

How do I share my whole heart with you in just a few minutes? I start with prayer. Please bow your head with me.

"Heavenly Father, be my every thought and word. Open and soften every heart to hear you and obey you. In the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen"

My testimony is not dramatic but a gradual learning of scripture, which is my life guide. I can actually remember 60+ years ago being in my elementary Sunday School class. Every Sunday we all filled out a small slip. You received points for each box that you could check, such as, daily Bible reading, offering and tithing. I was blessed to have a Sunday School teacher that taught us the difference between just an offering and a tithe. I was determined to be able to check the tithe box. As I grew from an allowance, to babysitting, to playing the piano for a small church, to bookkeeping, to teaching, my memory is of weekly tithing. Was it always easy? No. Might I have missed a week? Of course. Did God embed my heart with tithing? He did.

After Pat and I married, we worked on getting to and keeping up a tithe. We were eventually blessed to be introduced to a faith based financial planner who challenged us to give more than a tithe. I thought to myself, really? Isn't a tithe enough? But it's not. A tithe is just a start. We are now at 20% giving. That means #1 is St. Michael's and then other ministries that reach locally and those that reach around the world.

The foundation of this all is studying God's Word. From learning as a child and later teaching children 1 John 4 "God is love". Now let's consider the words in 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver."

How can you say no to God's love?

The widow said yes. We have heard this morning: Mark 12:44 "She out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, all she has to live on."