

October 23, 2007

Dear Members and Friends of Canyon Lake United Methodist Church,

In our church we have emphasized two important ingredients as a part of the Christian faith. One ingredient is the invitation to make a commitment to being a disciple of Jesus Christ. The other ingredient is to grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus through our experiences of worship, prayer, service and giving to God.

This letter is to help us grow deeper in our relationship to Jesus through our giving to God through our church. In Ephesians chapter 4 the Apostle Paul reminds followers of Jesus with the following. **“we will no longer be infants,...(but) we will in all things grow into Jesus who is the Head, that is Christ”**. Growth as a follower of Jesus is hard work. We are to mature into everything that God does in Jesus, gathering all the parts of our lives and all the details of Jesus’ life into a single whole.

Part of this hard work of growing as a disciple is how we manage and use finances in our lives. The stewardship of our money is important to our growth as a follower of Jesus. This fall we invite all of our members and friends to grow deeper as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Earl Nightingale shares the following story entitled “The Farmer and the Pumpkin”.

One time there was a farmer who had planted a crop of pumpkins. Walking through his field when the pumpkins were just beginning to develop, he came across a glass jug which apparently a passing motorist had thrown into the field. As an experiment, he poked a very small pumpkin through the neck of the jug, but he was careful not to damage the vine.

Months later, when the field was fully developed and about ready for harvesting, the farmer, making the one of his periodic inspections, again came across the glass jug. This time it was completely filled with the pumpkin he had put inside. The other pumpkins on the same vine were large and fully developed, but the pumpkin in the jug had not been able to grow beyond the confines of the glass prison and was shaped into its exact dimensions.

Giving to God helps to grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus. Have we limited our growing deeper in our relationship with Jesus? In the next weeks we will be looking at how we can deepen our walk with Jesus. Come and join the growth.

Blessings

Pastor Bob Ruedebusch

Pastor Rebecca Trefz