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#yikes

Act 30: Yikes

by Ruth Leigh

That sharp intake of breath as you decide to do something truly generous, as you click donate, as the notes leave your hand. Maybe you're getting used to that feeling this month. But what if that wasn't just a one-off moment? What if it was an invitation into a sacrificial lifestyle? Today, take the hit. Gulp, and click donate – on a monthly direct debit or pledge that takes some real sacrificial giving.

"In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able,

and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations..."

(2 Corinthians 8:2–5 NIV)

Sitting in church one day, I was listening to our vicar telling us that we needed to raise quite a chunk of money to pay the wages of our new youth worker. I had a vested interest in this, being the mother of three children, one of them a teenager.

Since becoming self-employed, I hadn't exactly been overburdened with cash, so in the pause while we were all encouraged to search our hearts, I was more than a little surprised at God's leading. The conversation went like this.

Me: Oh Lord, guide me in this decision.

God: You need to give really generously, Ruth.

Me: OK, what sort of sum were you thinking of?

God: Somewhere in the hundreds. Dig deep.

Me: You what?? You're an all-seeing God; you know the state of my bank account!

Are you quite sure about this?

God: Yep. Trust in me.

With shaking hands, I reached into my handbag, digging through the layers of used tissues, half-chewed sweets and random plastic objects (like I said, mother of three children). I took a deep breath and wrote a cheque for an amount I really couldn't afford. As I dropped it into the collection plate, I hung on to the words 'trust in me' as a drowning man clutches at nearby floating objects.

The cheque duly cleared. We hired the youth worker. He started transforming lives. I don't know what effect his work and the work of our current youth worker will have in the long term. I don't need to know either. I trusted and I gave more than I could afford because God asked me to.

All I needed to do was listen and obey. That was it. You should try it – who knows where it might lead?



Ruth Leigh is a writer, poet, inspirational speaker and caterer. She lives in the beautiful Suffolk countryside with her husband, three children and ten chickens. She makes her own jams and chutneys, has a morbid fear of fresh tomatoes and loves nothing more than curling up with a good book in front of the fire.

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Choose how to complete this act...



GREEN OPTION:

Renew an old giving pledge that you let go by the wayside.



YELLOW OPTION:

Look at causes or people you already give to. Can you increase your giving by 1, 5 or 10%?



RED

OPTION:

Make a brand-new sacrificial gift.

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