

WEEK #3 – BULLETIN INSERT

Generosity

1. God is a GIVER.
2. Generosity is at the heart of the GOSPEL.
3. The tithe is a TEST.
4. JESUS was God's tithe.
5. Your heart follows your FINANCES.
6. I am a STEWARD not an OWNER.

Generosity is an expression of faith and obedience.



Revealing key ways
that we can partner
with God in order to
live an epic life

GENERAL GROUP LEADERSHIP TIPS

- **Relax and enjoy** the people God has put in your group. We are ALL different – learn to appreciate and even celebrate our diversity!
- **If this is your first group meeting**, please refer to last week's material which includes some additional ideas.
- Don't lose the **nametags** yet. They will be very helpful for another meeting or two, at least. Don't assume that everyone knows everyone else's name. Nametags are available on CG table in the Grand Foyer.
- Ask someone to become a **group "Scribe"** – recording prayer requests each week as well as the results of those prayers in the subsequent weeks. (This is a great role for a quieter member of your group.)
- **Before the group scatters, eats, etc., please mention the mission/outreach idea to your group this week. Let them know that you will have a condensed list of ideas from the church at-large but that you would love for them to consider some ways that the group could work together to serve someone else, meet a family's need, etc. Remind them that serving together is a great way to get to know one another, create some wonderful shared memories, and bless someone else in the process.**

LEADERSHIP TIP: Begin thinking and praying about who might become an apprentice leader for your group. (See CG training session #3 at [RightNow Media](#) for ideas on identifying apprentices.)

WELCOME/SNACKS 20 minutes

OPEN (Ice Breakers) 10-15 minutes

Choose ONE From:

1. Give everyone a piece of paper and a pencil and have them sketch a picture that represents **generosity**. Then have them share their picture with the group. (Make it tougher by telling them to NOT draw the Cross.)
2. What is one great act of generosity you experienced?
3. **Part A** - Describe your probable reaction to waiting in line at a store and winning a million dollars as the "One Millionth Customer"? (Go around the circle for each member's response.)

Part B - (After everyone has responded, invite the group to jump in as desired and share their answers to the following.)
Describe your probable reaction if the person in front of you in line won the million dollars, instead.

INTERACTION OVER SUNDAY'S TOPIC/MESSAGE 35 minutes

LEADERSHIP TIPS:

- Not everyone has to answer every question. Allow some to share. Move on to the next question.
- Quickly review Sunday's bulletin insert with the group as needed.
- Monitor your time.

1. **Do you agree with Pastor Carter's assertion that generosity measures our lives? If yes, how so?**
(It can tell us about our passions; about how much we prefer ourselves rather than others or the church; it reveals selfishness or selflessness; etc.)

2. **What are some ways that we can express generosity?**
(Examples: money, time, effort/gifts/talents, praise, thinking the best about others – generous assumptions)

What are some enemies of generosity in our lives?

(Examples: selfishness – we spend so much on ourselves that we have little or no margin left with which to be generous; fear - of not having “enough”; pride - in always wanting the best or “just a little bit more”, etc.)

3. **On Sunday, Pastor Carter noted that God Himself is a giver. How do we know this to be true?**
(Examples: Generosity is at the heart of the Gospel - the Good News about what Jesus has done for us in dying on the Cross – John 3:16 & 1 John 3:16; God gives people second chances, and third-, and fourth...; God wants to bless people and loves to give them good gifts – Matthew 7:11; the Bible itself is a gift from God)

How have you seen God as a giver in your own life?

4. **Why do we find it uncomfortable to talk about money?**
(Perhaps we don't feel that we make enough? We don't want others to feel uncomfortable or less successful? We struggle to trust God and obey Him with “our” money which is so very needful and practical to our daily lives?)

In the New Testament, Jesus talked more about money than He did about heaven and hell. Why do you suppose He did this?

(Because He knows that our **heart** follows our finances. God is after your **heart**, not your money!
Matthew 6:19-21)

5. **Do you truly believe that everything you have belongs to God; that you are a *steward* of what you have instead of an “owner”?** (Allow time for response.)
If so, how does this get expressed in your decisions regarding finances?

6. **Ask: How does the Lord challenge his people to put him to the test in this passage?**

(Read aloud Malachi 3:8-10 below:)

8 “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the Lord Almighty. 12 “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the Lord Almighty.

Discuss how this passage relates to this statement from Sunday:

“Generosity is an expression of faith and obedience.”

7. Have you “tested” God through tithing (giving the first 10th of your income to the church)? If so, what have been the results of this practice in your life?

GROUP RESPONSE AND PRAYER 10-15 minutes

GENERAL GROUP LEADERSHIP TIPS

- Remind the group that this is a time for prayer & ministry; not advice-giving. “We were made for community, so let’s minister to one another.”
- Choose any of the following.

1. How often do I set out to delight people by generosity (going beyond what is strictly necessary or expected)? Do I generally expect anything in return?

When is the last time I did that for a friend, coworker, a complete stranger? When did someone do that for me? How did it make me feel?

2. What insecurities of mine are warring right now with the call to live a generous life?

(Don’t be afraid of silence after asking this question. People are processing. If someone shares an insecurity, invite him/her to pray a brief prayer of confession to the Lord. Then invite a volunteer to pray a brief prayer of agreement with what they have prayed.)

3. Am I living a generous life with my talent, treasure, and time?

In what specific area of my life is God asking me to be more generous?

(Invite people to respond in the form of a prayer. Example: “God, please help me restrict my spending so that I can be more generous towards your Kingdom.” Or, “God, please help me be more generous in my assumptions with my coworkers.” After a person prays aloud, ask one volunteer to agree briefly in prayer with each response. Example: “Yes, Lord, help him be generous in this way...”)

MISSION MOMENT 5 minutes

Say something like: **“Let’s talk about some ways we can be generous as a group to someone else by discussing what kind of mission we will undertake together!”**

- Elicit ideas about some ways the group could work together to serve someone else, meet a family’s need, etc. Feel free to contact me for ideas, as well.
- Please inform me as soon as possible of the group’s plans to reach out and serve others.
- It would be best if the group could plan to carry out this mission in the near future (i.e. during the series), but this is not essential, so long as the group plans to continue meeting together.