



## Pastor's Pen by Bruce Wolf, Elder

### Motive for Giving

I invite you to take a short quiz:

1. How many brass plaques in recognition of donating money to the church have you seen on pews with Jesus' name on them?
2. How many banquets were thrown to honor Jesus' community development accomplishments?
3. How many awards ceremonies were held praising Jesus' contributions to local business growth?
4. How many honorary degrees were bestowed on Jesus for the scholarly papers and books he published?

If you answered zero or none to each of the above, you might be a biblical scholar because you are correct in each case!

***“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.”***

**Colossians 3:23,24**

When I was a young boy of elementary school age I would bring home my report card. I was a mediocre student making an occasional “A”, a “B” or two, lots of “C’s”, and an occasional “D”. On those occasions when I brought home an especially good report card, I would get verbal praise. Other kids my age would gloat about receiving a dollar from their Dad for each “A” they brought home. Their parents rewarded them with money for making good grades. But my father never did that. He explained to me that earning good grades was my job as a student. Learning, he said, and being the best student I could be should be reward enough, in and of itself. I could never convince my dad to pay me cash for grades.

One time a few years later, my father noticed a sign on a bridge. The bridge had been named for a politician. Dad explained that placing name plaques on bridges and on government buildings was misplaced sentiment. He felt that indulging those who are elected to serve

the public was unnecessary. A public servant should not receive extra credit for doing the job he was elected to do. Dad felt that naming public structures after politicians was wrong because it was the citizens who had worked and paid the taxes that made the bridge a reality.

Dad liked people. But he was not overt with praise. His heroes were often military people whom he respected for meeting the challenges of war, saving lives, and protecting the innocent from evil. He revered people such as Admirals Halsey and Nimitz and spoke of them respectfully. Dad served in the Navy during WW II in the Pacific theater serving with the Marines on Guam, Bougainville, Guadalcanal, and some other places. He never talked much about his part in the war or suggested himself worthy of special recognition for serving. Dad simply went to war to do his job. Then he came home. As simple as that.

Our church is currently in the middle of a capital campaign intended to raise money to build a meeting place for Christ's church in MH. People will be asked to contribute money to this endeavor. When you give your gift there is a real good chance that you will not be recognized for it. You may not even receive a thank you note.

So what's up with that? Let me explain. Your gift is private, between you and God. We will not publish the names of who gave, or in what amounts. God already knows. That should be enough.

But if you are a person who expects a thank you card, or accolades, or some form of public recognition of your gift, you may want to reconsider your motives for giving. We belong to an organization of volunteers, contributors who freely offer their efforts to the

proper functioning of Christ's church. In this type of organization, no one person is of more value than another. No single volunteer's effort is of more importance than another's. And certainly no individual's worth in Christ's eyes is greater than another's.

So who shall we get to write you a thank you note that has any real meaning? The church doesn't belong to the preachers. It isn't owned by the elders or the deacons. The Sunday school teachers possess no stocks or bonds in MCC. Aren't thank you notes supposed to be written by the one receiving the gift? Since the church we intend to build is Christ's, you may wish to ask Him for some personal recognition.

Job was a good man, a very good and godly man. But I don't remember God's discussion with Satan including a suggestion to send Job a thank you note for hanging tough.

Another good man, Jesus of Nazareth, did a lot of things right, too. He received little praise or thanks while He was with us. Instead, mostly demands, questions, criticism.

It might turn out to be the same for you. You might not get a thank you. Don't sweat the small stuff. You'll be in excellent company.