

Practice Guide for October 27th, 2024

Life Together, pt. 8—Err on the Side of Generosity.

Suggested Ice Breaker (5 minutes)

If you suddenly received a large sum of money you weren't expecting, what would you do with it?

Opening (10 minutes)

Begin with 2 minutes of silence to focus on God's presence. Afterward, ask someone to open in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to reveal how we can grow in generosity and align our hearts with God's giving nature.

Opening Question: Have you ever been on the receiving end of a generous act? How did it impact you?

Reflecting On Scripture (15 minutes)

Have someone read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 and Hebrews 13:16 out loud for the group.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How do you think generosity reflects God's heart?
2. How do you think cheerfulness and generosity are connected?
3. How does this image of God as the provider challenge or encourage your faith when it comes to generosity?

Community Practice (25 minutes)

Read aloud this quote from Randy Alcorn:

"If we recognize God's ownership of everything, we'll steward our resources to help meet physical and spiritual needs. Our reward will be both future rewards and present contentment, purpose, and what Scripture calls 'the life that is truly life.'"

Take 5-10 minutes to journal your response to these questions:

1. How does your current practice of generosity contribute to a future (eternal) reward? Where do you sense God prompting you to give more freely?
2. Think about a person that has inspired you to be generous. What can you learn from their example, and how might you apply it in your own life?
3. Consider how you currently steward your resources (time, money, skills). Are there ways you feel God might be calling you to invest more generously in others?

Share your answers in groups of two or three.

Group Discussion:

- How do you feel about the idea that everything we have ultimately belongs to God? How does this affect your view of tithing and living generously?
- How do you think generosity shapes our relationships with others, both in our community and beyond?
- What are some obstacles that make it difficult to live generously? How can we support each other in overcoming these?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

As we conclude our discussion, have someone close in prayer and/or slowly read this prayer by John Wesley, which was later made into a hymn, called the *Covenant Prayer*:

*Lord, I am not mine, but yours alone.
Let your will be done and not my own.
Put me where you will, and let me serve;
in everything I do, let me endure.*

*Father, Son, and Spirit hear my cry,
forever I am yours and you are mine.
Father, Son, and Spirit hear my cry,
forever I am yours and you are mine.*

*Let me be employed for you,
laid aside for you,
lifted high for you or brought low.
Let me be full, let me empty.
Let me have all things or nothing.*

*This is my prayer, Lord, to you.
My promise and my vow, strong and true.
And the covenant I make on earth,
let it be fulfilled in heaven.*

Amen.

Further Reading:

- *Giving is the Good Life* by Randy Alcorn
- *Counterfeit Gods* by Timothy Keller