

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

May 17, 2009

A willing heart

by David King

When God gave Moses the instructions for building the tabernacle at Mt. Sinai, He did not impose a "tabernacle construction tax" on the people to finance the project. Instead, He made participation in this project strictly voluntary. "Take from among you an offering to the Lord. Whoever is of **a willing heart**, let him bring it as an offering to the Lord" (Ex. 35:5; see 25:2). The Israelites responded in such overwhelming numbers that the craftsmen had to ask Moses to restrain them from donating more: "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work" (v. 5). It was, in fact, "too much" (v. 7). Not bad for a volunteer operation.

Many years later, when an aged King David was making preparations for the grand temple that his son Solomon would build, he employed the same financing model. He donated a large sum from the royal treasury for the project, but issued a plea to his people for more: "Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the Lord?" (1 Chron. 29:5). The response was so overwhelming that the public offering exceeded what David had provided (v. 7). "Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered **willingly**, because with a loyal heart they had offered **willingly** to the Lord; and King David also rejoiced greatly" (v. 9). So when Solomon finally executed the project, the result was a magnificent temple worthy of God.

This same principle forms the basis of our relationship with God under the new covenant of Christ. In writing to the Corinthian church about a financial contribution for the needy

saints in Jerusalem, Paul took pains to clarify that there was no "required" amount imposed on them. He was asking for no more than they were able to give. "For if there is first **a willing mind**, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have" (1 Cor. 8:12). Their participation in this relief operation was entirely voluntary: "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (9:7).

The common element in all these stories is how the people of God use their money to support His work. As our creator, God has every right to dictate what we should give Him. (And the Old Testament tithe to support the priests was such a requirement.) But the only contribution that really means anything to God is the one that we give Him from a willing heart — freely, cheerfully, and without a hint of compulsion. That kind of gift is the truest measure of how we value our relationship with Him.

Of course, God takes a risk by putting our financial support of His cause on the honor system. If it is left entirely up to us to determine what we will give, won't some people give as little as they can? Yes, some will skimp on what they give the Lord. But if that's what they really think of God, does He need them on His team anyway? God is not the one being hurt by such misers. They are hurting only themselves.

The only service that pleases God is that which comes from a willing heart. And willing hearts are revealed only by giving them the freedom to choose what they will do.