



RADICAL GENEROSITY LEADER GUIDE – February 9, 2020

PRIMARY PASSAGE

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:16-18 NIV)

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ² In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. ⁵ And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. (2 Corinthians 8:1-5 NIV)

ICE BREAKER

- Share a story of when someone else's generosity had an impact on your life.
- Recap past values -> Gospel of Grace, Biblical Truth, Authentic Relationships, and Empowered People

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) Have you ever felt like you were told *what* to do without the *why* behind it? How did that change how you approached the task?

- Growing up your mom making you do chores that didn't make sense; a boss demanding an action that seemingly has no purpose; Bible commands that are hard to understand; etc.
- Knowing *what* to do without a clear *why* very rarely brings lasting change

2) When it comes to Radical Generosity, we are given the *why* before the *what* – “we give because Jesus gave” (see 1 John 3:16). How does this change your view of generosity?

- Jesus gave us the perfect/complete picture of Radical Generosity when He gave His life for us on the Cross (see also 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Philippians 2:5-11)
 - His one command was tied to this action, “Love others as I have loved you” (John 13:34-35)
 - Imagine how this would change not only the world's view of the church, but ultimately their view of God.
- In light of what God has done for us through Jesus, we are driven to live a radically generous life
 - In other words, we give out of a response to God's grace not out of obligation

3) Paul uses the Macedonian church as an example of people who saw giving as a privilege and joy (see 2 Corinthians 8:2, 4), in spite of their economic status. What does

this reveal about the connection between joy and generosity? How have you seen this play out in your life?

- Paul reveals to us that our joy is not connected to our circumstances, but to our generosity
- Jesus described this when He said -> “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35) – this could literally be translated “Happier is the one who gives than receives.”
 - This blessing of joy is tied to us being made in the image of God – who in and of Himself is Radically Generous
 - So we both give from an overflow of joy, but also receive joy when we give

4) What are some obstacles that keep us from being Radically Generous?

- Financial issues – debt, mismanagement of funds, etc. (Chapel is currently offering Financial Peace University if anyone in your group needs financial guidance); extreme lifestyle – see next question; lack of awareness of the needs around us; etc.
- Fear (scarcity mindset) – not trusting that God will provide for you if you give (see Matthew 6:25-34)
- Calendar/lack of margin – we are too busy or wrapped up in our schedule to meet the needs of those around us. Remember, generosity goes much further than just finances

5) The Radically Generous prioritize life-change over lifestyle, which causes them to give sacrificially (see 2 Corinthians 8:3). What changes in your life do you need to make to follow this example?

- Downsizing of home; shifting to more economical vehicle; inventory of extra monthly charges (memberships, subscriptions, season tickets, etc.); evaluation of vacations/travel (not that you don’t take them, but evaluating necessity of extravagance); amount of eating out (restaurants, fancy coffee, taking lunch to work instead, etc.)
- Creating margin in your schedule to serve/love people, volunteer, etc.

6) Following up with the above question – What does this say about the idea of the “American Dream?” How does our culture support or deny the Biblical value of generosity?

- Americans are among the most giving and generous people in the world, mostly due to the high level of prosperity. We tend to give out of our excess.
 - What would happen if we reordered our finances to give first rather than out of excess – Give first, save second, and live off of the rest? (Giving first teaches gratitude and generosity // saving second teaches discipline and builds wealth // living off the rest teaches contentment)
- Our materialistic culture works against biblical lifestyles both celebrating and creating a trust in provisions rather than the Provider.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

1) The Macedonian church gave themselves first to God then to others. For us to be Radically Generous toward others we first have to give ourselves fully to God. Have you done this in your life? If not, what’s holding you back?

2) The Gospel of Grace is an act of Radical Generosity – Jesus did for us what we could not do for ourselves. How can you model this to those around you this week? As in, how can you do for others what they cannot do for themselves?

3) What is a next step you can take this week to begin to become Radically Generous?

