

The Treasure Principle

The Treasure of Giving

Leader Check-in

Why do you think generosity is so important to the mission at Central? What does it mean to you when we say “generosity builds God’s kingdom”?

Discover

In the past, when given the choice between present or future rewards, which have you chosen? Why?

Read **Matthew 6:19–24**. How would you summarize this passage?

Why might Jesus’ teachings on *treasure* and *worry* be located next to each other in the Gospel of Matthew?

What does this passage teach us about the connection between money (or treasures) and the human heart? Consider **Proverbs 4:23** as you discuss.

Read **1 Timothy 6:17–19**. What connections are you making between this passage and Matthew 6?

Have you experienced the struggle to surrender your finances to Jesus? What did you do?

Fully Own

Re-read **Matthew 6:19–21**. If you were to look at your credit card statement or your bank account, what would it say about your treasures? Where are they located? Are you satisfied with your answer?

Reflect on Randy Alcorn’s quote, “You can’t take it with you, but you can send it on ahead.” Do you know someone who demonstrates this statement? In what ways would you like to imitate that person?

What would your life look like if you invested your finances in the future hope of eternity, rather than solely on the present? What would change?

Challenge

Read **Mark 12:41-44** and **Matthew 19:16-30** this week. What can you discern about the hearts of the people involved? Which character do you relate with most? Come back next week ready to share.

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The Spirituality of Giving

Leader Check-in

What did you learn from your personal Bible study this past week? What are you expecting God to do in your life over the course of this study?

Discover

What is the difference between an owner and a steward (or manager)?

Recall the story of the widow's offering in Mark 12:41-44. How are faith and generosity related? Can you be a person of great faith without being generous? Why or why not?

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-9. How does the example set by the Macedonian churches demonstrate the first two Treasure Principle keys? (*God owns everything; I am his money manager. My heart always goes where I put God's money.*)

Read Acts 2:42-47. Based on your understanding of this passage, what was most worthy of investment in the minds of the Jerusalem believers?

What does the Jerusalem church selling their "stuff" and investing in the poor say about their perspective of God's kingdom?

Fully Own

When was the last time you asked God what he wants you to do with *his* money?

If the concept of God owning everything is new to you, what might need to change in your habits toward money? How?

If the concept of our stewardship isn't new to you, what areas in your life might you be acting as if you're an owner, rather than manager?

Read Matthew 6:19-21 again. What will happen to our hearts when we start giving our money away? Where would we get our sense of security from if not from money?

How can you use the practice of generosity to shift your heart toward the kingdom values you want to care more about?

Challenge

Make an honest list of those things that you're invested in: work, hobbies, or stuff. Order it from biggest investment to least. Next to each, rank the items on a scale from one to ten, with ten being "most kingdom-oriented" and one being "least kingdom oriented." Pick one item and shift your resources toward something more kingdom-centered.

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The Sacrifice of Giving

Leader Check-in

How easy (or difficult) was it for you to make your list this week? What did you discover about yourself and your relationship with God as you completed the challenge?

Discover

Consider the third and fourth keys of the treasure principle: *Heaven—not earth—is our true home and*

I should live, not for the dot, but for the line. Which of these resonates with you most deeply? Challenges you more?

Read **Philippians 3:20** and **Hebrews 11:13**. How should our status as “foreigners” influence the way we think about money?

Read **1 Peter 3:10–13**. In light of the temporary nature of our belongings and our money, what should our attitude be toward earthly “stuff”?

What misconceptions have you had about giving? How is God correcting your previous understanding?

Read **Hebrews 11:20–29**. What was Moses looking forward to? How did this impact the way that Moses lived his life? What did he give up? What did he stand to gain?

Fully Own

Is your understanding of the value of God’s kingdom (and eternal reward) deep enough to compel you toward generosity? Why or why not?

What are you tempted to hoard? Why? Has it satisfied you?

What emotions surge to the surface when you consider giving generously or sacrificing for the kingdom?

Compare **Philippians 4:17** with the quote below. What do we have to gain when we give?

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. -Jim Elliot

In the past, how have you viewed death? How has your view of death impacted the way you view your money and possessions?

Challenge

Identify someone in your life (in your church, family, workplace) that makes eternity a priority in the way they live. Take the time to speak with them this week and ask how they order their life to reflect eternity.

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The Joy of Giving

Leader Check-in

Who did you talk with this week? What insights did you gain?

Discover

Have you witnessed the “disease of affluenza” in your life or community? What are its effects?

Read Ecclesiastes 5:12-14. Compare this perspective with the perspective within the dominant culture. Are these views compatible? Why or why not?

Read Zechariah 8:1-23. What evidence of the sixth key to the treasure principle (God prospers me, not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving) can you find in this passage of scripture?

Based on your experience, would you say that unbelievers respond to Christians the way that Zechariah says they should in Zechariah 8:20-23? Support your answer.

How does generosity solve the problem of poverty and materialism at the same time? What stories from the Bible can you recall that demonstrate this truth?

Fully Own

The fifth key to the treasure principle says, “Giving is the only antidote to materialism.” Have you seen key number five work in your life? If so how? What risks come with giving?

Does giving away 10% of your income (tithing) seem like more like a starting point or finish line to you? How would you make decisions about your finances differently if you saw tithing as the training wheels of generosity?

Read Philippians 2:1-11. What actions does Paul expect to accompany the shift in priorities he outlines in this passage? What does “looking to the interests of others” look like in practice?

What’s currently standing in the way of you embracing the treasure principle? What are you going to do about those obstacles?

Challenge

Spend time praying this week for God's grace in growing your giving habits. Identify the one or two attitudes or actions you need His divine intervention in, and ask Him repeatedly for help. Keep a record of success you see as God works in you.