



Extravagant GENEROSITY

The Heart of Giving

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL ... WEEK 3, OCTOBER 25, 2011

Dear Lakewood Family,

I can't believe it is already the third week of our stewardship emphasis called Extravagant Generosity: The Heart of Giving. Together we've begun the process of checking our spiritual health by answering the questions: "*What* do I love about my church?" and "*Who* do I love in my church?"

We've learned two weeks ago that the difference between "Stewardship" and "Generosity" moves us from a sense of duty and responsibility associated with fall fundraising to a feeling toward giving that comes from the heart and is a by product of your love for Jesus and your love for your church.

This last Sunday we reaffirmed that we are *blessed* with friends and family whom we dearly love ... people within our own families, our church family and those outside our church. We were challenged with the question: "Can you love without *giving*?"

We *express* our love for them in many ways.

We *give* of ourselves by investing time in the lives of those we love.

And we *share* in their joy and special celebrations with *gifts*!

As we continue to explore and celebrate *Matters of Our Hearts*, the devotional this week from the devotional guide written by Robert Schnase, Practicing Extravagant Generosity: Daily Readings on the Grace of Giving helps us to truly understand the meaning of the word, "Extravagant" and its implications for our lives of love.

Be sure to check your "Spiritual Pulse" by doing the "Heart Report" at the end of the devotion and consider coming to the Bible Study on Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. as we discuss three passages of scripture focusing on "Vision."

Enjoy and grow!

With love,

Terry



PRACTICING GENEROSITY

"You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity."

- 2 Corinthians 9:11

The practice of EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY stretches us to offer our utmost and highest to God rather than to give in a manner that is haphazard, unplanned, reactive, or mechanical. *Extravagant* does not correspond with giving that is merely dutiful, required, burdensome, mandated, or simply doing one's part. *Extravagant* denotes a style and attitude of giving that is unexpectedly joyous, without predetermined limits, from the heart.

People who practice EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY change their lives in order to become more generous. They become rich in giving. They do not wait to be asked. When they see a need, they step forward to meet it, offering their resources as a means of help. They look at difficult financial times through the eyes of faith rather than fear. They persist in doing good. They give in all seasons.

They enjoy giving. They pray and hope and dream about the good they accomplish through their gifts. They consecrate their giving to God. They delight in generosity. They give expecting nothing in return.

People who practice EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY learn to enjoy things without possessing them, to moderate their acquisitiveness, and to find satisfaction in simpler things. They avoid personal debt as much as possible. They save. They avoid overindulgence and waste. Their possessions do not rule them. They aspire, like Paul, to know the secret of being content with what they have. They give thanks in all circumstances. Love is a gift and life is grace.

People who practice EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY change lives. Their giving knows no bounds. They are rich toward God.



- ♦ What obstacles prevent you from giving extravagantly? How would the practice of greater generosity change you?
- ♦ When was a time you felt God's Spirit move you to give resources beyond what you had previously practiced? How does your giving to God influence other aspects of your life?

MY HEART REPORT



Please take a moment to check your "Spiritual Health" by answering these questions:

What do I want to see happen in the coming year at LPC?

What is my greatest hope for our church?



Lakewood Presbyterian Church

Thinking with Christ's mind • Loving with Christ's heart • Serving with Christ's hands