

# A Tribute to My Friend Who Showed His Undying Love for Jesus Through His Great Generosity

Dennis Doyle was a great man with a generous heart, who was enormously successful in real estate and who used his business acumen to enrich the lives of millions. He was also one of my closest friends. He died of Alzheimer's on May 15 at age 68.

Although we wrote about him in *Charisma*, and I did several *Strang Report* podcasts on the ministry he founded, you may not have heard of Dennis. However, in the Twin Cities, where he owned enormous amounts of real estate, he was well-known and greatly loved. I wanted to add my personal tribute to the many good things being said and written about his life.

I knew Dennis well for almost 20 years because we were in a small group of Christian businessmen who met several times a year. We would discuss not only business but spiritual issues and, in a way, hold each other accountable. Though the men in the group were all successful, Dennis was the most successful from a financial perspective. However, he was humble and rarely talked about himself or of all he had accomplished. Most often he talked in the group about helping others through the ministry he founded in 2000 called Hope for the City, later called MATTER.

Two decades ago, Dennis visited some Indonesian pastors in Los Angeles who had been businessmen in Indonesia. He learned they collected surplus supplies to distribute to the poor back home. He realized he could do the same in the Twin Cities, the headquarters of huge companies like Target and General Mills with surplus usable products but no way to distribute them to

the poor. Where others saw this surplus as a problem, the Doyles saw an opportunity. Dennis set up a small non-profit ministry, rented some trucks and for \$40,000 in costs was able to distribute \$1.8 million worth of product to the poor the first year.

In the early years Dennis and his wife, Megan, provided the funding. As the ministry grew, others came alongside because they saw how much good was being done and how efficient the ministry was. One of these people was Gene Simmons of KISS, who is also a philanthropist. They became friends, and KISS did several fundraiser concerts that, over several years, raised several million dollars for the ministry. Gene Simmons and KISS also brought notoriety to the ministry. As the ministry grew—and to broaden its appeal, especially to a new generation, the ministry changed its name to MATTER.

I remember Dennis explained the name, how the donors matter; the poor matter; and everything is made up of matter! According to its website, MATTER “was founded on a simple, yet profound question by the Doyles. As people of deep faith with a keen sense of responsibility toward the poor and most vulnerable in our world, they asked themselves, ‘what do we have in our own hands that can help?’”

Dennis did so much in such a short time a book could be written about it, but because I can only touch on a few highlights, I invited his widow and my close friend, Megan, to reminisce about Dennis and what his life represented. This very personal podcast gives a glimpse of this incredible man.

Dennis’ reputation as a successful entrepreneur is certain to be remembered by those whom he did business with over many, many decades. However, Megan says, his legacy takes on a much higher meaning in the kingdom of God.

She spoke of his generosity and added, “His life was a life of someone who never gave up. He had to get his last ounce of

life in before he would let go. That's how he lived his whole life. He did everything 150%."

To give you an idea of Dennis' godly character, he once said this: "Don't judge, come up with grand ideas. Come up with a spirit of love, and you'll reach people in a way they will understand."

Acting on the Doyles' grand idea to reach the people in the Twin Cities, they began to leverage their corporate network, and the response from several businesses, including Target and Cargill, were overwhelming. MATTER took off from there exponentially, and today it has impacted more than 40 million people worldwide since its inception. In fact, Megan told me that MATTER has given away more than \$650 million of corporate surplus to the poor during that period of time.

"We continue to feed the poor in Minnesota and in other areas of the United States," Megan told me. "We continue to furnish hospitals overseas as well as provide technology centers. We partner with Microsoft to bring computer access to faraway places in Africa and Indonesia, where a computer could not be afforded. To succeed in today's world, you have to have computer skills. If there's one thing separating the developing world from the Western world, it's technology. So, the more we can help to close that gap, the better the whole world will be."

I have conducted other interviews with the Doyles in the past. Their love for people is second to none. As MATTER President Quenton Marty recently said: "Dennis was one of the humblest people I've known. ... He was a rock star. He always had time for people and wanted to hear their ideas. He never took himself too seriously, and he never considered himself more important than others. This is what I admired most about my dear friend and mentor. He will be greatly missed."

I got to know Dennis in 2001, when he was in his late 40s. As

I got to know him, I knew one thing was apparent. He loved Jesus. He really did. Dennis let his light shine before men, as Jesus commanded us to do. Because of that, he was greatly loved. I never knew anybody who didn't love Dennis.

As I told Megan in the podcast, I know that even people who never knew Dennis will be inspired by his life of devotion to Christ and his generous spirit. Not only did he help the poor, but he made a difference in the lives of the people he hired, the clients he served and the entire Twin Cities area. Minnesota is better because of Dennis Doyle.

He was a role model to many, as he was to me. I've personally been inspired by his generosity both as a friend who helped me navigate a few business issues and a servant of Christ who extended generosity to tens of thousands he never met.

For more on Dennis Doyle and his life and legacy, listen to this entire episode of the *Strang Report* [here](#). A special website tells the story of Dennis' life. To learn more and to be inspired, [click here](#).

One of Dennis Doyle's favorite sayings and the credo for which he lived his life was, "Do good by doing good." It was as simple as that for him. {eo}