

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES 301

GENEROSITY

We're told the secret to happiness is more — more stuff, more spending, and more status.

But what if culture is wrong?

What if happiness isn't linked to our dollars but to our disciplines? What if the contentment, peace, and joy we crave could be cultivated not by getting more but by giving what we already have?

For the next few weeks, we want to talk about the spiritual discipline of generosity. Yes, it's the season of giving, but generosity was never meant to be limited to a holiday or special occasion. For followers of Jesus, it was a way of life. And for Jesus, it was the main mission of His life. He came to give us a gift we could never earn on our own.

Maybe you're reading this and don't feel like you have a lot to give; but generosity begins with our mentality, not our money.

We've talked about prayer, Bible study, worship, and fasting. We've looked at our routines and picked a fight with our flesh. Now, Elevation YTH, it's time for the ultimate heart-check discipline.

Do you own your stuff, or does your stuff own you?

Where are you storing up treasure? (Spoiler alert: That's where your heart is.)

Are you living with open hands or with a scarcity mindset?

Let's process this together!

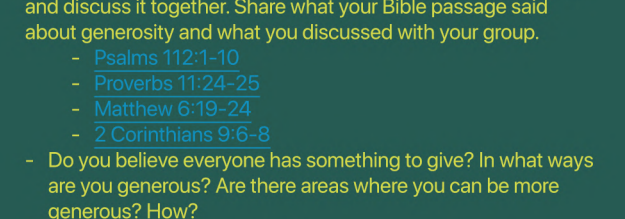
It's gonna be better than good; it's gonna be life-changing if we allow the Holy Spirit to have His way!

WEEK ONE

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 12

HOW TO BE RICH THE RIGHT WAY

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."
1 Timothy 6:17-19



*GROUP DISCUSSION

THINK IT THROUGH (AND TALK IT OUT):

- 1.1
 - When you hear the word generosity, what words, actions, or people come to your mind?
 - What are some differences between what the world says about generosity and what the Bible says?
 - Read what Jesus says about generosity in [Matthew 6:1-4](#), [Matthew 10:42](#), and [Luke 6:27-30](#). When we're generous to others, we live out of the generosity God has shown us. How has God been generous to you?
- 1.2
 - Read [1 Timothy 6:17-19](#). What stands out to you in this passage?
 - The book of 1 Timothy is a letter written by Paul to a young church leader in Ephesus named Timothy. Ephesus was a wealthy city, and Paul encouraged Timothy to teach that money should be used to do good. Look at verse 18. No matter how much money we have, what does this passage say about how we should live our lives? What are some ways we can be "willing to share"?
 - Generosity starts with your mentality, not your money. Are the ways you think about money helping you be more generous or less? Where in your life is this a struggle?
 - How could you be the rich the right way — in good deeds — this week?
- 1.3

Get into groups of two or three, pick a passage below to look up, and discuss it together. Share what your Bible passage said about generosity and what you discussed with your group.

 - [Psalms 112:1-10](#)
 - [Proverbs 11:24-25](#)
 - [Matthew 6:19-24](#)
 - [2 Corinthians 9:6-8](#)
 - Do you believe everyone has something to give? In what ways are you generous? Are there areas where you can be more generous? How?
- 1.4
 - Read [Matthew 25:14-30](#). What do the following represent in the parable: the man and the master, the journey, the servants, and the bags of gold and talents?
 - The excuse "I don't have a lot to give" can stop us from being generous with what God has given us. How does the parable in Matthew 25 counter that excuse? (Think about it: In Genesis 2:7, God formed Adam from dust. God can work wonders with whatever we bring, no matter how big or small.)
 - Why does generosity require discipline? How are you currently disciplined in your generosity? In what ways do you need to be more intentional?



*THIS WEEK...

OPEN UP YOUR BIBLE

Nobody is born generous! It takes discipline to fight our flesh and live generously. And when we spend time with Jesus, we become more like Him and grow in our generosity. This week, check out these verses, and ask God to reveal to you how to be generous in the right way.

- [Leviticus 19:9-10](#) – What would it look like for you to leave the "edges of your field" for those in need?
- [Deuteronomy 15:7-11](#) – Pray and ask God to show you where you need to be open-handed with a generous heart.
- [Matthew 25:14-30](#) – Identify one talent you've buried, and put it to good work today!
- [2 Corinthians 9:6-8](#) – What stood out to you in this passage?
- [Hebrews 13:16](#) – Write this verse on a note card, and commit it to memory. Remember, God is pleased every time you help someone in need.

RECAP AND REFLECT

Everyone has something to give; it's just a matter of whether they have the discipline to give it. Based on what we've learned, identify what it means for you to live a generous life and where you need to be more disciplined.

WALK IT OUT

This week, make a list of all the ways God has been generous to you. Spread His goodness to others by being intentionally generous to someone each day.

WEEK TWO

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 18

A HEART CHECK DISCIPLINE

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Luke 12:34



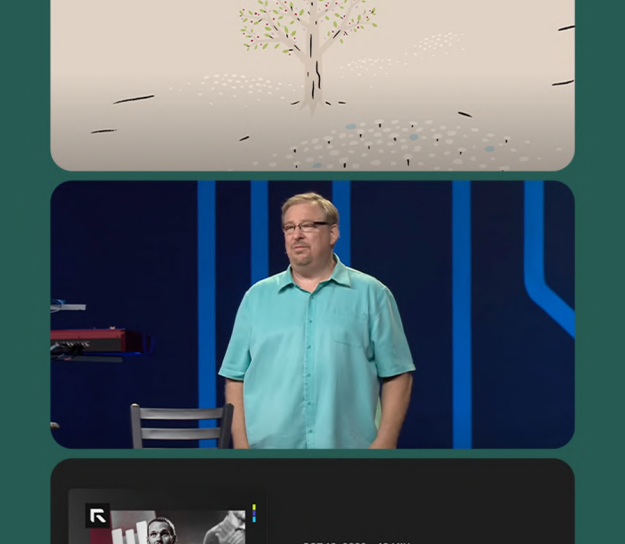
*GROUP DISCUSSION

THINK IT THROUGH (AND TALK IT OUT):

- 2.1
 - Think about your possessions (you know, those things you own). Which three can you not live without?
 - Read [Luke 12:13-21](#). In verse 15, Jesus said, a "life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." What does a life of following Jesus consist of then?
 - Jesus talked about money more than He talked about heaven and hell combined. What do you think Jesus knew about our hearts and desires related specifically to money?
- 2.2
 - Is it possible to have a lot but not do much with it? What are examples of this or where do you see this around you? (e.g., at school, in your community, on social platforms, entertainment, etc.)
 - Read [Matthew 6:19-24](#). What does verse 20 mean when it says, "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal"?
 - "You cannot serve both God and money." ([Matthew 6:24b](#)) How does your choice of money and master affect the way you live your life?
- 2.3
 - Generosity is different from tithing. Generosity is a discipline, but tithing is a command. Read [Malachi 3:10](#). This is the only verse in the Bible where God says to test Him. Why is trust in God an integral part of tithing? (Leader Note: Share a time when you tithed, but it was hard. How did God provide and grow your faith?)
 - God is a generous God. Everything we have comes from Him. He lets us keep 90% of what we receive and calls us to be faithful and obedient with the other 10%. When you tithe, how are you investing in the gospel? What things can bear fruit because of the seed you sowed?
 - Being generous with our money means going above and beyond the tithe. Do you know a generous person? In what ways are they generous with their money?
- 2.4

In Matthew 19, we see a rich ruler ask Jesus a series of questions, trying to figure out what he must do to get into heaven. Read [Matthew 19:21-22](#) to see how Jesus replied. Are you surprised by Jesus' response? Would you have responded like the ruler?

 - The famous preacher Billy Graham said, "Tell me what you think about money, and I'll tell you what you think about God, for these two are closely related. A man's heart is closer to his wallet than anything else." How does culture use money to separate us from God? In what tangible or visible ways is your heart closer to your wallet than God?
 - We think we own our stuff, but in the case of the rich young ruler, it's clear his stuff owned him. What are some practical ways to loosen our grip on stuff so we can trust God more and live generously? (e.g., Once or twice a year, go through your clothes and give away items you don't wear very often.)



*THIS WEEK...

OPEN UP YOUR BIBLE

You know the drill... Open your Bible to get a word from God and spend some time with Jesus. Take notes, highlight what stands out, and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you.

- [Proverbs 3:9-12](#). Highlight what stood out to you in these verses. Ask God to reveal to you how you can give Him your "first fruits."
- [Malachi 3:10](#). Think through ways you haven't fully trusted God this week. Pray and ask God to help you put your whole trust in Him.
- [Luke 18:18-24](#). Be honest with God about your mindset today. Ask Him to help you have the mindset of Christ.
- [Proverbs 3:9-10](#). Read this verse in a few different translations (we suggest NIV, NLT, and the MSG). What is the Holy Spirit showing you?
- [Proverbs 11:24-25](#). Thank God for people who have shown generosity to you or for how you have benefited from the generosity of others.

RECAP AND REFLECT

It takes discipline to loosen your grip on your stuff and trust God with your story. Based on what we learned, examine your "bank" accounts. How are your accounts — both earthly and heavenly — doing this week? Do you need to change anything (e.g., your actions, words, intentions, encouragement, money, etc.) to build up your heavenly account?

WALK IT OUT

Right now, our church is in our Year-End Offering season. It's a time when our faith is challenged as we take steps to trust God. For some, this looks like beginning to tithe for the first time, and for others, it's a decision to be generous and give a gift that goes above and beyond their tithe.

Get with God, and let Him speak to you about how He wants you to grow in your faith and your giving through this season. Ask God to stretch your faith as you trust Him to help you be disciplined in your generosity.

EXTRAS FOR eGroup Leaders

If you want to grow in generosity or get a better handle on your finances, check out these resources! It's never too early (or too late) to begin trusting God with what's in your hands.

