



WORDS FROM  
*Pastor Randy*

Most of us as parents can appreciate the **Dennis the Menace** cartoon that has Dennis rushing into the room holding a big box in his hand saying, "We'd better tell Santa Claus to forget about the train set I asked for. I just found one on the top shelf of Dad's closet."

Christmas is the time for giving. It is that special season of the year that we recall how God demonstrated His great love for us by sending His Son, the greatest gift of all. "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift*" (2 Cor. 9:15). That first Christmas morn, Mary indeed wrapped God's present to the world when, as the Bible says, she "*wrapped him (the Baby Jesus) in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger*" (Luke 2:7).

There is something within the very essence of love that always involves giving. Remember John 3:16, "*God so loved . . . that He gave.*" That's what love does. Love finds a way to give.

You can give without loving  
But you cannot love without giving

Someone has said that we are never more like God than when we are giving. This Sunday provides an opportunity for us to express our love through giving. It is time for our annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. This offering has become the lifeline for international missions.

This year we will "**March to the Manger**" and there place our love gifts in support of our 5,563 Southern Baptist missionaries who are currently serving in more than 153 countries around the world. These faithful people are in places like the remote Himalayan villages of northern India, Ethiopia, the Caucasus Mountains of Central Asia, Cambodia, and Zahra. Their efforts have resulted in 26,970 new churches and some 565,967 baptisms last year. These committed men and women are literally carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth.

[Pepe and Shari Lopez](#) are missionaries in one of the seven Canary Islands off the west coast of Africa. The Lopezes provide helpful services for the Islanders, teach Spanish, and lead children's camps. They say, "The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is our 'life support.' We could not live, function, or remain here should Southern Baptists not be praying for us all the time. We are the tangible extension of your life and ministry."

Let's once again give our very best Christmas offering. Our goal this year is \$12,000. What a great victory it will be, not only to reach this goal, but to exceed it this year! Let's do it because we love the Lord. We love our missionaries. We love lost souls.

You always get more than you give . . .  
When you give more than you get!

Prayerfully,

Pastor Randy

