

On Your Own – Take home questions to shape your life

Getting Ready to Give

Our Celebration Mailer this week helped us discover how much we should give to this year's ministry budget. The material below is from that mailer. During your "On Your Own" time prayerfully read through this material as you seek God's heart for your giving in both time and financial resources.

Part of our yearly celebration series is making our pledges to support God's work for the coming ministry year (July 2010-June 2011). People often wonder how much they should give. The answer comes in many ways but here are a few things to consider:

- **What is your true treasure?** If you have discovered Jesus as your treasure, your response is one of great generosity because you want to participate in his work, his mission, and you have a deep desire for others to know Jesus as *their* treasure.
- **What is your true treasure?** One of the amazing things about Jesus Christ is that he lost all of his treasure (Philippians 2) to make you his treasure. This reality humbles you, melts you, and lifts you up and causes you to give away your treasure in ways that honor Christ.
- **Are you free?** A person who has really been freed from money by Christ and by having Christ as his/her treasure becomes radically generous. It is a generosity that recognizes that Christ sacrificed all he had and took up his cross so that we could become his treasure. In that light:
 - * We are always looking for opportunities to give away
 - * When Jesus treasured us he treasured us sacrificially. As we seek to love others as he loved us we have to give away enough that it sacrifices our lifestyle. If we give but there is no sacrifice, no cross in our economic life, we haven't responded to Jesus as he has given himself for us.
- **Over the years** the tithe or 10% has been the goal of giving. If Christ has gotten into our heart then the tithe doesn't seem like much. We might ask what would have happened if Jesus had tithed his blood? We would still be lost. While in comparison with Jesus' sacrifice the tithe doesn't seem like much, still 10% for many people does feel like a sacrifice, it does change our lifestyle. But for some 10% is no big deal. What we have to understand is that the 10% is a helpful starting point, but the real standard is the cross. Is there a cross in your economic life?
- What might God be calling you to give up (from small things to large) so you feel the joy of sacrificial giving?

Don't Miss

- Profession of Faith celebration May 9, morning service
- No Evening Service May 9 and 16
- Celebration Picnic May 16
- Recovery Service May 23 6 p.m.

EXPLORE THE STORY DISCOVER YOUR LIFE evergreen ministries



Message Notes:

Investing in the Good Life (2 Sam 2.24, 2 Cor. 8.9)

When the Good Life turns Bad (Psalm 46.1-4, Numbers 35.9-12)

A Safe Place (Isaiah 43.1-2, Romans 8.28, Romans 8.35-39)

Staying Safe (Numbers 35.26-27, Job 8.14-15)

Exploring the Story, Discovering Your Life
A Study for Small Groups and individuals

Remembering

Look at your message notes: What part of the message made you wonder, want to know more, held particular meaning for your life, or just caught your attention?

Telling our Story, Building Community

Tell about a rescue that you experienced or saw.

Being Shaped by the Text Psalm 46

Investing

Sunday morning Pastor Larry pointed out that we invest in what we believe is the good life. From homes to cars to clothes to sports equipments to lessons, we put money out there to pursue our vision of the good life.

- How difficult is it for you to invest your resources in God's version of the good life? (Think of Micah 6.8, Isaiah 61, and Psalm 46)
- What is God's version of the good life, and how difficult is it for you to invest your resources there?
- Tell about a time when you invested your resources in God's version of the good life and found joy.

Read 2 Samuel 24.24

- How do you decide "what costs you something" and "what costs you nothing" when you invest in God's picture of the good life?
- Pastor Larry mentioned that the tithe (10%) has often been used as the basis for understanding sacrificial giving. However, the true basis of sacrifice is the cross. How does seeing the cross as the basis of our sacrifice change your thinking about giving?

Telling the Truth

Read Psalm 46.1-4

- Why do you think God is so honest that life, even for those who follow him, will have pain and suffering?



- How does the honesty of God contrast with our culture's belief that life should be pain free?

- Does it help you to know that God is honest about pain and suffering? Why or Why not?

Safe

Sunday morning we found that God is a refuge in three ways.

- How have you experienced God being a refuge in keeping you safe from harm? Isaiah 43.1-2
- How have you experienced God being a refuge by using suffering to shape you into someone who looks more like Christ? Romans 8.28-30
- How have you experienced God being a refuge by holding you in his love? Romans 8.31-39
- How have you experienced God being a refuge through the care of his people?
- Tell about a time you were a refuge by being God's hands and feet in the lives of others?