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## Volume XV Number 37 – February 15, 2024

### ***Radical Generosity***

When I was just a kid, I remember vividly a Saturday evening ritual at the Kieschnick home at 12913 S. Post Oak Rd. in Houston. Our house is still standing but looks nothing like it did 70 years ago.

My father was managing grocery store meat departments. First, Lewis and Coker, now defunct. Later, Rice Food Markets, still going strong. His weekly pay was cash in a small, sealed envelope.

After Saturday dinner, Dad went to his and Mom's bedroom, opened his sock drawer, pulled out a cigar box, counted out exactly 10% of his weekly pay, placed it in the box, and put it back in the sock drawer.

The next morning Mom and Dad put the stack of cash in the weekly offering envelope, took it to St. Matthew Lutheran Church for Sunday morning worship, and placed it in the offering plate.

In those years, Mother stayed at home, caring for her four children, working part-time when possible. Though my parents never talked about being poor, at least not in the hearing of their children, it was quite obvious that our resources were limited and had to be carefully managed.

Throughout the years since those early days of my life, I've thought about and have been inspired by the radical generosity my parents demonstrated. How easy it would have been for them to reduce or even eliminate that offering and to spend it on necessities of life, which were many. Yet, that's not what happened. A generous amount was given faithfully to the Lord through the ministry of their church.

Radical Generosity is not an everyday household term. The word "radical" is sometimes defined with these words: extreme, uncompromising, militant, fanatical, revolutionary, uncompromising. Sounds rather weird when connected with generosity, right?

So, why in the world would I be writing an article titled “Radical Generosity”? The descriptors above are not applicable. The concepts I’m thinking about are acceptable definitions of the word *radical*. Words like deep-seated, far-reaching, profound, deep-rooted.

One of the most powerful examples of radical generosity in the Bible is the story in Luke 21:1-4 of the widow who gave two mites (about ¼ of a penny) to the temple treasury. These words spoken by Jesus touch my heart: “This widow out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.” Now, that’s radical, deep-seated, far-reaching, profound, deep-rooted generosity.

The Bible says nothing further about this generous lady. We can only imagine what happened to her after she gave all she had. Hopefully, Jesus or some of his followers figured out a way to help her live.

These words from the hymn “Take My Life and Let It Be” have always troubled me: “Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold.” Those words are easily sung, hardly ever actually done.

Even without giving absolutely everything to God in response to his temporal and eternal love for us, we can surely still experience the joy of radical generosity. If you’re not already generously supporting your church or other charitable cause, try it. You’ll like it. Radical generosity produces genuine joy!

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