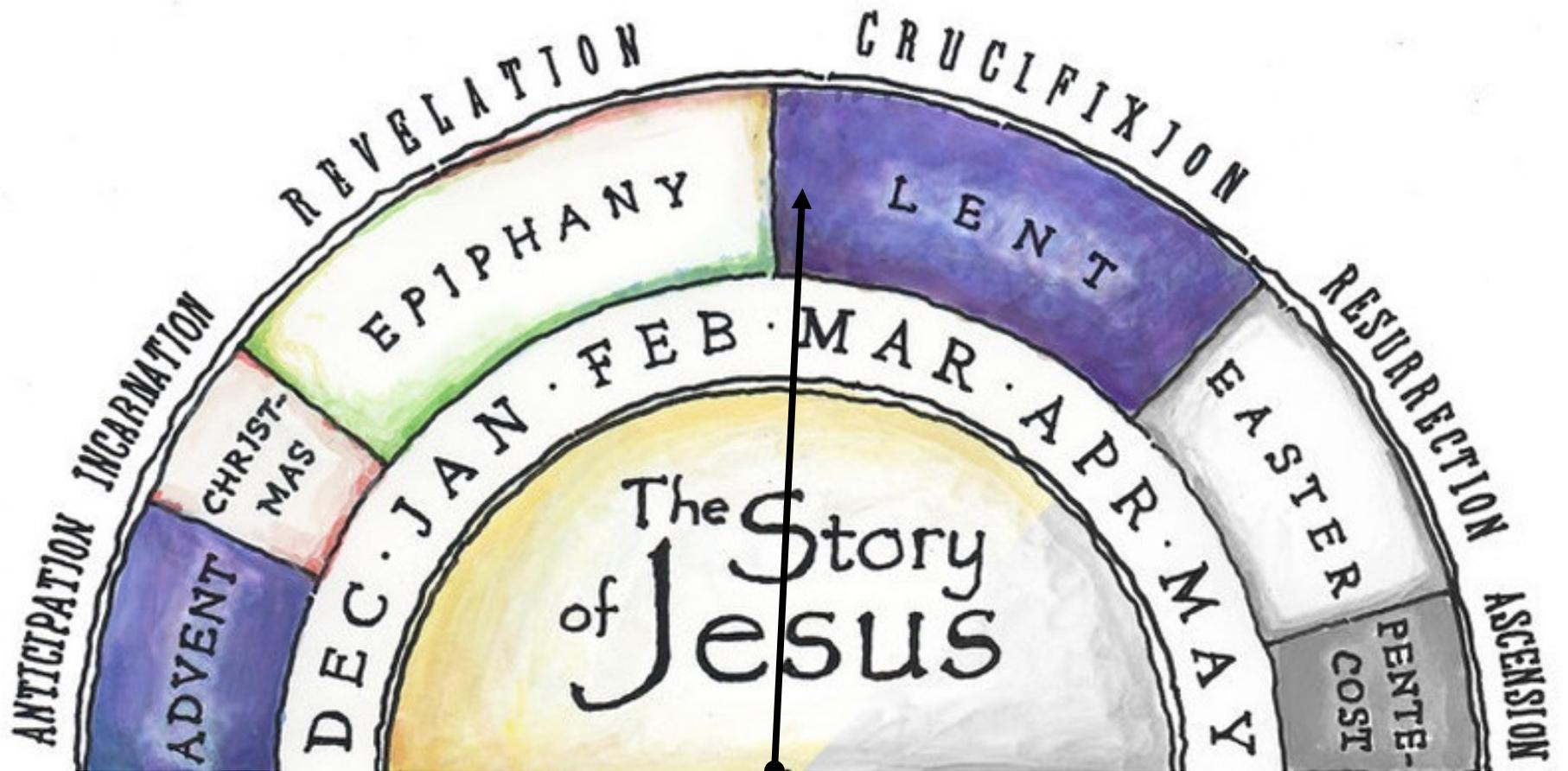


God of wilderness and water, your Son
was baptized and tempted as we are.
Guide us through this season,
that we may not avoid struggle,
but open ourselves to blessing,
through the cleansing depths of repentance
and the heaven-rending words of the Spirit.
Amen.

Opening Prayer

A decorative banner at the bottom of the page features a dark background with white geometric patterns, including a grid and a circular motif. Overlaid on this are several hands in various colors (red, blue, green, purple) reaching out or holding each other, symbolizing unity and prayer.

CHURCH CALENDAR



GIVING SHOULD BE...

1. Regular
2. Proportional
3. Sacrificial
4. Voluntary
5. Joyful/cheerful
6. Motivated by a commitment to be a student of Jesus



THE PRACTICE OF GENEROSITY

Week 1: Joy (Giving > Receiving)

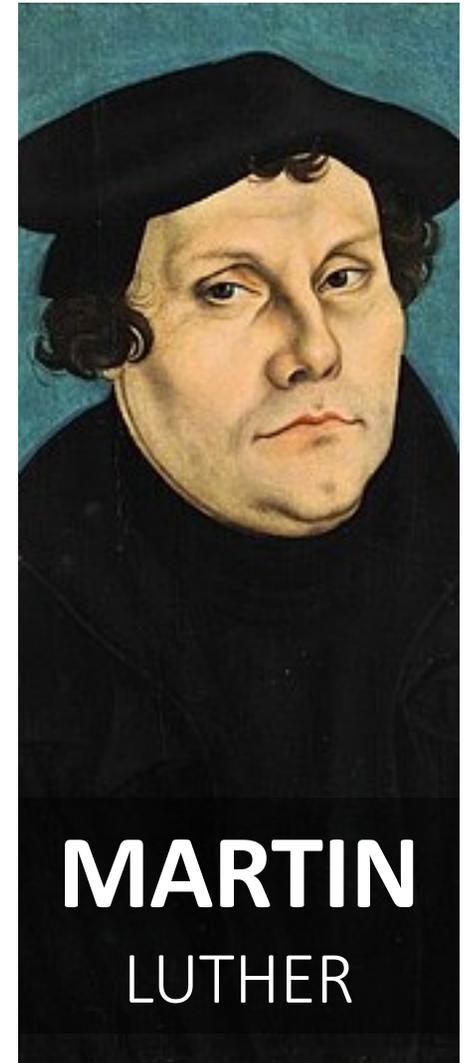
Week 2: Simplicity (Freedom > Greed)

Week 3: Stewardship (God owns it all)

Week 4: Sharing (Give to the poor)



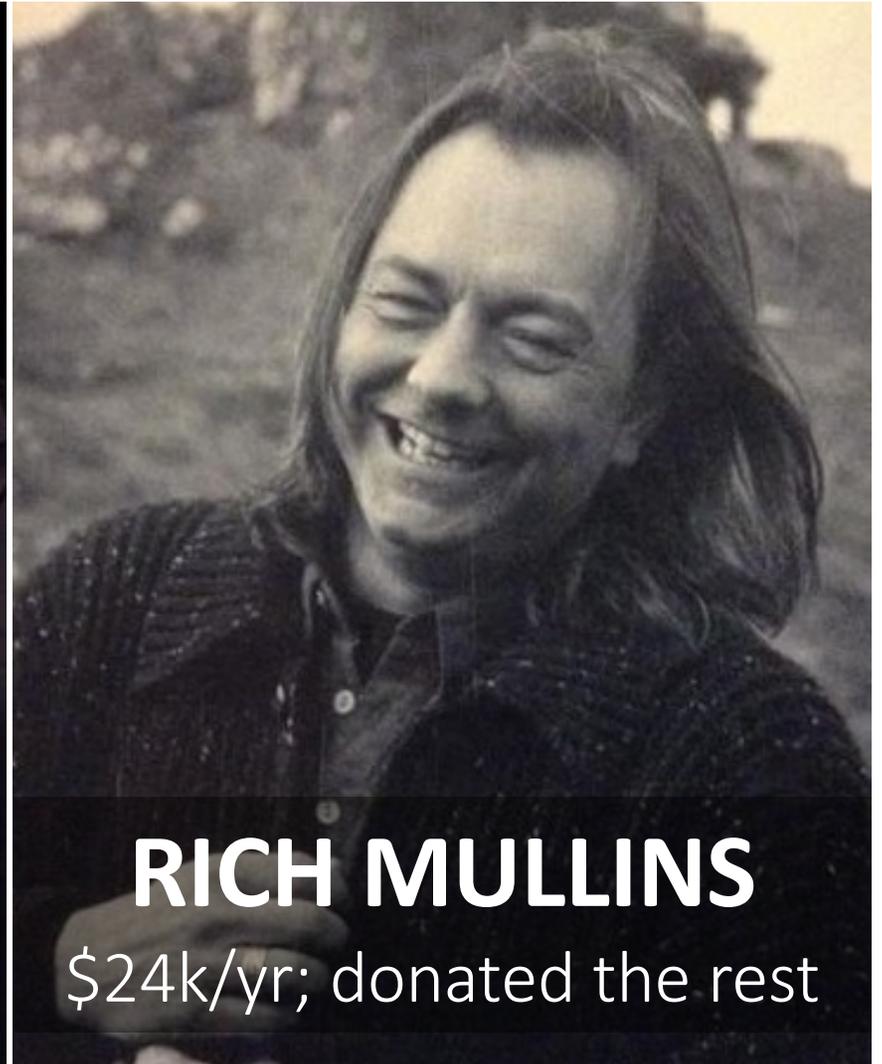
There are three conversions necessary: the conversion of the heart, the mind, and the purse.





RICK WARREN

Lived on 10%; gave 90% away



RICH MULLINS

\$24k/yr; donated the rest

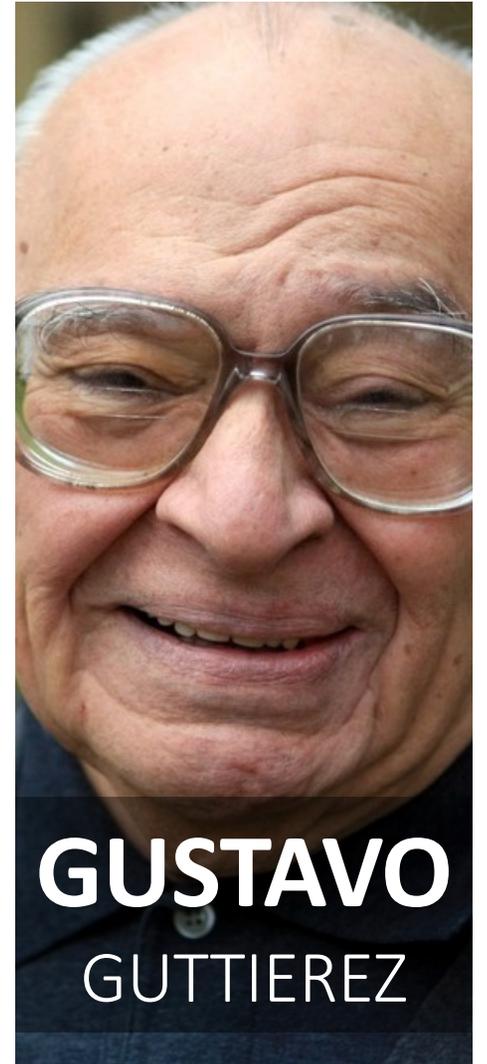


BORN POOR



PBS | FRONTLINE

So, you say you love the poor?
Name them.



*Someone in the crowd said to him,
“Teacher, tell my brother to divide
the inheritance with me.” Jesus replied,
“Man, who appointed me a judge
or an arbiter between you?”
Then he said to them, “Watch out!
Be on your guard against all kinds of greed;
life does not consist in an abundance
of possessions.”*

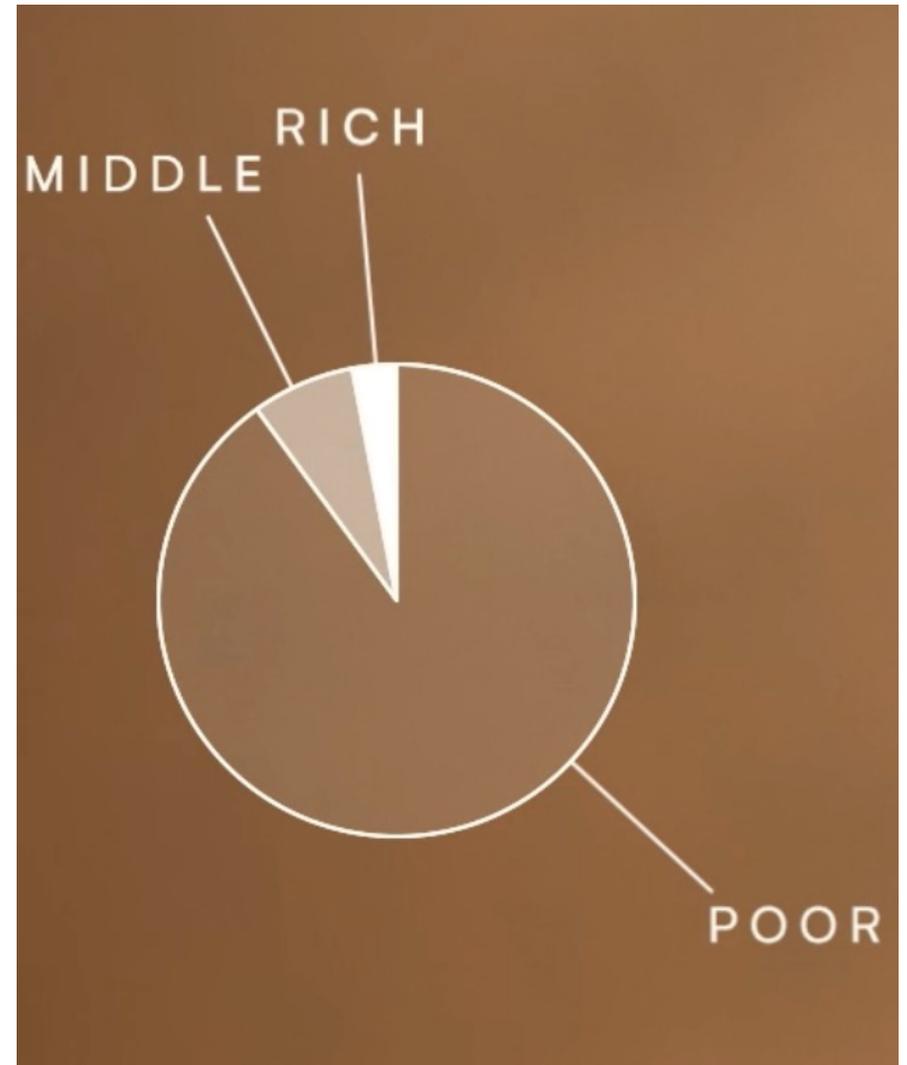
HOLY
BIBLE

LUKE

12:13-14

EGRARIAN ECONOMY

Any community whose economy is based on producing/maintaining crops/farmland; cultivating the land is the primary source of wealth



*And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’
“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; **eat, drink and be merry.**””*

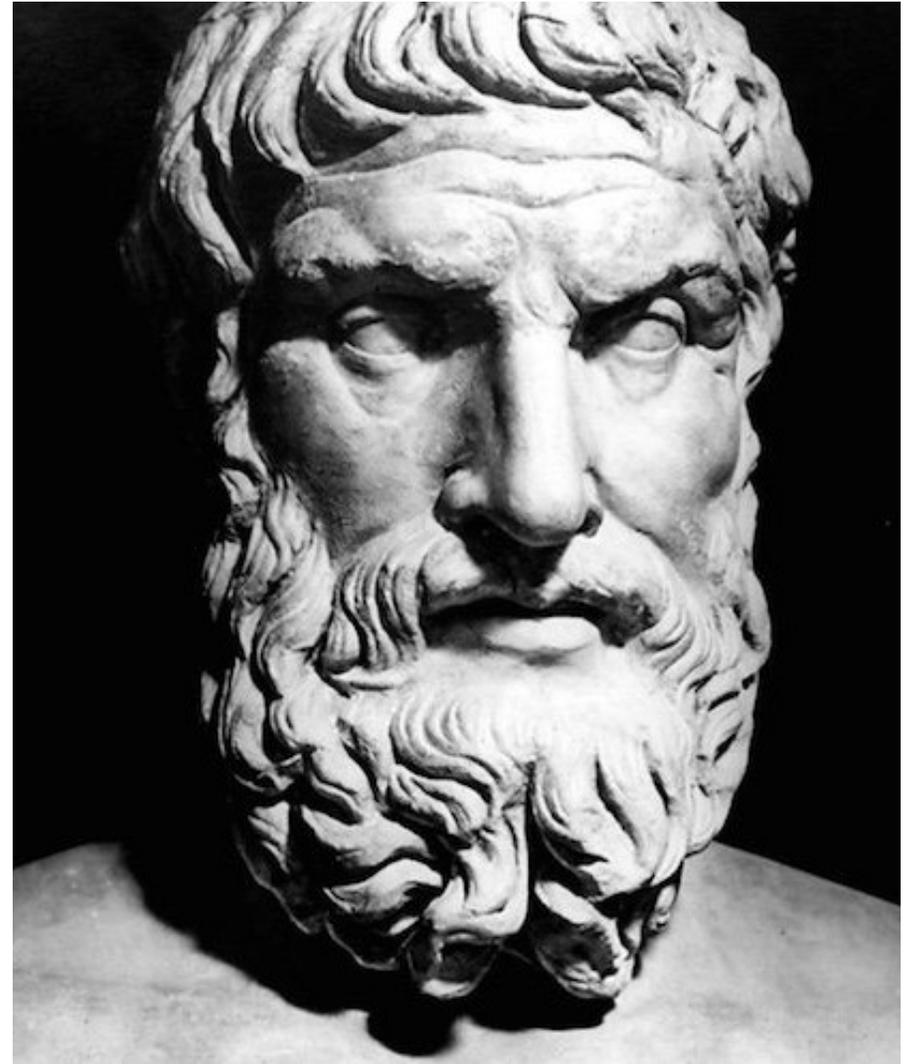
HOLY
BIBLE

LUKE

12:16-19

EPICUREANISM

School of philosophy founded in 307 BCE; based on the teachings of the Greek philosopher Epicurus; a form of hedonism, but with the belief that the absence of pain/fear constitutes the greatest pleasure; advocates a version of “the simple life”



HOLY
BIBLE

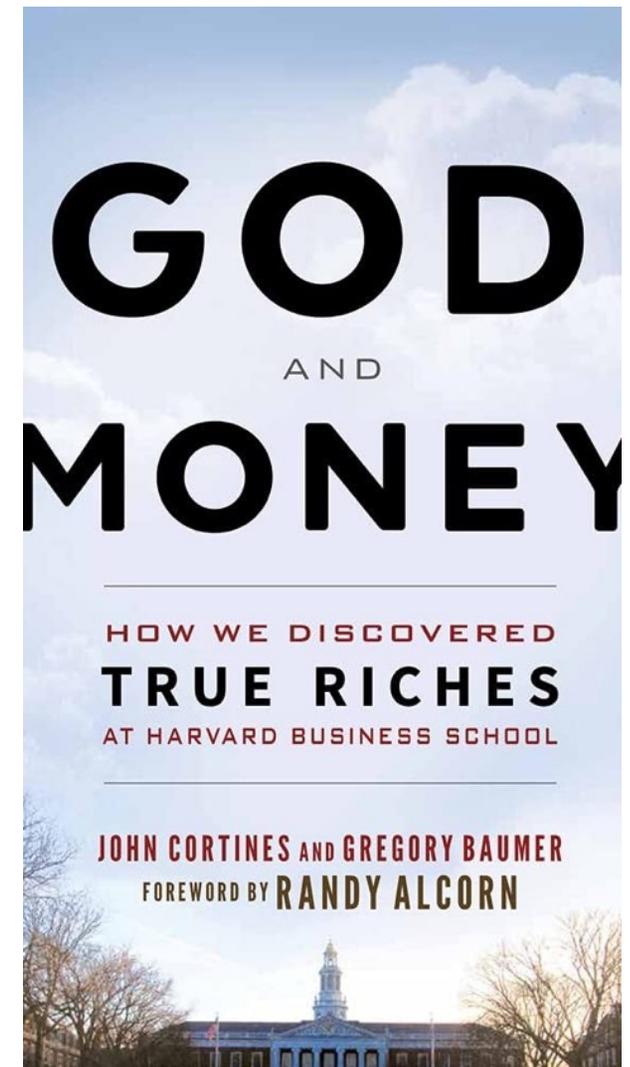
LUKE

12:45-46

*Then I'll gather in all my grain and goods,
and I'll say to myself, Self, you've done well!
You've got it made and can now retire.
Take it easy and have the time
of your life!' MSG*

*And I'll sit back and say to myself,
"Friend, you have enough stored away
for years to come. Now take it easy!
Wine, women, and song for you!" TLB*

The stock options belonging to a manager vested after a major run-up in share price, and he thought to himself, “What shall I do, for I already have enough saved to send my kids to college, my house is paid off, and I already max out my 401k every year?” And he said, ‘I will do this: I will open an investment account and create a passive income portfolio, and I’ll exercise my options and put the money there. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have a big enough portfolio to be financially independent; retire early, plan some vacations, play golf.’



*But God said to him,
'You fool! This night your
soul will be required of you.
Then who's will those things
be which you have provided?'
So is he who stores up treasure
for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

HOLY
BIBLE

LUKE

12:20-21

PRACTICING
the WAY

Somude Scripture Community

The villain in
Jesus' story
is our
culture's
hero.

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

HOLY
BIBLE

LUKE

12:33-34

PRACTICING *the* WAY

Living in God's kingdom,
trusting in our Father to provide:
What we give away, we keep;
what we cling to, we know
we will ultimately lose.

Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

HOLY
BIBLE

LUKE

12:39-41

HOLY
BIBLE

ACTS

2:44-45

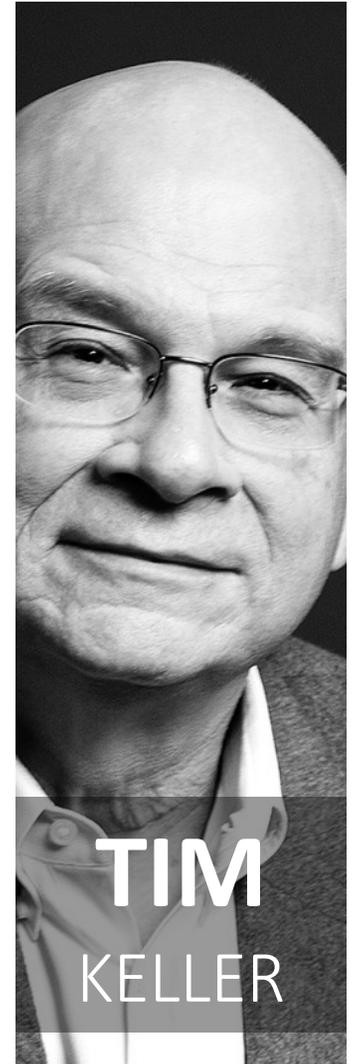
*All the believers were together
and had everything in common.
They sold property and possessions
to give to anyone who had need.*

HOLY
BIBLE

ACTS
4:32-34

*All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed any of their possessions as their own, but shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. **And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them.***

The early church was strikingly different from the culture around it in this way – the pagan society was stingy with its money and promiscuous with its body. A pagan gave nobody their money and practically gave everybody their body. And the Christians came along and gave practically nobody their body and they gave practically everybody their money.



PRACTICING *the* WAY

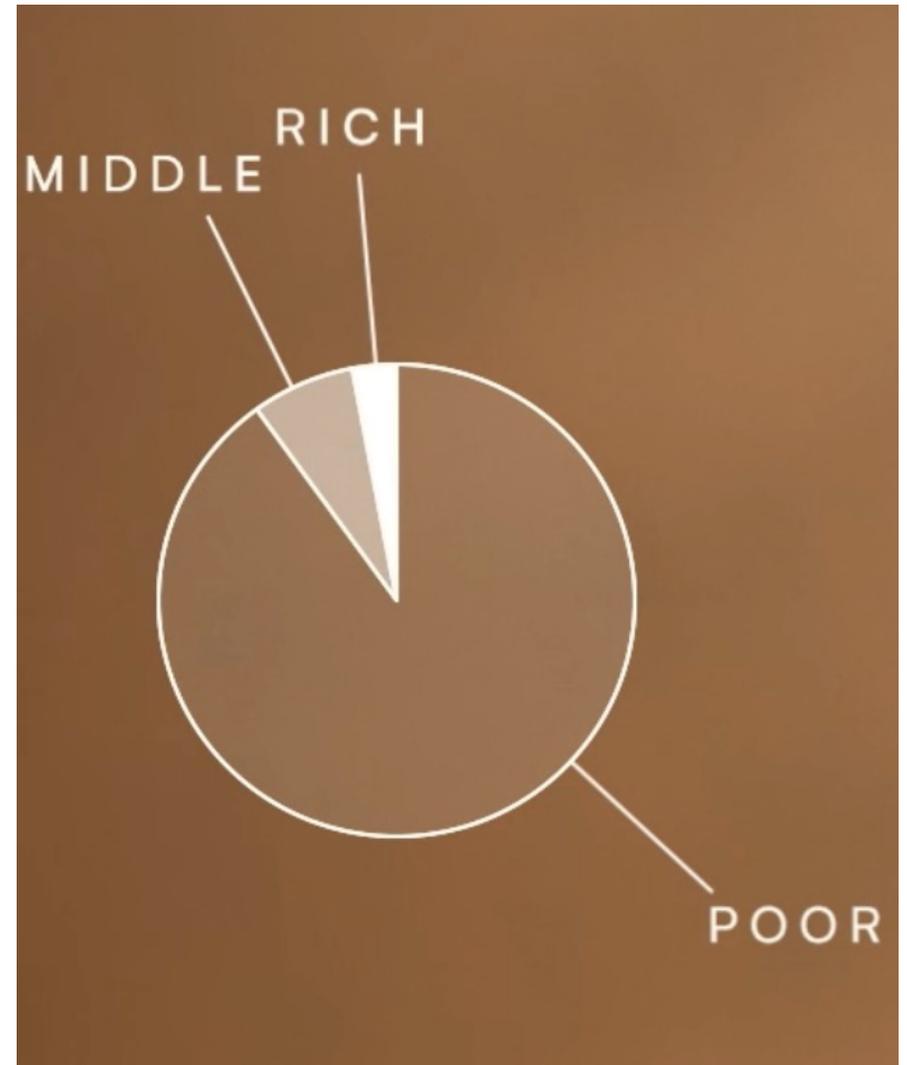


In the Greco-Roman world
there was no moral value
in giving to the poor.

Most social just work there
originated with the early church.

EGRARIAN ECONOMY

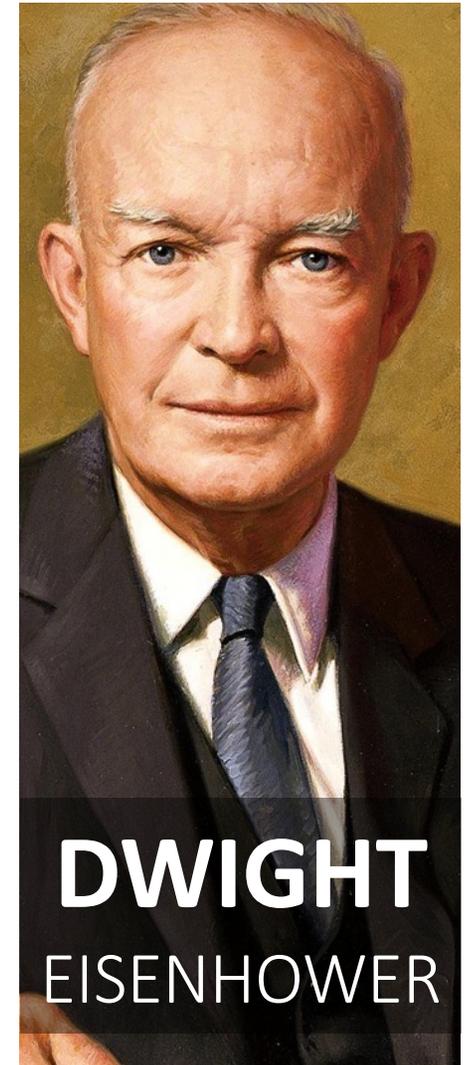
Any community whose economy is based on producing/maintaining crops/farmland; cultivating the land is the primary source of wealth



The bread which you hold back belongs to the hungry; the coat, which you guard in your locked storage-chests, belongs to the naked; the footwear moldering in your closet belongs to those without shoes. The silver that you keep hidden in a safe place belongs to the one in need. Thus, however many are those whom you could have provided for, so many are those whom you wrong.



Every gun made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies ...a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms...is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, and the hopes of its children. This is not a way of life at all in any true sense. Under the clouds of war, it is humanity hanging on a cross of iron.



HOLY
BIBLE

ACTS

4:35

*For from time to time
those who owned land
or houses sold them,
brought the money
from the sales and
put it at the apostles' feet,
and it was distributed
to anyone who had need.*

PRACTICING *the* WAY

Don't build bigger and bigger barns.
Be generous to anyone who is in need.

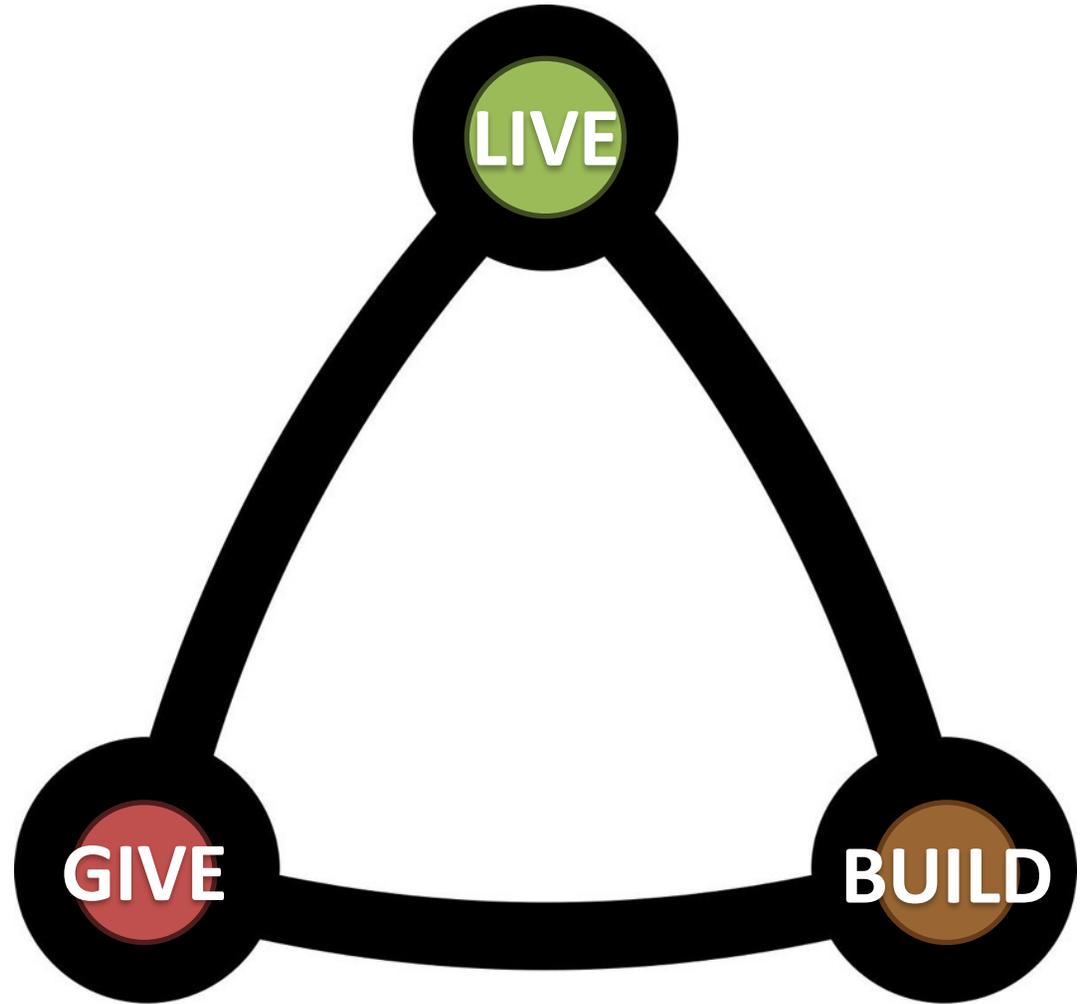
Generosity will look different
based on one's context/resources;
just do the next right thing...





thrivent[®]

3 FREE financial
counseling sessions

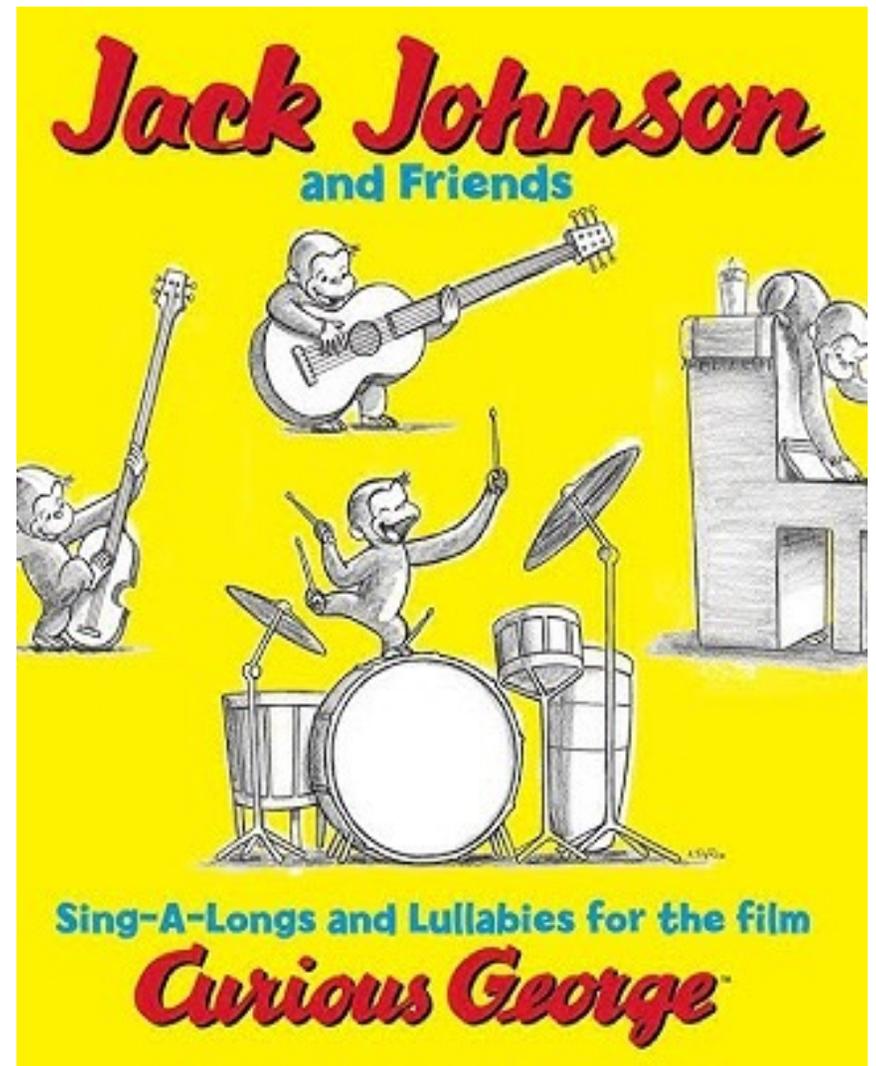


REFLECTION QUESTIONS

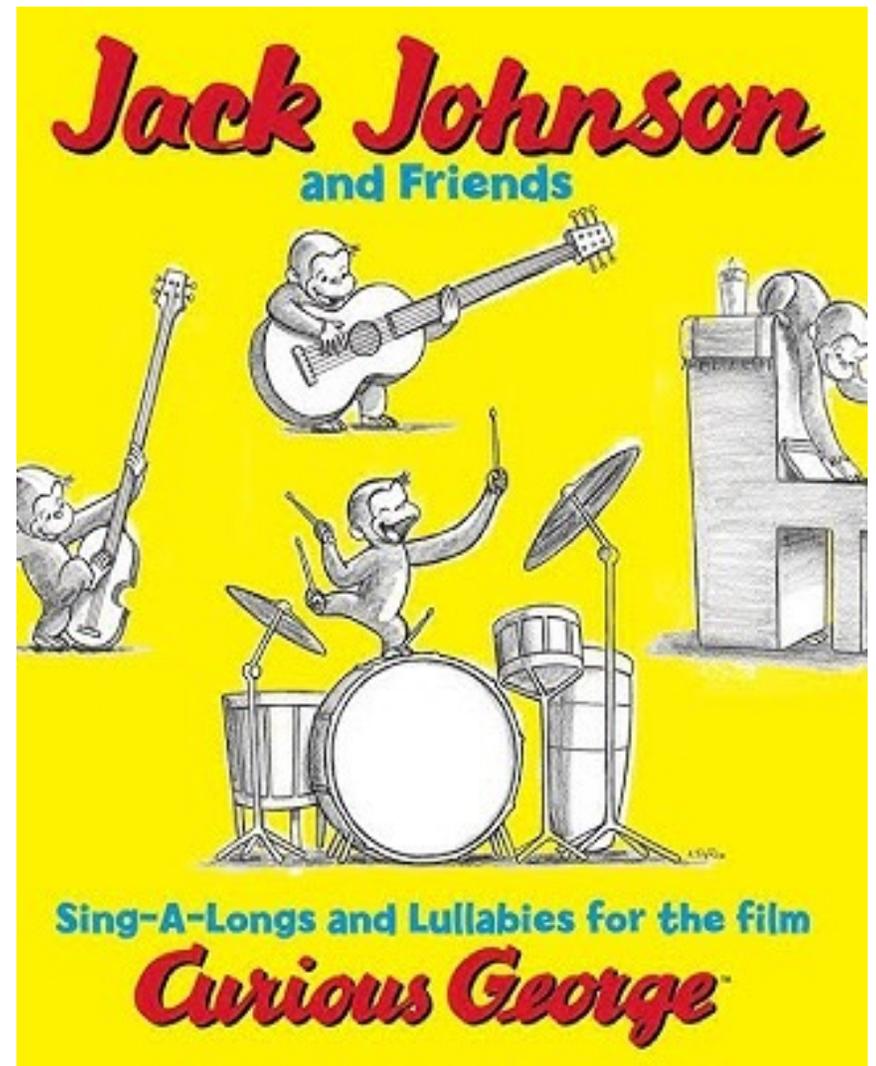
- How often are you around those in need?
- What does sharing with them look like?
- What invitations to generosity might the Spirit be offering you?



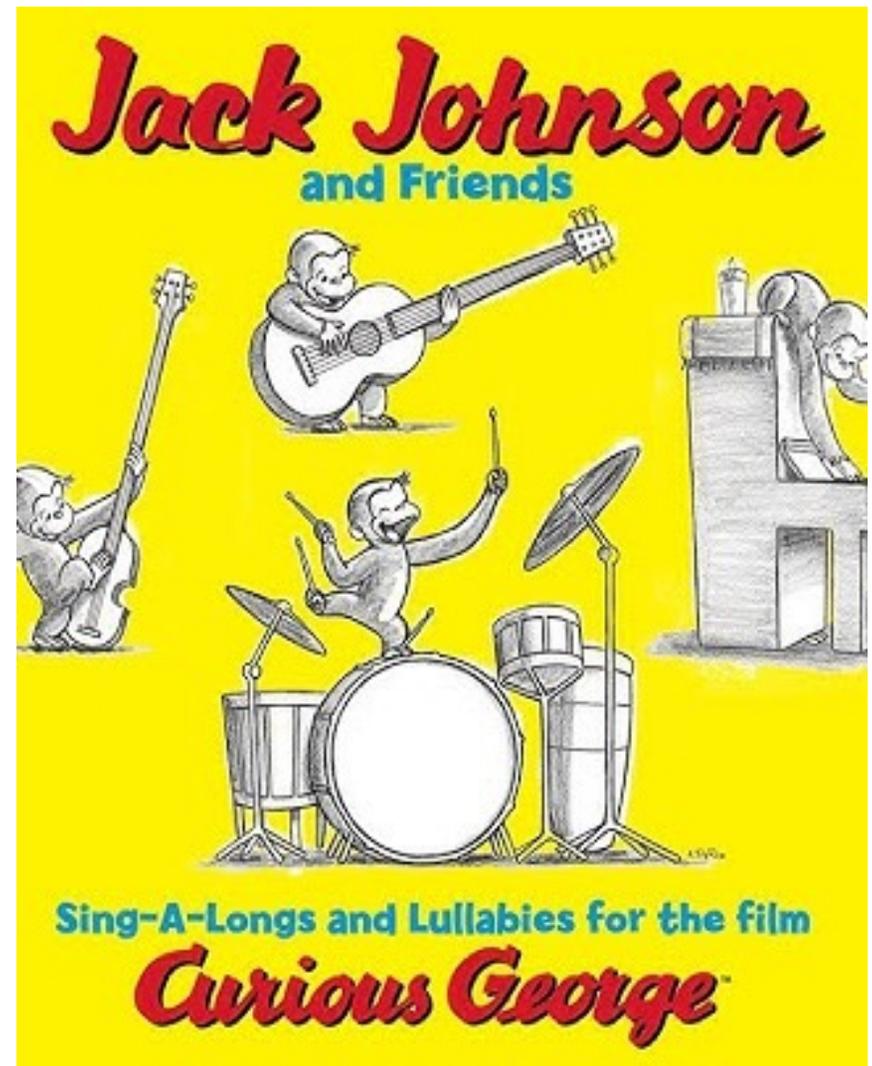
It's always more fun
to share with everyone
It's always more fun
to share with everyone
If you have two
Give one to your friend
If you have three,
Give one to your friend
and me



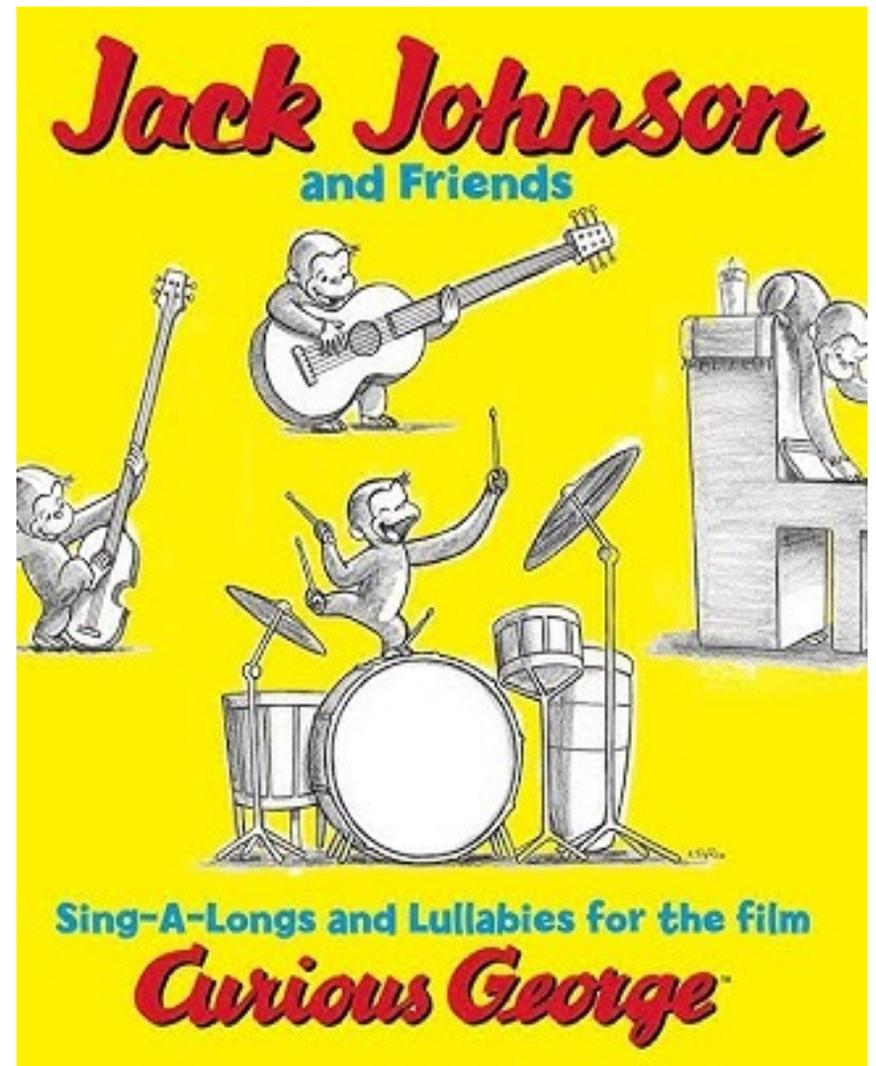
It's always more fun
to share with everyone
It's always more fun
to share with everyone
If you have one
Here is something
you can learn
You can still share
just by taking turns



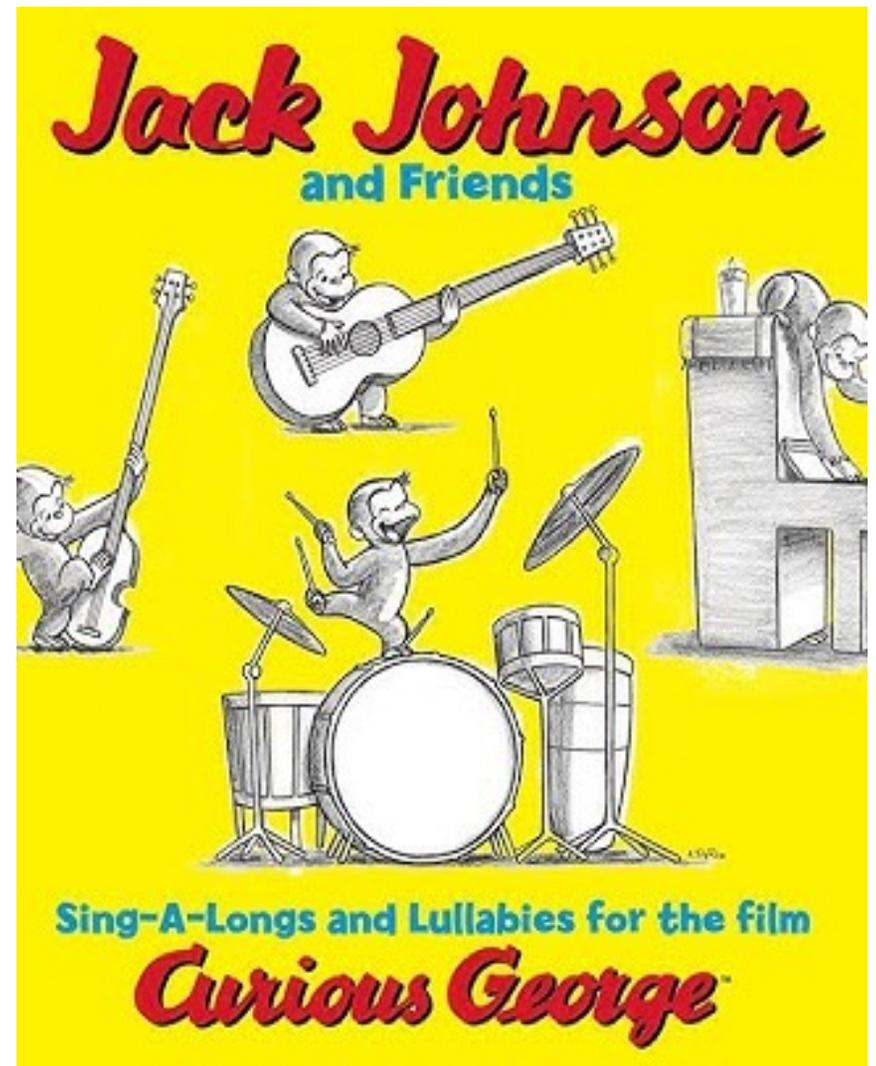
If you got a ball
 Bounce it to the gang
If there is a new kid
 Invite him out to hang
If you got one sandwich
 Cut that thing in half
If you know a secret joke,
 tell it and share a laugh



If you got one drumstick
Give one to your friend
Make one beautiful rhythm
Share a beat
that never ends
And if your feeling lonely,
Share time with your mom
Share some milk
and cookies and sing
the sharing song



It's always more fun
to share with everyone
It's always more fun
to share with everyone



O God, we ask for generous hearts. Help us to give freely of our resources, and love to those in need. Let us see the opportunities around us to make things different, and may our generosity be a reflection of your love and kindness. Help us to recognize the needs of those around us, to respond with open hearts and hands, and may our generosity inspire others to give and create a ripple effect of kindness and support. Amen.

Closing Prayer

A decorative banner at the bottom of the page features a dark background with white line art of hands reaching out. Overlaid on this are several overlapping circles in red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, symbolizing unity and diversity.