

## To My Family, The Sanctuary,

One Saturday evening a few months ago at our worship service in the foothills, I asked people to surrender their wounds as they came to the communion table. I don't know that this is exactly what I was asking, but my wife prayed to the Lord saying, "I'm sorry that I never trusted you with the Sanctuary"—that is a wound, a wound of anxiety and fear. She told me after the service, "Peter, it was almost audible. I heard the Lord say, 'The Sanctuary was never yours. It has always been mine.'" I said, "That's great news!" On the way home she commented, "I'm not sure what this means—if it's significant—but when I heard him say that, I saw Him. He was standing in a field full of grain, up to his waist, running his hands over the ripe heads of wheat and smiling."

Well, that seems significant to me, for I seem to constantly worry about the harvest. The harvest is in the Lord's hands. He's the one that brings the growth (1 Cor. 3:5-9). But, I do believe we have seed to sow. We have a message to proclaim that few seem to be proclaiming: God is Love. Love will not fail. Love conquers all through His death on a tree and His resurrection in the garden. We testify to both the authority of Scripture and the Relentless Love that is God. That seed is bearing fruit here and even on the other side of the world. And yet, I seem to worry incessantly about the harvest—that's unfaithfulness on my part. And I worry about our finances—that's a sin.

I don't want to pass my sin on to you with this letter. And yet, I suspect that it's part of my assignment to remind you that we all sow this seed together. And that's not a curse but a blessing—God wants you to enjoy giving and the miracle of His harvest. "Look I make all things new," He says in our next chapter of the Revelation. How cool is it that He desires to do that even through us?

Institutions often remind people of the joy of giving, when they're actually stressed about getting. I hope our getting is just so that together we can do more giving.

I struggle with preaching that we need to get (cause that's not preaching), but I don't struggle with the idea that we all need to give, because giving is literally Life—receiving the Good and bleeding the Good for others is literally the river of Life flowing through us, cleansing us of despair, sorrow and anxiety, and filling us with the hope of eternity—giving is getting.

Well, no matter what, we do need to give, and there are many ways to give and places to give. However, if we, as an organization, are to continue to give we will need to get. As an organization our "giving and getting" was pretty good this last year, until November—I don't know why November was down... maybe because God wanted me to write this letter? But now, as we move into the last month of the year, you need to know that we—the Sanctuary Denver—are relying on what God will give through you.

In the Old Testament, the religious organization ran on tithes and offerings. The tithes amounted to something like 33.33% of income and didn't include the sacrificial offerings in worship. In the New Testament Jesus simplifies the math and reminds us that a steward gives all because he or she knows that none of it actually belongs to him or her, but to our Master. So I'm asking you to ask your Master, "Jesus what would you like me to give to the Institution of the Sanctuary Denver?"

To keep doing what we are doing as an organization, we will definitely need people to increase their giving in December. And I would hope that we could do more than simply what we have done. God always provides us with challenges and limits, but He also provides us with hopes, and it all teaches us courage and faith. He will grow His harvest, but I think He might use some of the following if we choose to give:

1. Our current staff and slate of programs: worship services, groups, ministries, classes for adults and children, websites, mission partners, etc. etc.

## 2. Things we haven't been doing and hope to do:

- ▶ Provide more resources for youth and children's ministry: this would probably include increased staffing.
- ▶ Keep our building operational and increase accessibility: we need new windows, better plumbing (some can't attend because of mold), and we'd love to install some sort of lift to make the sanctuary accessible to the handicapped.
- ▶ Compensate our staff appropriately and provide them with the hours necessary to carry out their calling, dream dreams for the future, and organize us (here and abroad) as a body.
- ▶ Give more to mission partners particularly in places like the Philippines. Currently, there are hundreds or thousands that consider themselves part of our church. I would love to see our giving take the form of increased personal involvement. Last year we paid for a cheeseburger factory to fund local pastors preaching the Gospel of Relentless-Love. Wouldn't you like to visit?
- ▶ Resource Sanctuary Abroad: we actually have hundreds, even thousands that connect with us online through our websites, Facebook, and printed material. I can barely keep my head above water long enough to produce a sermon and those that work on our website and media are over-taxed. . . . And we need new cameras—without these we lose connection to hundreds of people that think of us as their church.

The list above could be much longer. I probably need to talk about it more, but I don't, because I'm trying not to worry, and I don't want to diminish what God has already done.

But what He's done at the Sanctuary—which is remarkable—and what He will do, He will do through us. My job is to be the mouth for us . . . So listen up, us: we need to pray and give accordingly. Would you take a few minutes and do that right now?

Jesus is growing a great harvest. The harvest is us. We're the bread, made from grain, that is Christ's Body, and we bleed His blood. Would you surrender the wound that is your anxiety over money, and ask, Jesus, "Lord what would you like me to give to you through my church, the Sanctuary Denver?"

I love you,

Peter

***P.S.** You can give in our worship services, mail checks to the church office (3101 W 31st Ave, Denver CO 80211), donate electronically on our website ([thesanctuarydenver.org](http://thesanctuarydenver.org)), or create a recurring gift with your credit or debit card.*