

THE MONEY REVOLUTION

Home Group Discussion Guides



HOME GROUP STUDY 5 : Give Generously

This is the final home group study in a series of five on biblical principles for handling our money. It is designed to accompany the book 'The Money Revolution', which seeks to help Christians develop their skills as stewards of the resources God has entrusted to them.

Warming Up

1. Can you think of an example of a time you have witnessed generosity, either to you, or from one person to another?

This need not be with money - it could be by giving their time, love, home or whatever.

2. In what ways is God generous? How do we know this?

If we have understood the first principle, then everything we have is a gift from God, but also we recognise that in Jesus' death on the cross, God gave himself.

3. Read the following quote from Archbishop Rowan Williams :

The thing that God gives more than anything else is himself. He doesn't just give us life, but his life, his energy, his curiosity, his creativity. Receiving the grace of God is like a crevice halfway down the Niagara Falls saying that it receives some water! Receiving isn't the word to describe the abundance of the water. There's not a great deal of point in the rocky crevice halfway down saying, "Well, I think I would like to hold on to some of this water." You really haven't got much option. It falls on you and it bounces off, that's what waterfalls do! It's given to us to be givers, to pass on an intensity of outpouring.

- a. What do you think of that analogy?
- b. Do we recognise the grace of God in this way? If so, why? If not, why not?

Bible Passage 1 - The Good Samaritan. (Luke 10:25-37)

A member of the group should read this aloud

4. In what ways was the Samaritan generous?

The Good Samaritan gave his time to stop and help the traveller, he gave of himself in exposing himself to risk if the thieves were still around, he sacrificed his comfort in putting the traveller on a donkey, and he gave money to pay for the expenses at the inn.

Bible Passage 2 - 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

A member of the group should read this aloud.

5. Note the use of the word "grace" in v1. What does it mean in this context?
6. In v2, note the situation of the Macedonian Christians. They were not comfortable and prosperous. It is a general fact that in Britain today that on average those who are less well off give away a greater proportion of their

income than those who have higher incomes. This is true both in churches and in society as a whole. Why might this be?

7. Note in verse 3 that Paul writes that they gave “even beyond their ability”. Ask members to think of an example from the gospels where someone gave “beyond their ability”

The obvious link is with the widow who gave 2 copper coins (eg Luke 21:1-4). Note that she gave 2 coins, not just one, which is a vital point -it was not a choice as to give or not to give, but that she chose to give everything.

8. In v4, Paul writes that they “urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints”. Does giving feel like a privilege? Why or why not?
9. Note in verse 5, the priority - they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will.
10. What do we think Paul is saying in verse 8 : ‘I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.’
11. Verse 12 is a very important verse to think about proportionate giving. ‘For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.’ The principle is that we might give according to what we have (proportionately) but willingly, not by law (which is one drawback of the way that the tithe has been interpreted by some.)
12. This passage ends ‘He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little.’ How might this form a vision for generosity?

Life Application

13. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Cor 9:7
What makes us give cheerfully? How do we feel about giving?
14. This has talked mainly about money. The Good Samaritan showed generosity in lots of ways - what other ways can we show generosity?

Summing Up

15. Ask the group to recall and summarise the five principles :
 - ◆ *Everything belongs to God - God’s nature is generous sharing*
 - ◆ *Be active stewards - the Good Samaritan was an active steward*
 - ◆ *Live within your resources - we are called to reflect God’s generosity*
 - ◆ *Build up treasure in heaven - through expressing gifts of love.*
 - ◆ *Be generous in your giving - to the church, to others to carry out God’s work.*
16. God’s generosity is expressed supremely in his love in sending Jesus : For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son Jesus Christ. (Jn 3:16) How can we express our love through generosity?

Responding in Prayer

Take time for personal reflection. Think about all the principles and ask God to help you apply them in your life, and in your finances.

Follow Up

Group members are encouraged to look at the final pages of the book : pages 49 to 64.