

"This October will mark **20 years since I was first introduced to Consecration Sunday** and challenged to take one step forward in my giving.

At the time, that challenge frightened me. I wasn't sure I could give more, and I shared that concern with my pastor. His counsel has stayed with me ever since.

He encouraged me not to focus on making one large leap, but simply to **grow in my giving over time**—weekly, monthly, or annually. How much I increased was something for me to prayerfully work out with God. What mattered most, he said, was continuing to take that next step. The goal wasn't simply a larger offering; it was **growth in my faith and trust in God**.

I took his advice. For me, gradually increasing my giving on a monthly basis worked best, and I have continued that practice ever since.

My pastor also gave me a challenge: at the end of each year, look back and ask myself whether my increased generosity had left me lacking anything I truly needed.

Twenty years later, I can answer that question.

There has always been food on my table and a roof over my head. God has faithfully provided.

That doesn't mean there haven't been difficult seasons or that giving has always been easy. It means that, little by little, I learned that growing in generosity wasn't simply changing what I gave. **God was using it to change me.**

And perhaps that is the real invitation of Consecration Sunday: not simply to ask, "How much will I give?" but prayerfully to ask, **"Lord, what is the next step You are calling me to take?"**

~ Chris Wethman