



FROM THE PASTOR

“There is no good without sacrifice”

I don't remember when I first heard that quote, but it has always stuck with me over the years. I think it's one of those quotes that flies in the face of our society that either hopes or wants things to come easy to them. In the states where there are lotteries, revenues are substantial even though the odds of winning are very low. Why would one then buy a ticket? It's chance at being *instantly* rich. Credit cards with high interest rates are popular because you can get what you want right *now*. The internet can get information for us much faster than we could in the past. Even some churches use the gospel to say that if you are truly a Christian God will bless you with health and wealth right now... “name it and claim it!”

All the above sounds good, doesn't it? Except there is one problem. We enter the season of Lent. Lent tells us that the way to Resurrection is through the pain of the cross which included rejection, torture, and scorn. If you remember the disciples couldn't believe Jesus when he told them his eventual fate. This was the path of God's son? Even Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane asks God to take “this cup away from me.” While we have the gospel accounts of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, I don't think we really have a complete grasp of the horribleness of it. It was and is a sacrificial act that won us the great and powerful victory of Easter.

Which brings the discussion back to you and me. I believe that God loves us, has good things for us, and wants to fulfill good dreams and visions we have. But the guarantee that they will automatically be given to us or even in our timing or terms, without hard work, sacrifice, or resistance simply does not exist. One of the greatest and most exciting times in my life was when I truly felt God calling me into the ministry. Almost everything I asked for God granted, but it was not without loss, obstacles, setbacks, and me having my own doubts along the way! *Now* I thank God for it, for it made me a better pastor at the end. Would I want to go through all that again? Absolutely not!

I think this fits in well with our building stewardship campaign. I wasn't here when the good dream of the renovation of our church took place. But I've heard some stories about that process, and it seems there were some tough things that happened along the way. Yet at the end of the day we have been blessed with a church that wonderfully serves our needs and our community.

But the journey continues in our giving to pay back our loan which helped make this happen. I think God has done some amazing things to get us where we are today in paying that money back. So as we ask God to guide us in this building pledge drive it may be a good thing to remember the statement above, “there is no good without sacrifice.”

Your brother in Christ,

John

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Sunday Worship Times
8:30 & 11:00am
Sunday School
9:45am

