

# The Joy of Generosity

## Week 3 - Practices

### NOTES ARE IN APP - Not on screen - Download

- <https://theelement.church/app>

### Connect with us - Next Steps Form

- Text "Element" to 97000

### EGroups

- [theelement.church/egroups](https://theelement.church/egroups)

### GIVING TIME:

- **4 WAYS TO GIVE**
- ONLINE: <https://theelement.churchcenter.com/give>
- APP: Give Tile
- TEXT: Text an "amount" to 84321
- MAIL: PO Box 52 East Lansing MI 48826

### Intro - The Joy of Generosity

- First week - More than money
- Last week - Stewardship

### **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

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. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 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.

- They had money and that was ok
- They were told to **relocate their trust**
- They were richly provided "everything" for enjoyment FROM God
- Told to be rich in good deeds & generous
- Lay up treasure in heaven

- **Take hold of a life that is truly life**
- Money that is more than money!

“Throughout the Bible there are over 2,000 verses concerning money. This is roughly twice as many as faith and prayer combined... money is the main subject of nearly half of the parables Jesus told... Why? There is a fundamental connection between our spiritual lives and how we think about and handle money.” - Randy Alcorn

### **“TWO LEGS” OF BIBLICAL FINANCES...**

1. Generosity
2. Stewardship

We’ve talked about concepts and principles.

### **PRINCIPLES MUST CONVERT TO PRACTICES**

Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice. - Anton Chekhov

“The small steps you take today will be the beginning of the big stories you tell tomorrow... (but) It doesn’t take trying, it takes training” - Julie Mullins

### **1 Timothy 4:7-8 New International Version (NIV)**

7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come..”

### **ILL. Mandalorian Show: Baby Yoda**

- *“There is no try, only do or do not.” - Old Yoda*

### **ILL. Paint - the power is in the application**

## ILL. Application requires Practices - 2006 Duke University Study

- 45% of our daily activities in life are automatic
- Almost one out of every two minutes you are doing something you are not consciously aware of making a decision
  - To apply something you have to make it automatic

## 5 P's of Practicing Giving

- 5 Practices
- I will give you a VERY practical challenge to go with each one.

### #1.) Purposed Giving

“When you became a Christian, you signed up for a completely different economic system... As believers, we all have the responsibility to leverage our wealth for kingdom purposes.” — Andy Stanley, Fields Of Gold

The goal is not to live on the earth forever  
but to leave something that does.

- Money is for building God's purposes not our personal survival
  - Stewards not owners
  - Sowing not spending - investing in God's work (Eternity)

### ILL.: Nickels at Johnny Rockets.

You walk in and they hand you a nickel...

- The nickel was given to you (not yours)
- You pocket the nickel!?! For your survival?
  - It is given to you for a very specific purpose

- You instantly become a “steward” or manager of that money.
- There is an amazing song in the juke box
- Celebration for ALL
  - You can listen + Others can listen + some dancing
- **CONDUITS!**
- **Challenge:** Settle internally that your life & finances are not primarily about personal survival but advancing the purposes of God.
  - I am a steward, not an owner

## **#2.) Priority Giving**

- **Give God the First**
- **An opportunity for learning to trust God**

**Wealth is a wonderful tool and a horrible God.**

- **Matt. 6:24, 32-33** - “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money... **[God takes care of food, drink & clothing]...** **32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- “NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS...”
  - **You can only prioritize ONE**
  - Money is looking for slaves?
  - It enslaves?

**Q: How to stop that?**

**A: PUT THE MASTER FIRST**

**Proverbs 3:9-10**

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

- 22 Times in Proverbs Alone - First Fruits
  - 10% First Fruits off the top
    - Pre Law
    - First
    - Tithe means 10% in Hebrew
  
- **ILL. 7 Habits Highly Effective - First things First**
  - Wide mouth gallon Mason Jar
  - First sized rocks
  - Pebbles
  - Sand
  - (Big rocks go in the jar first all others go around them)
  - Put them in proper order & it works, swap the order & it don't!
  - The ORDER matters
  
- An **opportunity** for learning to trust God:
- **Put God First:**

“Life’s basic decision is rarely, if ever, whether to believe in God or not, but whether to worship or compete with Him.” - Eugene Peterson

### ILL. The Greyhound and the wild dog eating chair

- Owner: “Hey Greyhound, stop!”
- Greyhound: “No way!”
- God: “Do this with the money I’ve entrusted to you.”
- Me: “Fat chance! I gotta keep running...”
- Trusting God in
- Action/Surrender is how to stop the chair

## This is not primarily a math issue, but a control issue.

“Make it the very first check you write every month... it not only ensures that you’ll guard it as a priority, but it’s a symbolic way of reminding you where your hope lies.” Andy Stanley

- Challenge: If you write checks, make it the very first check you write every month, if you use a card make it your first transaction each month, if you automate giving set it as the first automation every month.

### #3.) Percentage Giving

- Could do a theological discourse on **tithing** in the old testament & new covenant grace but not needed
- **God wants us to be generous & to trust Him financially - not money**

### Q: How can you get a “measurable” on that?

- Biblically when God speaks on the topic He seems to use 10% as a rule of thumb
  - Bible talks about tithing specifically in the books of
    - Genesis
    - Leviticus
    - Numbers
    - Deuteronomy
    - Chronicles
    - Proverbs
    - Nehemiah
    - Amos
    - Malachi
    - The Gospels of
      - Matthew

- Luke
    - Hebrews
    - Acts - pushes it beyond 10% to 100% - they sold all their things & brought it to the church to share - different than socialism)
- PUT GOD FIRST IN FINANCES, BIBLE HISTORICALLY USED 10%
- **The priority/power of the tithe - an objective scale**
  - Sliding scale that adapts for EVERY PERSON
- Before the law - **abram & melchizedek - Genesis 14:20 Hebrews 7**
  - Priest of Salem - no one knows where Salem is - Jesus
  - 10%
- **Jacob's Ladder - Genesis 28**
  - Built an altar and
  - Gave a 10th of his income
- **Malachi 3 - Try me in this...**

### Malachi 3:10

“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.”

- “Blessing” Hebrew root word is “BMW” - just kidding
- **Hebrew - “Blessing” root word comes from peace!**
- **Jesus** references the need to tithe Luke & Matthew 23:23
  - Justice, Mercy and Faith
  - “This you should have done without leaving the other [tithe] undone”.

## Not a salvation issue

- God's love is unconditional - gift
- God's blessings are conditional - obedience
- The NT above and beyond the tithe - Jesus (anger/lust)

## Side Note: tithe goes to the local church??

- Abraham - Melchizedek/Priest
- Jacob - the house of God/doorway to heaven (meeting w/ God)
- Malachi - Storehouse - where you eat (honoring God)
- Law - Levites no land/financial inheritance - Tend the temple
  - **Numbers 18:21 NIV**  
To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting.
  - **Levites did not get an inheritance (12 tribes):**
  - Joshua 13:33 - But to the tribe of Levi, Moses had given no inheritance; the Lord, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as he promised them.
  - I Corinthians 9:11 (Paul) If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?

**WHERE** is a decision you have to make.

**WHAT** seems pretty clear as a principle - 10% is the Bible's basic rule of thumb for testing where we put our trust!

## Maybe God knows something we don't? 10% - Heart conditioning?

New Testament MORE about your heart. Still gives rule of thumbs...

**1 Corinthians 16:2** - On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income...

- This was spoken as a percentage to people living from a hebrew context.



- New Testament: If the law was 10% how much more?

Percentage based giving levels the playing field & offer a way to examine ourselves.

One out of 10

10 out of 100

100 out of 1,000

1,000 out of 10,000

10,000 out of 100,000

100,000 out of 1,000,000

It's all the same.

### NOT EQUAL GIFTS BUT EQUAL SACRIFICE

My hope/dream for our church: 100% participation

- Challenge: Pray & pick a percentage and commit to it - start where you are.

#### #4.) Progressive Giving

- **ILL. Bible uses FARMING**
  - The more you sow, the more you harvest, the more you harvest the more you can sow, and so on and so on...
  - **SO YOU WANT TO INCREASE WHAT YOU SOW!**
  - THE MORE YOU **SOW** THE MORE **HARVEST** THERE IS

“Any fear associated with giving to God's kingdom is irrational. It's on par with a farmer who, out of fear of losing his seed, refuses to plant his fields...giving to God's work is not giving something away. It's an investment, not a loss. The farmer who sows doesn't lose seed. He gains a crop.” - **Andy Stanley, *Fields Of Gold***

Who cares about Andy Stanley?

What does the Bible say?

**2 Corinthians 9:6-11** - Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.” 10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

- **Challenge: For those already giving - How are you planning to increase what you sow so you can experience an increased harvest?**

### **#5.) Planned Giving**

“[God] wants you to go home, look at your bucket of seed, and determine in your heart how much you'd like to sow. He wants you to consider thoughtfully your current circumstances, your life, your potential, and your finances. He wants you to involve your family. He wants you to pray about it. And then He wants you to come up with a plan.” — **Andy Stanley, Fields Of Gold**

**2 Cor. 8:7-8A** But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in

you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. 8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love...

- Challenge: How will you create and execute a plan moving forward?

### **CLOSE - Spiritual impartation:**

#### **This is the moment where I want to challenge you:**

- It doesn't matter what you know
- It doesn't matter what we say we believe
- It matters where we put your trust and what we do
  - Who is in charge?
  - What will you do about that?