

DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY

Generosity: having a heart to give freely and offer help to others

“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.”

2 Corinthians 9.7

IMPACT – “PRE-DECIDE”**ACTIVITY IDEA:**

This should be done in groups of 3-4. This would be a great activity to involve kids or teens.

Supplies: Have one bag of similar items for each team (suggestions: cans, bottles, pencils, kids blocks, books, etc).

1. Give each team one sheet of notebook paper and place the paper on the floor or a table.
2. Instruct them that all objects they are given must be stacked entirely on the sheet of paper – nothing can hang off the sides.
3. Also, once items are set, they cannot be moved.
4. One identical item at a time, hand each team their object. (example: give everyone the same size soup can).
5. Make sure they can't see the other objects before you hand them out.
6. Continue with your items but save a big one for last. This will get cumbersome and you will probably have many leaning towers.
7. Then, after all the items are out and most of the towers have crashed, tell each team they now have 2 minutes to re-stack all the items in whatever order to best stay on the paper.
8. Extension: Give some teams more and larger items, and some teams fewer and smaller.

Takeaways –

“Why was it easier to restack all the items the second time?” (*We knew what was there, we could plan and expect for the largest and heaviest items, etc*)

“How do you think this relates to budgeting?” (*Planning ahead makes the bricks stack much better than trying to stack each time a new bill or purchase comes up*).

“Did it seem fair that some teams had to deal with more and some had to deal with less? How does this relate to finances?”

STARTER QUESTIONS:

Do you think you're more spontaneous or more of a planner? What would others say you are?

I'm going to give you a couple of scenarios, tell me your responses.

1. **At 3pm, one of your coworkers offers you some tickets to a show that night. What do you do?**
 - a. Say "yes" without hesitating.
 - b. Get excited but say you need to call your spouse/family and ask.
 - c. Start immediately making alternate plans for at least 3 things that must happen so you can go (i.e. different dinner plan, leaving early from work, babysitter, taking the dog out, etc.)
 - d. Panic because that's not nearly enough notice.
2. **It's Thursday and your in-laws call to say they're driving through and would like to come stay with you for the weekend.**
 - a. Say "Sure! We'd love to have company!"
 - b. Say yes, then start looking up the weather and activities you could do while they're here.
 - c. Say yes, then panic internally about house cleaning, grocery shopping, and losing your weekend plans to do nothing.
 - d. Stall until you can come up with an excuse to say you aren't available.
3. **Your friends want to go on a cruise in the spring, and want you to go.**
 - a. Sure! You'll figure out the details and money later on.
 - b. Say yes, then ask for details about cost, time, dates, etc.
 - c. Say you'll have to think about it, ask for details about cost, time, dates then go home and look at the finances, calendar, and talk to your family before finally saying yes.
 - d. Say no thanks. You already know that your vacation budget is taken for the year, and you're choosing to prioritize your family vacation over your friend vacation. Perhaps you suggest a less expensive option to see your friends that would fit within your budget.

What are some advantages or disadvantages of being spontaneous? What about being a planner?

MAIN IDEA:

We are currently in a series titled "Impact" where we are talking about what it means to be rich.

From the message this week: **New definition of rich:** having more than we need!

"God has blessed me with more than I need. I'm rich. I will not trust in my riches, but in Him who richly gives me all I need."

KEY VERSE:

"Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."

Proverbs 3:9-10 (NIV)

Topics for discussion:

How does being spontaneous or being a planner come into play with our finances? What is good or bad about each style?

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most planned and organized) how well do you stick to a monthly budget? What are some things that hinder your organization and budgeting?

²⁸For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Luke 14:28-30

Why does God care about our budgeting or giving? (It requires trust. It's one of the only places in the Bible where God says it's ok to test him.)

"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 you will not have room enough for it". Malachi 3:10 (NIV)

⁸Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. 1 Peter 4:8-10

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21

Pastor Hank said there is a problem when we are 3-S Givers (Spontaneous, Sporadic, Sparing) and the solution is to be 3-P givers (Priority, percentage, progressive). Before we talk about problems and solutions, let's look at the examples.

What are some examples giving are spontaneous, sporadic, or sparing? (Giving a dollar at the register when we check out, giving to kids/people on the street corners, donating our clothes when we've grown out of them, etc). **Are these always bad?** (No, but if it's our only way we give, then we miss our command from God to give regularly).

What are some examples of priority, percentage or progressive giving? (Direct deposit from our paycheck, calculating as we get new sources of income, challenging ourselves and our families to look for places in our budget where we might add to what we give.)

For those people with variable income (tips, home business, etc), how can they budget for giving?

One of Coastal's Values reads:

Generosity: having a heart to give freely and offer help to others

“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.” 2 Corinthians 9.7

Have there been times where you have stretched in your giving and seen God work?

How can we help each other be generous?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

God doesn't need our money. He wants our hearts. However, he knows that our hearts can easily be captured by greed. He pushes us to be generous and prioritize giving because it will help us trust him more and grow more like him.

How can our group pray for you?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Additional Scriptures about Giving:

“Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

Luke 6:38

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:21

IMPACT
"Pre-Decide"
November 19, 2017

If you make \$25,000 – top 2% richest people in the world
If you make \$50,000 – top .31% richest people in the world
If you make \$100,000 – top .08% richest people in the world

New definition of rich: having more than we need!

"God has blessed me with more than I need. I'm rich.
I will not trust in my riches, but in Him who richly gives me all I need."

"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."

1 Timothy 6:17-18 (NLT)

Two Greek phrases:

"work good" = agatho-ergeo

"be wealthy" = plouteo

"good" = kalos

"works" = ergon

"give away generously" = eu-metadotos

"willing to share" = koino-nikos

"Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."

Mark 12:41-44 (NLT)

Problem: being a 3-S Giver: • Spontaneous

• Sporadic

• Sparing

Solution: becoming a 3-P Giver: Priority • Percentage • Progressive

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Proverbs 3:9-10 (NIV)

“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 you will not have room enough for it”.

Malachi 3:10 (NIV)

90% with God’s blessing goes way further than 100% without it!