



April 9, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

What is your first thought when you hear the word generous? I cannot think of generosity without remembering Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for us. It was a generous act of love that gave us life. It was transformational for each of us and for the world.

Sacrifice is difficult. Yet that's exactly what we must do when we follow Jesus' example and practice generosity. We must sacrifice something of value to us for the good of another, because we love them. You see, this is what differentiates generosity and giving. Giving can be done begrudgingly and devoid of love. This type of giving is simply transactional. But true generosity is always initiated by love. Because God is love, as our hearts become molded in his likeness, we will naturally move toward a life of greater generosity...generosity that is *transformational* instead of *transactional*.<sup>1</sup>

How do we respond to such generosity? Has the gift of Jesus become ho-hum in our everyday life or do we celebrate the gift daily? So many things distract us from remembering his gift. So many things push Jesus' generosity into the depths of our memory and the gift and our life becomes ho-hum.

God doesn't want us to have a ho-hum life. He wants us to have life to the full. Life filled with joy. The life that God desires for us is more fully experienced as we are conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). When we become more like him our desire is to respond to the generosity of Christ by living generously as his followers. Generosity involves sacrifice which transforms our life.

As we plan for the coming fiscal year, I ask that each of you prayerfully consider how you will respond to the generosity of Christ. *My encouragement is that each family make a commitment.* I won't ask for an amount or percent but for a commitment from everyone. By making a commitment you are trusting in God's continued generosity and being molded into His likeness.

On the weekend of May 11/12 we will dedicate these commitments during our service. You may return the form on or before that weekend and we will include your intentions in our dedication. If you are unable to attend services in person, please return in a sealed envelope marked dedication form.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Pat

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<sup>1</sup> MacDonald, Gordon *Generosity: moving toward life that is truly life*, p 6.