

27 October 2011

Dear St. Peter's Family,

The Lord Almighty challenged his people: "In tithes and offerings, you are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse.... Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the LORD Almighty. "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land." (Mal. 3:9-12)

Are the people of the United States struggling because they have failed to honor God with their life and labor? Is our nation under a curse for robbing God of the honor and blessing due his name? Again and again the prophets of old challenge nations and people to return to the Lord, to bless him to be blessed.

Again the Lord says, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14)

So often when we are blessed with an abundance of money, we hoard it or spend it on ourselves. When the money runs out, we obsessively worry about it. God knows our hearts are inclined to trust in the work of our own hands rather than trust in Him. He made our hands; he gives us the fruits of our labor. Jesus taught that the biggest rival to our love for God is the love of money. (See Matt. 6:19-21)

Please join me in praying and working for the renewal of our community. Renewal comes with sacrifice of self. God does not call for overwhelming sacrifice. He asks for 1/10th of our money and 1/7th of our week. Staying faithful to the Tithe and the Sabbath require significant, but not overwhelming, dedication to God. These spiritual disciplines reveal that our hearts are inclined toward Him. God honors faithfulness.

St. Peter's radiates with the light of the glory of God when we "share the joy and love of Jesus Christ!" Say "Yes!" to the Lord's vision and mission for our church by prayerfully pledging your commitment on the week-end of November 12 and 13. "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land."

If you need help in discerning how you are being called to "share the joy" through the offering of your tithes, time and talents, I would love to meet with you personally. Call Susie in the church office for an appointment.

Each and every one of us has a unique role to play in fulfilling God's mission. What is yours? As each one steps into his or her God given role, all are blessed. Together, let us lean into the Lord's challenge and promise. Let us bless the Lord with the tithes and offerings of ourselves. The Lord promises to bless us and heal us in return.

I am faithfully yours in Christ Jesus our Lord,


Charlie Holt