

# STARVE THE MONSTER

## PART FOUR: DEFEAT THE MONSTER

It's one thing to battle the monster, but how do you defeat him? A lot of the battle goes on in your mind. And it goes on in your bank account. So is defeat possible? Yes, although the answer may surprise you and even discourage you before it liberates you.

**BIG IDEA:** You will always want more until you decide to give more.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you consider yourself 'rich in this world'? Why or why not?
2. With your Bible or YouVersion, read 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

*Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.*

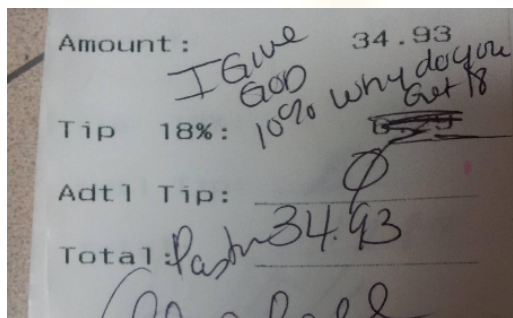
1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NLT)

3. Why do you think Paul refers to money as being 'so unreliable'? Is it?
4. According to Paul, what is the real purpose of money?
5. "You will always want more until you decide to give more." How do you think generosity battles entitlement?
6. In what ways do you think the idea of giving more money away is surprising, discouraging and (ultimately) liberating?

## MOVING FORWARD

Give money away this week to an organization that you believe does good. If you suspect this is another ploy by a church for your money, don't let that stop you: give it somewhere else. Give enough that you notice it and you have to rebudget to give.

If you are a Christian and want to serve Jesus and His cause well? You can start by not going out to eat—unless you're willing to love your neighbor the restaurant server as yourself. In case you were unaware, servers make less than \$3.00 an hour and rely on their tips, which are then taxed. Some nights the tips are good, and then again, some are bad. But the worst days for servers getting tips are on Sundays after church.



The story of pastor who instead of a tip left a snarky note for her waitress—"I give God 10 percent why do you get 18?"—made news because of what followed the otherwise commonplace event: a photo of the receipt was posted online and went viral, the server was then fired, and finally, after her stinginess found her out, the pastor issued a public apology.

# STARVE THE MONSTER

Whether Christians are aware of it or not, a subpar tip is a stumbling block in communicating the Gospel. It causes unbelieving servers to think that we, as Christians, value money over everything and everyone else ([1 Timothy 6:10](#)). So, my coworker, like many other servers, interprets such actions (poor tips from alleged Christian people) as stingy. Tragically, the result -- though it may be unfair -- is that many servers have identified the majority of Christians as a contingent of people who care little for others. They hear Christians promise them that God is just and fair and that He is a generous King who is lavish with His mercy and kind toward others. Christians promise them that the Gospel they preach is for all people right before they metaphorically clinch their money in their fist and tip poorly; refusing money to laborers who are worthy of their wages ([1 Timothy 5:18](#); [Matthew 10:10](#)). Listen to what Thom Ranier has to say about Christians and tipping...

1. **Tipping is an opportunity we may not otherwise have.** We have social contact with people with whom we may not interact on a regular basis. This is our opportunity to represent the name of Christ well. God has put these people in our paths for a reason.
2. **Our generosity is one way we point people toward Christ.** We demonstrate our priorities with the ways we spend money. We have seen in numerous studies that churches with a passion and heart for their communities are the churches making a difference. We can't have a positive witness with a greedy attitude.
3. **We can help counter some of the negative impact of other church members.** A server in a restaurant told me she hated working the Sunday lunch shift. She said church members were the rudest and stingiest customers she encountered. Our positive witness with a generous tip can counter some of the negativity caused by others.
4. **Generous tipping reflects a compassionate and grateful heart.** Many servers work long hours and endure verbal abuse on a regular basis. Often their pay is very low. They may depend on tips to make ends meet. When we tip generously, we are demonstrating compassion for these servers, and we are expressing our gratitude for their service.
5. **Most of us are blessed with abundance. We should be generous with that which God has given us.** Healthy tipping is thus a matter of evangelistic witness and wise stewardship.
6. **Generous tipping can reinforce positive conversations with servers.** If we are kind to servers, and if we speak with graciousness and gratitude toward them, our witness is reinforced when we tip generously.
7. **Poor tipping can be a negative witness that takes time to overcome.** A few years ago, several people in my organization went to lunch together. They tipped very poorly. The server wrote on Facebook about these employees with clear reference to our organization. Our witness was thus compromised with the server and with the public in general.

I have little patience with those who are stingy to servers. If we can afford to eat out, we can afford to tip generously. Church leaders would do well to remind their members about this often-neglected topic of witness in the community.

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*"Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others."* 1 Timothy 6:18