



Community Group Discussion Guide

Love Jesus, Live Sent – Value 5: Reimagined Generosity – Dec 12, 2021

I. Starter Questions:

- When you hear the word “generosity,” what do you typically think of?
- What else can generosity include?

II. Explanation of Value: Reimagined Generosity

Our fifth reframed value is **Reimagined Generosity**: We respond in faith to God’s provision by investing money as well as time, skill, effort, and resources for God’s use in accomplishing His Kingdom purposes. (Deuteronomy 15:7–8; Matthew 6:19–24; Romans 12:1–8; 2 Corinthians 8–9; 1 Timothy 6:17–19; Hebrews 13:16). Based on this church value, then, we believe that an individual disciple is *investing in God’s Kingdom*. As we invest money, time, skills, effort, and resources in God’s Kingdom, we recognize that investing in eternal, heavenly treasures generates a return far greater than any earthly investment we can make.

III. Discussion of Scripture:

Context: Deuteronomy 15 discusses several laws given to the people of Israel related to the sabbatical year. In verses 7–8, the people of Israel are instructed to take care of the poor and needy among them, showing them that their obedience should begin in their hearts and extend outward to meet practical needs. Likewise, Christians today should obey the command to be generous toward others and care for one another.

Deuteronomy 15:7–8 (ESV)

⁷ If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, ⁸ but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

1. According to Deuteronomy 15, from where should our generosity begin? Why does our generosity begin here?
2. To what extent are we commanded to care for our fellow brothers and sisters?

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Jim Elliot

The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn pp 6-11

Matthew 13:44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.”

Matthew 19:21 Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

**The Treasure Principle: You can't take it with you-
but you *can* send it on.**

Treasure Principle Keys:

- 1. God owns everything. I am his money manager.**
- 2. My heart always goes where I put God's money.**
- 3. Heaven, not earth is my home.**
- 4. I should live not for the dot but for the line.**
- 5. Giving is the only antidote to materialism.**
- 6. God prospers me not to raise my standard of living , but to raise my standard of giving.**

Context: During Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, he taught on some practical applications for everyday life. Included within this message is his teaching on the importance of not being focused on earthly possessions but instead focusing on heavenly, eternal treasures.

Matthew 6:19–24 (ESV)

¹⁹ Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ²² The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, ²³ but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! ²⁴ No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

3. What are some examples of earthly treasures that we lay up for ourselves? What are some examples of heavenly treasures that we can lay up?

**4. What does our attitude toward money and possessions reveal about our hearts?
Treasure Principle #2 My heart always goes where I put God's money.**

5. Why does the investment in heavenly treasures generate a return far greater than any earthly investment we can make? Financial planners tell us, "When it comes to your money, don't think just three months or three years ahead. Think thirty years ahead." Christ, the ultimate investment counselor, takes it further. He says, "Don't ask how your investment will be paying off in just thirty years. Ask how it will be paying off in thirty *million* years."

6. How does laying up eternal, heavenly treasures play a part in us equipping one another to love Jesus and others?

Treasure Principles #3 and #4

Hebrews 11:16a Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. ...
Where we choose to store our treasures depends largely on where we think our home is.

From the dot- our present life on earth- extends a line that goes on forever, which is eternity in heaven.

Context: In the first 11 chapters of Romans, Paul writes about God's righteousness, our sinfulness, and the salvation and redemption that we receive through Christ. In chapter 12, he turns to discussing how our lives should look as a result of the work that Christ has done to save and redeem us.

Romans 12:1–8 (ESV)

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

7. **What does it mean to be a living sacrifice? How might this idea spur us on toward generosity?**
8. **What implication does the truth in verse 5 of being “one body in Christ” have on our call to be generous toward one another with our lives?**
9. **Where do our spiritual gifts come from? What is the expectation for us with these gifts? How do these relate to the idea of reimagining what generosity looks like in our lives as Christians?**

The Treasure Principle: **You can't take it with you-
but you *can* send it on.**

Treasure Principle #1: God owns everything. I am his money manager.

We need to adopt a steward's mentality toward the assets He has entrusted -not given- to us. A steward manages assets for the owner's benefits. It's our job to find out what the owner wants done with his assets, then carry out his will.

Context: Following the great joy that Paul expresses over the Christians in Corinth in 2 Corinthians 7, he lays out a model for what generosity looks like in the church.

2 Corinthians 8–9 (ESV)

[2 Cor 8:1–5 ESV] ¹ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints-- ⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

[2 Cor 9:6–13 ESV] ⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good

work. ⁹ As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. ¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others

1. **Read through all of 2 Corinthians 8–9. What model of generosity does this lay out for the church? What would it look like if our church were to model this kind of generosity?**
2. **Even in the midst of affliction and poverty, Paul recognizes the church in Macedonia as being full of joy and overflowing in generosity. How can this be? What spurred them on toward this type of generosity? What did this generosity look like according to 2 Corinthians 8:5?**
3. **What attitude should we have in our generosity? Why?**
4. **What does our meeting the practical needs of others lead to, according to verse 12?**

Context: In this passage, Paul writes to Timothy regarding how the church should be shaped and transformed by the gospel. Specifically, in verses 17–19, Paul addresses those that are wealthy and how they should guard their hearts in order to ensure they are storing up treasures in heaven.

1 Timothy 6:17–19 (ESV)

¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

5. **Where are we instructed to set our hopes? Why?**
6. **What happens when we set our hopes on the riches of this world? Why?**
7. **In what are we called to be rich? What does this type of richness lead to?**

The Treasure Principle: **You can't take it with you-
but you *can* send it on.**

Treasure Principle #5 Giving is the only antidote to materialism.

Giving is a joyful surrender to a greater person and a greater agenda. It dethrones me and exalts Him.

Of course, money isn't all we can give. Time, wisdom, and expertise are wonderful gifts. Giving in any form breaks affluenza's fever. Giving breaks you free from the gravitational hold of money and possessions. Giving shifts you to a new center of gravity- heaven.

Context: In this closing section of Hebrews, the author provides some practical applications for the believers. Among these, the author reminds us to bring sacrifices that are pleasing to God, including sharing and being generous with what we have.

Hebrews 13:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

8. How does the instruction to “share what you have” expand the scope of generosity beyond just money?
9. How does knowing that our generosity and sacrifice is “pleasing to God” encourage you?
10. How might you meet the material needs of someone in our church? How does meeting the needs of others play a part in making disciples?

The Treasure Principle: You can't take it with you-
but you *can* send it on.

Treasure Principle #6 God prospers me not to raise my standard of living , but to raise my standard of giving.

God gives us more money than we need so we can give- generously.

The more we give the more we delight in our giving- and the more God delights in us. Our giving pleases us. But more importantly, it pleases God.

“God loves a cheerful giver”. (2 Cor 9:7). This doesn't mean we should give when we are feeling cheerful. The cheerfulness often comes during and after the act of obedience, not before. So don't wait until you feel like giving- it could be a long wait! Giving infuses life with joy. It interjects an eternal dimension into even the most ordinary day. Just give and watch the joy that follows.

Final Quote from A Christmas Carol

IV. Responding in Prayer

- Pray for each of us to have hearts and hands that overflow with generosity, whether that be with money, time, skills, effort, or resources.
- Pray that we would each use the gifts that God has given us as we love Jesus and live sent.
- Pray that our church would “overflow in a wealth of generosity” by submitting to God and caring for one another.
- Continue to pray that our church grows in our pursuit of glorifying God by becoming a hub for an all-ages disciple-making movement, equipping one another to love Jesus and live sent.