go. 4 Abraham looked up on the third day and saw the place far away. 5 He said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey. I and the boy will go to that place and worship, and return to you." 6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt gift and had Isaac carry it. He took in his hand the fire and the knife. And the two of them walked on together. 7 Then Isaac said to Abraham, "My father!" Abraham answered, "Here I am, my son." Isaac said, "See, here is the fire and the wood. But where is the lamb for the burnt gift?" 8 Abraham said, "God will have for Himself a lamb ready for the burnt gift, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

You can never participate in God's provision (miracles) unless you place everything you love on the Altar

Genesis 22:9-14 New Life Version

9 Then they came to the place that God told them about. Abraham built the altar there, and set the wood in place. Then he tied rope around his son Isaac, and laid him upon the wood on the altar. 10 And Abraham put out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. 11 But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham! Abraham!" And Abraham said, "Here I am." 12 The angel of the Lord said, "Do not put out your hand against the boy. Do nothing to him. For now I know that you fear God. You have not kept from Me your son, your only son." 13 Then Abraham looked and saw a ram behind him, with his horns caught in the bushes. Abraham went and took the ram, and gave him as a burnt gift instead of his son. 14 Abraham gave that place the name "The Lord will give us what we need." And it is said to this day, "On the mountain of the Lord it will be given."