

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



Weekly Sermon Series

Generosity...Mindset Proverbs 3:5-12; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3

How much can you give away without crowing about it to others? How much can you give away before it begrudges you? Do you feel that you give far more of your resources and time than your neighbor or fellow parishioner? Does it make a difference to you in some way? Do you really think that it makes a difference to him or her? Probably not, but it makes a difference to God as God gave what you currently possess whether it be money, property, time, talent, health, etc. God only asks you to bestow part of your firstfruits to God and others in thankfulness for what you have. If you can't do that, then how much of what you currently have are you planning to take with you upon your death? Where do we really place our mindsets about giving? Do we give to God's work from what is left over after all the bills are paid or is God paid first? Do we write out a check for charity because our name will go on a plaque or be published in a charitable report for all to see and feel smug because we gave more than so-and-so who actually ranks higher up the social ladder?

As the book of Proverbs states in verse 5; "trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding: in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." It can't get any better than that can it? But oh boy, when it comes to making a critical decision, what do we do first?

Call upon God for guidance or surf the internet or run to a professional for here will come a time when the answers are not there. You are going to have to trust in someone other than yourself or another person. By the same token, there may be someone out there in need and by giving you can supply his or her need for help. The need may be a financial gift, a visit, some labor or a simple conversation. How long do you think you could go without a piece of mail arriving for you personally? There are countless people living alone today who would be grateful for a card or visit. There are all sorts of needs for money, clothing, food, a ride, guidance, or something as simple as a visit and a cup of tea. You don't have to look far, either.

This week, for a start anyway, let's put a smile on someone else's face and, in doing so, we will put one on our own. God will see to that. Be generous to your church, a charity, a stranger, a neighbor, or maybe someone who was once close to you where perhaps some differences have driven you apart. Pray for someone else and ask the Lord to bless them as much as he has blessed you. After all, it isn't going to hurt anyone if you do.

-- Week of November 23, 2008