

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series: The Power of Generosity

"Generosity is not something that God wants *from* you, it is something that God wants *for* you."- Andy Stanley. Too often when we talk about "generosity" in church, we think of it as something God or church leaders want from us; something we are obligated or commanded to give. But what if generosity means more than just a habit of giving away money? What if living generously is actually a lifestyle that God wants us to experience and enjoy? Join us this September as we discover the power of generosity to make our lives better, because living generously allows us to experience community and freedom, to live with joy, and make an impact in the world.

Message description

Talking about money is hard, especially in church. It can make us feel uncomfortable, guilty, or even obligated to give. But what if generosity isn't something God wants *from* us, but a lifestyle that God wants *for* us? The truth is, living generously makes our lives better. And the first way it does this is by allowing us to experience the support, compassion, and care of a Christian community. **Generosity makes our lives better because it allows us to care for one another in times of need.** And when we do that, when we offer what we have and show up for one another in every season, God's love and generosity is revealed through our own acts of service. **God's generosity is revealed through the generosity of God's people.**

Key Scriptures

2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Acts 2:42-47

Questions Related to This Week's Message:

1. Do you find it difficult to talk about money with your friends and family (how much you make, have, spend, or give)? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think money and stewardship are difficult, or at times even awkward, topics in church?
3. Do you consider your financial giving an aspect of your spiritual life and growth? What role should our finances play in our own discipleship?
4. Our vision as a church is to join Jesus in the revolution of transforming lives through teaching and serving. Our first core value that begins this revolution is **REVEAL: helping people see Jesus**. Here at Revolution, we believe that the love, presence, power, and grace of God are *revealed* through our worship experience and hospitality. In her teaching, Rachel talked about how financial giving can also play a role in revealing the love of God within a community. Have you ever considered this before? Do you believe that God can be glorified, and God's love revealed through acts of sacrificial giving? Do you believe your generous giving can help other people see Jesus?
5. Tell us about a time when you have experienced this kind of generosity yourself in church. What did it mean to you and how did you experience God in that season?

Going Deeper:

Over the course of this series, we will dig into the passage from 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. This is a letter from Paul to the church in Corinth encouraging the believers in their giving. His specific ask is for a financial gift for the Christians and poor in Jerusalem, which the Corinthians had already promised to send (9:1-5). But as Paul will go on to explain, their giving goes beyond Jerusalem to join in with the mission of the gospel as their generosity leads others to worship and offer thanksgiving of God.

This week, we will explore the passage in how God's generosity is experienced and revealed in community.

Re-read 2 Corinthians 9:1-15.

1. Verse 6 captures the common metaphor of reaping and sowing, or the old adage "you reap what you sow." Look at the other places in scripture where this language is used; in reference to *giving* (Proverbs 11:24-25, 22:9, Malachi 3:10), *sin* (Galatians 6:7-9), and *judgment* (Luke 6:38).
 - How do these other references in scripture impact or add to your understanding of sowing and reaping in 2 Corinthians?
 - Used culturally, the saying "you reap what you sow" often refers to facing the consequences of our actions. And yet, "you get what you deserve" is the exact opposite of how God's grace and love works. How does Paul articulate reaping and sowing differently here?
2. Verse 8 reveals three fundamental truths about God:
 - (1) God is the source of grace and multiplies the gift of grace.
 - (2) God's grace is sufficient for all that we need in this life.
 - (3) God's grace empowers us to do good in the world. Or said another way, our service, love, and giving to others can be a response to God's goodness and grace first offered to us. (We love because he first loved us, also becomes, we give because God first gave everything to us).
 - Do you see generosity as an act of response to God? Why or why not?
 - How do these three truths lead you to trust God more deeply?
 - Where have you seen the goodness of God revealed through the actions of one another? How can you glorify God today because of the actions of someone in your group?
 - Take time to encourage where you have seen God at work in each another. "I experienced the generosity of God in you when..."
3. In verse 9, Paul quotes Psalm 112:9. Read Psalm 112 as a group in which the psalmist is describing the character and nature of a righteous person.
 - What are some of the defining characteristics of this righteous person [gracious, merciful, lends, gives to the poor]?
 - Why is the righteous person able to be generous (seemingly, because he trusts in the Lord)?
 - What role does trust play in your own generosity? Do you ever think of giving as an issue of trust?
 - What else stands out to you about this psalm?

Bottom line: We can trust God through our giving because God provides all that we need, God multiplies the gifts that we offer (v 10), and God produces thanksgiving in us and others (v 11).

Family-Related Questions:

- What opportunities do you have with your kids to demonstrate a lifestyle of generosity?
- Do your kids ever challenge you in your understanding, experience, or practice of generosity?
- How can this community help you model this lifestyle for your kids?