

# Pastor's Corner

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September 2009

Dear Church Member,

It is time again to put together a budget for 2010, and select members to serve on various committees. I hope that you will be in prayer for this process, because it does impact you whether or not you are on a committee. We are the church and together we are in ministry with Christ. I ran across an article I would like to share with you. "Giving Your Best" is from a devotional entitled *Experiencing God Day by Day* by Henry T. & Richard Blackaby. It begins with a Scripture that is found in Deuteronomy 17:1; "You must not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep that has a defect, anything seriously wrong; for that is abhorrent to the Lord your God."

God's love moved Him to sacrifice that which meant the most to Him - His only Son. Our response, if we truly understand His love for us, is the desire to give back to God that which means the most to us.

The Old Testament reveals that God set high standards for the sacrifices He required of His people. A worthy sacrifice had to cost the people something. As their hearts shifted away from God, the people began struggling to give God costly offerings. They would bring blind, lame, and sick animals, assuming God could not tell the difference (Mal. 1:8). God saw what they were doing and declared their offerings to be in vain (Mal. 1:10). Throughout the Old Testament period, God was setting the stage for the ultimate, perfect, and sinless sacrifice of His Son for the sins of humanity.

The offerings we give back to God reveal our heart's condition. A heart that overflows with gratitude for God's love will respond in selfless devotion. If we are unwilling to sacrifice our time, our possessions, our money, or our energy, we indicate that we do not love God as He desires. God takes delight in the person who gives to Him cheerfully out of a loving heart, a person who understands that God is the source of everything he has, and who knows that God will more than compensate for whatever is sacrificed for Him (2 Cor. 9:8). If you struggle in giving your best to God, pause and reflect on what God sacrificed for you. Trust Him. Give Him the best that you have because you love Him with all your heart.

To add to that, I will close by saying that it is not how much we give to him, because we can never give back what He gave to us. However, we need to always check ourselves by asking, "Are we trying to live like the Joneses or are we living for God?" The church needs leaders, leaders must be willing to make the sacrifice. Are you willing to be a leader for God?

Peace be with you  
Rev. Eric Lane

