

## **A Cup of Generosity**

**Pastor Dana Karen Reardon**

Two thirds of everything Jesus said related to money and not because Jesus cared about money but because Jesus cares about us and our spiritual welfare. He taught us that where our treasure is there will our heart be also. And Jesus wants our hearts.

Giving is a spiritual thing. I have heard it said that Discipleship is everything you do after you say, "I believe", but I think the same thing can be said of stewardship. Everything we have comes from God and so how we use it becomes a question of faith.

A lot of pastors do not want to know who gives what and how much in a congregation. My guess is that they worry that knowing who the big givers are might make them favor some over others. That can certainly be a problem, but I have other reasons for thinking that pastors should know.

Imagine someone is a good and faithful giver and then suddenly they are not. I think the pastor might wonder why. Did they lose a job or take a cut in pay and need help from the congregation? Did something happen that cause a rift in their relationship with God that caused them to stop giving? I have had many people tell me that they used to be faithful until some tragedy struck that caused them to doubt the goodness of God. That is something their pastor should know about.

Just because someone is the biggest giver does not mean they are the most faithful. Remember the widow's mite. In my first congregation the former president of the congregation was now the new treasurer and because of updating to computer as opposed to doing everything with paper and pencil he decided to open a new account for a fresh start. He told me that he would put his offering for the year, \$3000, in to open the account.

That was twenty years ago and was a good amount. I am sure he was the biggest giver in the congregation. When he told me what he was going to do I said, "You know what this tells me?" I am sure he thought I would say how generous to do this up front but instead I said, "You aren't giving enough." If he could put his entire offering for the year in January, then he certainly could give more. And he did!

