



# ***THE JOY OF GIVING***



CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH  
2020

## Introduction to *The Joy of Giving* series.

Have you ever wondered why God cares about your money? In the New Testament alone, money is mentioned over 200 times. Money appears to be important to God, yet He doesn't need it. People often criticize the church for their focus on money. To be honest, more than one pastor has taken advantage of the generosity of God's people. It might lead some to ask, "Why should I give to the church?"

It is significant that the only time God tells us to test him is found in Malachi 3:10-11. Here, God promises not only to provide for us, he promises to bless us if we give. Join us for the next three weeks as we look at what God says about money and discover *the Joy of Giving*.

### Introduction To The 4G Guide

#### *GATHER – GOD – GROUP – GIVE*

It's important that we *GATHER* each week as a church family. Still, God has so much more for us! He wants us to take what He's teaching and apply it to our lives. This is the heart of the 4G Guides. These guides are written to encourage you in your personal *GOD TIME* and in your small *GROUPS*. They are designed to help you understand what God is teaching and apply it to your daily life. Understanding and application allows you to then take what God is teaching and *GIVE* it to others.

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture references are from the *English Standard Version* (ESV Text Edition: 2016) Bible.



## USING THE 4G GUIDE

Each week is divided into four sections:



### Gear Up

Each week starts with the Gear Up section. This section introduces the weekly topic and expounds on Scripture. Also provided are some practical steps to putting the subject matter into practice.



### God Time

Personal time with God is vital to the Christian walk. Five daily devotionals are provided for each week's topic. This is your one-on-one time in a guided devotional format. At the conclusion, we encourage you to pray, seeking direction for the day and the rest of the week.



### Group Time

We learn from one another! In small groups we meet to dig deeper into the weekly material. This booklet contains lesson outlines for discipleship discussion. For more information on available groups and forming a group, go to our Groups webpage:

[cbcfamily.net/groups](http://cbcfamily.net/groups).



### Family Group Time

Family worship glorifies God. Each week we have simple devotionals just for Families. Plan ahead though, as many of these lessons include fun experiments or video shorts to discuss.



## Gear Up: The Joy of Putting God First

**Does God really care about our money?** It may seem strange to answer yes since we know He doesn't need our money. In reality, He doesn't need *anything*

from us. But that doesn't mean He doesn't care about our money; it's important to Him. But why?

**The way we treat money reveals a lot about our faith and our relationship with Him.** It shows what we put first in our lives. God loves us and wants us to be generous toward Him and others. When we are generous we show trust in God's provision and we show love, joy, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and other aspects of having the Holy Spirit actively involved in our lives.

### What Are We Sowing? What Are We Reaping?

**In 2 Corinthians, Paul writes to the church about giving.** The Corinthian church was preparing to give a gift to the poor Believers in Jerusalem. Though the Corinthians were not Jewish by blood (they were Romans) and they had never met the Jewish Christians who received the gifts, they would be blessed with the joy of giving.

**We, too, receive the blessing of joy when we give.** The Lord calls us to give, regardless of whether or not we know the ones who receive, or whether they look, act, or think like we do. When we give, we are sowing a seed of generosity, and then will reap the blessing of *more* generosity. This results in the joy of lives changed for God's glory— both our lives and the lives of those we help. We sow and reap generosity and abound in joy.

### Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, 10-11 (NLT)

<sup>6</sup>Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. <sup>7</sup>You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." <sup>8</sup>And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. [...] <sup>10</sup>For God is the one who

*provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. <sup>11</sup>Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.*

### God Is a Cheerful Giver

**God Himself is a cheerful giver!** The Bible doesn't use those specific words to describe Him, but nonetheless, He is the one who generously and cheerfully provides all that is necessary for *our* generosity. That is why He loves it when we are cheerful givers—we are being like Him! When we sow generously, God provides a harvest for us to be even more generous, meeting the needs of others.

### Giving Builds Trust

#### Read Malachi 3:10

*Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way," says the Lord of Armies. "See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure."*

**When we are generous and cheerful givers, it shows that we trust God to provide for our needs.** Our eyes are then opened to the blessing of His provision and the blessing of His work. We grow content and trustful, and this results in the praise and honor of God.

**Experience joy today.** What are you sowing and reaping? Do you give cheerfully and generously? Does your generosity show your level of trust? Give, trust, and experience the Joy of Giving.

WEEK 1 – THE JOY OF PUTTING GOD FIRST

God Time: Day 1



Have you ever had the “nudge” to give to something, and a little later when the time came to actually give, you backed away from the “nudge” and made excuses not to give?

How did you feel during that experience?

From where or whom do you think the “nudge” came?



Read 2 Corinthians 9:1-5

*<sup>1</sup> Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, <sup>2</sup> for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them. <sup>3</sup> But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be. <sup>4</sup> Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. <sup>5</sup> So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift [or blessing] you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction [a gift expecting something in return].*

In these verses, Paul is writing to the Christian Corinthians in the city of Achaia (Ex: Texans in Bastrop). They’ve promised to send a “gift” to the persecuted church in Jerusalem. Paul’s been bragging about the Corinthians but is sending some guys ahead to make sure they’re following through. He’ll be really embarrassed if he shows up with some Macedonians (Ex: Oklahomans) and they find the Corinthians (Ex: Texans) going back on their promise. Paul is making sure everything is going according to plan and, at the same time, that no Corinthians are expecting anything from him in return.



Have you had that “nudge” to give to a person or ministry and have promised (openly or in your heart) to follow through?

Spend time in prayer to confirm this “nudge” is from God and commit to follow through.

God Time: Day 2

We’ve all heard the phrase, “God loves a cheerful giver.” You might even ask, “Is that really in the Bible? It seems kind of made-up.” Sort of like the phrase, “God helps those who help themselves,” is actually not in the Bible. (While it has been attributed to Benjamin Franklin, it’s origins can be traced much farther back.) But, “God loves a cheerful giver” is in fact in the Bible.



Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

*<sup>6</sup> The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup> Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*



Verse 6 is oftentimes shortened to; “You reap what you \_\_\_\_.” Or in modern lingo, “What goes around, \_\_\_\_\_ around.”

Keep in mind, these verses follow verses 1-5 we looked at in Day 1. Paul is now continuing his encouragement of the Corinthians to give with the “zeal” they have promised.

What kind of sowing, or giving, is Paul encouraging in verse 6?

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While yesterday we learned in verse 5 that Paul was clear with the Corinthians that they should expect nothing in return from him for their gift, what does verse 6 tell them?

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Where will this bountiful reaping come from? \_\_\_\_\_



But verse 7 tells us God’s true expectation of a giver (or sower):

*“Each one must give as he has \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Not \_\_\_\_\_ or under \_\_\_\_\_.*

*For God loves \_\_\_\_\_.”*



Is it more about action or attitude?

WEEK 1 – THE JOY OF PUTTING GOD FIRST

God Time: Day 3



Read 2 Corinthians 9:10-11  
*<sup>10</sup> He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. <sup>11</sup> You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.*

In verse 10, sowing seed happens in the physical and spiritual realms; “bread for food” and “harvest of your righteousness.” Who provides the seed for both?

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List examples of ministries we can give to to sow physical seed:

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\_\_\_\_\_

List examples of how we can share the Good News to sow spiritual seed:

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Circle the word “multiply” in verse 10.

Who multiplies the seed? \_\_\_\_\_

In your own words, what is the result of “multiplying your seed?”

\_\_\_\_\_

Reread verse 11.



If you sow His seed, in what way will you be enriched?

\_\_\_\_\_

Therefore, in what way are you to be generous?

\_\_\_\_\_

This will produce: \_\_\_\_\_

God proved His generosity to us through Jesus. When we sow the seeds He’s given us, we can trust Him to multiply our generosity.

God Time: Day 4



Does God often challenge us to test Him? Does this seem like something you should be doing?

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Malachi 3:6-4:5 shows a conversation between God’s people and Himself. They’ve been short-changing God in just about every aspect of life. So, God responds with a challenge in verse 10.

Read Malachi 3:10



*Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.*



What do the people need to do? \_\_\_\_\_

And if they do, what will God do? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you up for the test? \_\_\_\_\_

God Time: Day 5

Continuing yesturdays God Time, in Malachi 3:13 God targets the people’s attitudes. Things aren’t going the way they feel they should, fairness seems out the window, and they even say, “It is vain to serve God. What is the profit?” (Malachi 3:14)



Have you ever felt this way? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Malachi 3:16-18



*<sup>16</sup> Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name. <sup>17</sup> “They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. <sup>18</sup> Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.*

Ask yourself honestly, “What am I sowing?”



**Group Time**

◀◀ LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Starting a new series.



What do you hope to gain from this series?

▶▶ LOOK UP:

**Good News:** *God blesses those who put Him first.*

Very few Americans view themselves as wealthy. Most think they are very generous. But compared to the world, we are very wealthy and not as generous as we think we are. We tend to get caught in a cycle of earn-consume-lack-earn-consume-lack that repeats itself over and over leading to a fear that we will never have enough and even lose what we have.

But there is a better way. In 2 Corinthians 9, Paul reminds us that our investment determines our harvest. We need to look not only at what we are giving but, more importantly, how are we giving. Giving in the right attitude builds faith, and faith leads to blessing – the blessing of changed lives.

**LOOK IN: Discussion Questions**

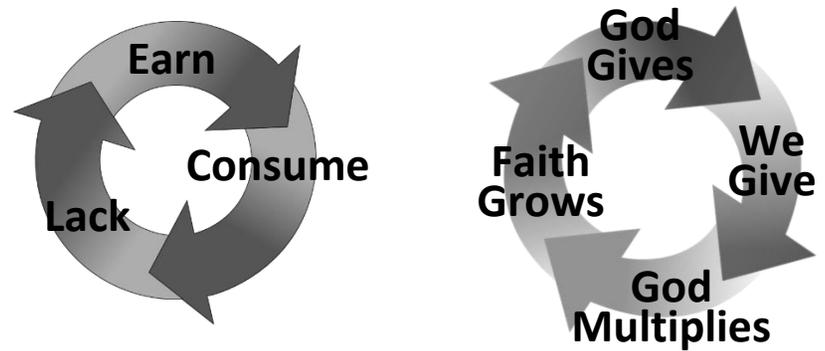
**Read:** 2 Corinthians 9:7-11

- Share stories of someone you know who showed great generosity.
- Why is it difficult to talk openly and honestly about money?
- Why is it so difficult at times to give generously?

▶▶ LOOK FORWARD:

**Point:** *God Himself is a cheerful giver. When we give, God multiplies our giving so that our faith will grow. We then experience the blessing of His provision and His work – changed lives.*

- Compare the cycles:



- Which cycle do you find yourself in?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Which cycle do you want to be in?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Every journey begins with a single step in the right direction. What first step will you take towards giving generously?  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pray for one another to take these steps. Be ready to share with your group what God does with your obedience.

Family Time



**Big Idea: We are called to give. When you give is your attitude one of joy?**



**Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:7**

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*



**Say:** Sometimes, giving is hard when we have worked so hard for our money. But if we remember that we are blessed with so much, it is easier to give just a small portion of what we earn to help others. When we do this, a strange thing happens. Our hearts become less selfish because we are thinking of others instead of ourselves.



**Ask:**

- Why do we give to God? (Everything we have belongs to Him.)
- What are different ways we can give to others?
- What are different ways we can give to our church?
- Why is it important for us to be a cheerful giver? (Because God is a cheerful giver.) Read Matthew 7:11 together.



**Family Activity:**

Here's a giving challenge for you. Go through old clothes and toys that you do not use anymore. Put them in a box and take them to a local charity or donate them to a family in need. Then in the space below write about what kind of things you gave. How did you feel giving up those items? Do you think it was better to give than to receive?

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## Gear Up: The Joy of Living in Abundance

**“Why does God want my money?”** This is a common question. The answer (like we learned last week) lies in the fact that the way we view money tells a lot about the condition of our hearts. We often approach our money and resources with a scarcity mindset. We think of money as something we need to hoard or hold onto. However, God wants us to trust Him and see abundance in what He has given us.

### How Do I See Abundance?

#### Read Mark 6:34-38

<sup>34</sup>When he went ashore, he saw a large crowd and had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then he began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup>When it grew late, his disciples approached him and said, “This place is deserted, and it is already late. <sup>36</sup>Send them away so that they can go into the surrounding countryside and villages to buy themselves something to eat.” <sup>37</sup>“You give them something to eat,” he responded. They said to him, “Should we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?” <sup>38</sup>He asked them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.”

In this passage, the disciples saw a great need, but they couldn’t see how it was possible to meet that need. They thought they’d have to use an abundance of money in order to purchase the abundant amount of food. But God doesn’t always work that way! Jesus told them to look at what they had available.

### There Is Not Enough? There Is Always Enough!

In John 6:7-9 we get more insight into this situation and learn that the Disciple Phillip thought they just didn’t have enough. He thought “two hundred denarii worth of bread wouldn’t be enough...” But in Matthew 14:20, we learn that when Jesus broke and blessed the bread that was available, “Everyone ate and was

*satisfied. They picked up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces.”* When the LORD is at work, there is always enough!

**We find great joy** when we understand that the LORD can work abundantly through what He has provided. Understanding that helps us be generous with what He has given us.

### Because There Is More Than Enough...

When it comes to obeying God, He will always provide more than enough resources to do what He is asking us to do. He will “feed others” through us and provide just what we need in order for Him to get that job done. But we still need to be actively involved, partnering with Him in His work.

#### Read Mark 6:41-43

*He [Jesus] took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves. He kept giving them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup>Everyone ate and was satisfied. <sup>43</sup>They picked up twelve baskets full of [leftover] pieces of bread and fish.*

### Work like it depends on you, but give like it all belongs to God.

Notice that the disciples in the story above still had to do something. They had to set all that bread out to a crowd of 5,000 men plus women and children. Then later, they had to collect the leftovers. But there was enough because God provided.

**What does all of this mean?** We must have faith that God provides abundantly for us. And when we give generously to Him and others out of the abundance He provides, we find great joy!

WEEK 2 – THE JOY OF LIVING IN ABUNDANCE

God Time: Day 1



In your own words, define “abundance:”

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe you have an abundant life? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_



Read John 10:9-10

*<sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

John 10:9 gives us an if/then statement. What is the “if” part?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who is responsible for this choice? (Hint: Look in the mirror)

\_\_\_\_\_



Circle the words “saved” and “pasture” in John 10:9. This is the “then” part. “If” we enter through Jesus, “then” we will be saved and find pasture. What do you think it means to “find pasture?”

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The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *abundance* as, “an ample amount.” It defines *ample* as, “generously sufficient to satisfy a requirement or need.”

Therefore, we might define “abundantly”, as found in John 10:10, as, “An amount generously sufficient to satisfy our requirements or needs.”



Do you truly believe Jesus can give you an abundant life, sufficiently satisfying all your requirements or needs?

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Pray to earnestly enter into God’s presence, through Jesus. It is here you will find pasture – a life of sufficiency and satisfaction.

God Time: Day 2

Do you sometimes worry about finances?

\_\_\_\_\_



List your biggest financial worries:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



What does the Bible say about financial worries? (Search it.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Yet we still worry.

Read Matthew 6:31-33



*<sup>31</sup> Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

Reread verse 33. What is the proper order of all things? What should always be first?

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The question is, “Do we seek Him first, or do we find ourselves worrying first and then seek Him in hopes of alleviating our worry?”

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What is your motivation? Do you seek God to get form God? Or do you seek God because you’ve been given by God?

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Pray for strength, determination, and discipline to daily seek first His Kingdom and righteousness.

WEEK 2 – THE JOY OF LIVING IN ABUNDANCE

God Time: Day 3



Define "the kingdom of God:"

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\_\_\_\_\_



Read Matthew 6:33  
*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

How can we seek "the kingdom of God?"

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\_\_\_\_\_



Are you contributing to a cause that is bringing heaven and earth together? If not, how can you start?

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God Time: Day 4



Define "righteousness:"

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines righteousness as:  
1. acting in accord with divine or moral law: free from guilt or sin.  
2.a. morally right or justifiable; a righteous decision.  
b. arising from an outraged sense of justice or morality.



Read Matthew 6:33  
*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

How can we seek God's righteousness?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Are you contributing to a cause that fights against something God finds unjust?

\_\_\_\_\_

God Time: Day 5



List some ministries you contribute to regularly:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you know for certain that they are making a positive kingdom impact? Are you using your/God's resources wisely?

\_\_\_\_\_



Read Luke 6:36-38  
*<sup>36</sup> Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. <sup>37</sup> "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup> 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."*



Verses 36-37 speak about our heart and attitude. Verse 38 speaks specifically about our actions. Rewrite verse 38 in your own words:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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When we give, we often assume, even if well-spent, that the money is gone. How does verse 38 change that thinking?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pray that you will use your resources wisely, and also that you understand that (if given in the right attitude) what you give "will be measured back to you."

WEEK 2 – THE JOY OF LIVING IN ABUNDANCE

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. **Point:** *God Himself is a cheerful giver. When we give, God multiplies our giving so that our faith will grow. We then experience the blessing of His provision and His work – changed lives.*



- In what way did you give generously to help others follow Jesus this week?
- With whom did you do this?
- How did it go? Did God bless you?

LOOK UP:

**Good News:** *When we give to Jesus there is more than enough for everyone – even you.*

No one has to teach us to be selfish. God knows that money, whether it is the stuff we can buy with it or the sense of security it gives us, is in direct competition for our hearts. When Jesus fed the 5000, He didn't just *feed* the crowd. They were satisfied; there were leftovers. And it all started with a boy's lunch (John 6:9). The minute we give what we have to Jesus, lives are transformed.

LOOK IN: Discussion Questions

- Share a time when someone has been generous with you.

**Read:** Mark 6:7-13 and 30-44

- What did you like about this Bible story? Be specific.
- What did you not like about this Bible story? Be specific.

- Put yourself in the story. If you'd heard, "we're looking for people to donate food to feed this massive group," how willing would you have been to give what you had?
- Would you have judged what you had as insignificant, and therefore useless, by the size of the need?
- Might you have felt, "What I have will only feed me and mine. So, what use is it for me to give?"

LOOK FORWARD:

**Point:** *Work like it depends on you and then give like it belongs to God – because it does.*

- Make a list of things you are attached to (stuff); especially things that come with an ongoing price (Ex: Netflix, greens fees):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Is there a person or a ministry that God is calling you to give generously to? (This can be confidential and does not have to be shared with the group.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- This past month, did you have more money than money?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Is there something on the first list above that you are willing to give up or give away that would allow you to make ends meet and be more giving?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Write a prayer seeking God's guidance towards giving up and giving more. Commit to praying this prayer daily.

Pray for one another to do these. Be ready to share with your group what God does with your obedience.

**Family Time**



**Big Idea:**

**When we give to Jesus there is more than enough for everyone – even you.**



**Key Verse: Luke 6:46-49**

*Why do you call me “Lord, Lord” and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.*



**Ask:**

- What are some things that you like or are attached to?
- Are those things important to God?
- How can the way we spend our money be like the wise builder or the foolish builder?
- What are ways we can use our money wisely?



**Encourage:**

- The Bible tells us that we are to be wise with the things that God gives us. Our money is just one of those things. Share with your family a time when you were generous or a time someone was generous to you.
- When we give our tithes and offerings to the church, we are being like the wise builder because we are focusing on Jesus.



**Family Activity:**

Find a jar or cup that your family can decorate as your “giving jar.” As a family, add money to the jar/cup during the week. At the end of the week, take the money you have put in the jar and give it wherever God is leading you.

Record what you did:

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## Gear Up: The Joy of Abundant Giving

There is great joy in abundant giving! As we put God first and realize that we live in His abundance, we then can move into the very practical steps of biblical, abundant giving. What does this look like, specifically? While the type of giving may differ from person to person, there are some commonalities: Christians give spontaneously, strategically, and sacrificially.

### Give Spontaneously

The Parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates for us what it looks like to give spontaneously.

#### Read Luke 10:30-37

<sup>30</sup>Jesus took up the question and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and fled, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup>A priest happened to be going down that road. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>In the same way, a Levite, when he arrived at the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan on his journey came up to him, and when he saw the man, he had compassion. <sup>34</sup>He went over to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him. When I come back I’ll reimburse you for whatever extra you spend.’”

While the priest and the Levite passed right by and did not offer help, the Samaritan man gave his time, physical abilities, and finances. He showed compassion to the injured man! This was an on-the-spot decision to render aid right when his heart was moved. It’s a good lesson for us to do likewise.

### Give Strategically

But we don’t always have to wait for our hearts to be moved toward *spontaneous* giving. We can stop waiting for an opportunity to come along and instead start planning. We can take a step and give proactively to a person, ministry, or organization—this is strategic giving. Look at these verses about strategic giving:

#### Isaiah 32:8

*But a noble person plans noble things; he stands up for noble causes.*

#### 1 Chronicles 22:5

*David said, “My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly great and famous and glorious in all the lands. Therefore, I will make provision for it.” So David made lavish preparations for it before his death.*

### Give Sacrificially

Lastly, the Bible teaches that we are to give sacrificially. Jesus commends a widow who gave two coins worth a penny because He says “*this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. For they all gave out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had — all she had to live on.*” (Mark 12:43-44)

We must remember, God doesn’t call us to *only* give of our finances. That is just one part of the picture. Like the Good Samaritan, we are asked to give of our money, yes, but also our time, abilities, and love. Whether we give from our excess or our poverty, when we give of ourselves, from the right heart, we experience the blessing of joy!

To whom is God asking you give? Are you prepared to give spontaneously, strategically, and sacrificially? Pray and seek out opportunities and then experience the joy of abundant giving.

WEEK 3 – THE JOY OF ABUNDANT GIVING

God Time Day 1: Give Spontaneously.

 Think of a time when you saw or heard of someone or some ministry that was in financial need. What was your first thought?

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 Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan: Luke 10:25-37.

Read 1 John 3:13  
*But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?*

Circle "in need" in 1 John 3:13. We often try to judge "need" like the lawyer in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29). And it can cause us to not give spontaneously. But there is a difference between relief and development:

- o **Relief** is an immediate need and often requires a spontaneous response. (The wounded man in the Parable of the Good Samaritan needed immediate relief.)
- o **Development** is more ongoing and strategic.

Reread 1 John 3:13 and circle the word "heart." Both relief and development require preparation. Is your heart prepared to give spontaneously as God leads and as generously as He gave to you?

If not, what needs to change? How will you change it?

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Reread 1 John 3:13 and circle the words "God's love." This is a challenge. What does a failure to give spontaneously reflect?

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 Read Luke 10:36-37  
<sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" <sup>37</sup> He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

God Time Day 2: Give Strategically

 Do you have a monthly household budget? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a monthly "Giving Plan?" \_\_\_\_\_

Is it part of your monthly household budget? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Romans 13:7-8

 <sup>7</sup> Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. <sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Circle the words "taxes, revenue, respect, honor" in Romans 13:7. Why do you suppose this verse gives equal footing to these words?

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 Romans 13:8 says to "Owe no one anything." What do we call it when we do not owe anyone anything?

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According to Romans 13:8, what's the only thing we should owe others?

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The Book of Proverbs has much to say about using our finances wisely. It requires planning, seeking counsel, and smart giving. Honestly ask yourself, "Am I using my finances wisely? Am I planning or just consuming?"

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If you are consuming, are you willing to get help to start planning?

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 Read Proverbs 15:22  
*Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.*

Pray about the strategic giving of your time, finances, and love.

WEEK 3 – THE JOY OF ABUNDANT GIVING

God Time Day 3: Give Sacrificially



Have you ever given up something that you really valued or enjoyed so that someone else could be blessed?

How did it make you feel? \_\_\_\_\_



Read Mark 12:41-44

<sup>41</sup> And he [Jesus] sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. <sup>42</sup> And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. <sup>43</sup> And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. <sup>44</sup> For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."



Have you ever given out of your poverty so that someone else could be blessed?

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How did the previous question make you feel considering today's first question?

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Read Acts 2:44-47

<sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.



Do you view your time, talent, and finances as yours to give or God's to share?

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Consider what God did for us through His Son's sacrifice.

Pray for the right attitude when giving and give sacrificially.

God Time: Day 4



Read Matthew 6:1-4

<sup>1</sup> Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. <sup>2</sup> Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup> But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Would you rather be "praised by others" or rewarded by God?

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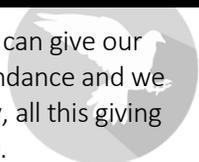


Rewrite verses 3-4 in your own words:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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God Time: Day 5

We can give much more than finances alone. We can give our time and our talents. We can give out of our abundance and we can give out of our poverty. But most importantly, all this giving should lead to the giving of our faith – the Gospel.



*Faith without works is dead, but a blind man receiving sight in a pitch-black cavern still needs to be shown the light.* (E'isms)

Read Micah 6:8



*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

Pray to intentionally seek out injustice and opportunities to give spontaneously, strategically, and sacrificially to help bring physical and spiritual justice to an unjust and lost world.

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



3. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

4. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	_____	

4. **Point:** *Work like it depends on you and then give like it belongs to God – because it does.*

- Was there someone or a ministry that God was calling you to give generously to? (Names can be kept confidential.)
- Did you choose to give something up or give something away so you can give more generously?
- How did it go? Did God bless you?

LOOK UP:

**Good News:** *If you are open, God will lead you to abundant giving and the blessing that comes with it.*

God created us to be generous and abundant givers because He is a generous and abundant giver. So, what does it look like to live generously?

- 1) **We give spontaneously.** We don't ask, "Who should I call? What if they take advantage of me? or "What difference will I make?" We ask, "What does God want me to do?"
- 2) **We give strategically.** We take fiscal responsibility for our lives so we can give more. And, if we need help, we seek it out.
- 3) **We give sacrificially.** Jesus isn't looking for an amount. He's looking for obedience, and our obedience changes lives.

LOOK IN: Discussion Questions

- Have you ever given money to a person or cause even though you were scared to do so at the time? What happened?

**Read:** Luke 10:30-36

- Why do you think the priest and Levite, "passed by on the other side?" Do you have a personal experience where you can identify with them?
- Looking at the three ways to give in the recap above, what motivates you to give generously?

LOOK FORWARD:

**Point:** *God sees and honors our obedient sacrifices!*

- Which way of giving is easier for you: spontaneously, strategically, or sacrificially and why?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
- Read Mark 12:41-44. When you've contemplated giving sacrificially, have you found yourself more concerned about the amount or the obedience?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
- How can you create more opportunities to be obedient when the opportunity arises?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
- Is there a mission or ministry that your group could commit to help or support?  
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Pray for one another to do these. Be ready to share with your group what God does with your obedience.



**Family Time**



**Big Idea:** If we are open, God will lead us to abundant giving and the blessing that comes with it.



**Key Verse: Genesis 4:4 NIV**

*And Abel also brought an offering. He brought the fattest parts of some animals from his flock. They were the first animals born to their mothers. The LORD was pleased with Abel and his offering.*

**Read: Genesis 4:1-7**



**Ask:**

- What are the differences between what Abel brought to God and what Cain brought to God?
- How did God react to Cain and Abel’s offerings?
- What should our attitude be when we give to God?
- What does God say we should do if we have a bad attitude when we give?

**Say:** God is calling each of us to give our best and to give with a good attitude.



**Encourage:** Consider how much we as a family could be missing out on because of not giving or giving with the wrong attitude.



**Challenge: What are different kinds of blessings we can receive from God?**

Make a list of the Faith Blessings we can receive from God by giving:

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Make a list of the Significance Blessings we can receive from God by giving (i.e. seeing lives changed, investing in God’s kingdom, etc.):

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**Family Activity:**

As a family how do/can we respond to the challenge of giving our time, talents, and treasures (money) to God?

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## The 3-Step "1-on-1 Encouragement" Process

NOTES

*Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since he who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.*

Hebrews 10:23-25

1. Partner-up: Partners should be of the same gender. If there is an odd number three is okay but work swiftly.
2. Partners ask each other these five questions:

	1) Did you spend specific personal time in the <b>BIBLE</b> <u>each day</u> this past week?	These are "Yes" or "No" questions.  Any hesitations or "Well..." responses are circled "No."
	2) Did you spend specific time in <b>PRAYER</b> <u>each day</u> this past week – not just for meals?	
	3) Did you do something specific to show Godly <b>LOVE</b> to someone this past week?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If so, the partner briefly shares the encounter(s) with their partner and, on the provided line, writes the name(s) of the person(s) they showed love to, shared the gospel with, or disciplined.</li> <li>• If not, leave the line blank.</li> </ul>
	4) Did you intentionally share the <b>GOSPEL</b> with anyone this past week?	
	5) Did you <b>DISCIPLE</b> anyone this past week?  (Ex: Sharing with others from any of the Gathering, God, Group, or Family Times)	

3. Each partner prays for the other: No matter how or what the partner has done over the past week, this is an intentional prayer of encouragement for the coming week!