Generosity Rising – Scott McKenzie Excerpt

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There comes a time when the system no longer seems to work. When old processes become ineffective and standard operating procedures become obsolete. A time when revolution is the only viable option—a revolution that overthrows the old system and ushers in a new order. For the church, now is that time! Yes, you heard me right; the church today desperately needs a revolution in stewardship and generosity. The church today needs pastors and stewardship chairs willing to step forward and lead a revolution in generosity and giving.

This book is written for people who care about stewardship issues in their own lives and in the

lives of their churches—the lone nuts who are passionate about stewardship

and generosity. This book is about starting a movement, a revolution of

generosity within our churches. It’s a handbook on how to lead a revolution

in generosity. I invite you on a journey, to go from being a lone nut to a

revolutionary leader in generosity. (from the Introduction to *Generosity Rising*)

Now, let’s look at what a revolution in stewardship and giving must be about. Listen to the words of Tom Peters:

*Sometimes I think that all leadership literature stinks—including much*

*of the stuff I’ve written. Too much focus is on tactics and motivation (and frankly, manipulation). All of that misses the point: leadership for what? From King and Gandhi and Jefferson . . . to Bill Gates and Steve Jobs and Richard Branson . . . leaders lead because they want to get some particular thing done. They want to do stuff that matters . . . great leaders are not merely great at leading. They are great at inducing others to take novel journeys to places of surpassing importance.* (Tom Peters, Reimagine: Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age)

Instead of looking for new tactics, new ways to manipulate, or new ways to make “the ask,” Peters suggests that great leaders find and invite others to journey with them to a place of surpassing importance. So, let us start a revolution in stewardship and giving that leads to the place of surpassing importance and invite others to journey with us.

In the life of the church, what is the “stuff” that matters and where is the place of surpassing importance? What is the journey we are inviting people to? How will we inspire great leadership? Let us return to those words from the Declaration of Independence. *We hold these truths to be a self-evident, that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness.* These words penned by Thomas Jefferson in 1776 resonate with the words written by Tom Peters in 2006: “They want to do stuff that matters . . . great leaders are not merely great at leading. They are great at inducing others to take novel journeys to places of surpassing importance.” The revolution of giving and generosity has to be bigger than budgets, buildings, salaries, and denominational taxes. The revolution of giving and generosity has to be bigger than campaigns and tactics. I will now commit blasphemy and actually rewrite those amazing words in the Declaration of Independence because I believe they can help us find the place of surpassing importance for our revolution in generosity

and giving:

**We hold these truths to be self-evident that all people are created in the image of a loving, giving, and generous God. We believe real life, true liberty, and eternal joy are only realized when we live lives of abundant generosity and sacrificial love.**

The big picture, the big cause, the place of surpassing importance for a revolution in generosity is nothing short of enabling individuals to become the very people God created them to be. What a novel journey of surpassing importance; the journey of becoming the person God created me to be from the beginning of all creation. Now that, my friends, is what a revolution in generosity is all about. (*Generosity Rising*, pgs. 3-4)