

GIVING FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

Small Group Leader's Guide – Lesson Three



BEFORE THE LESSON:

- Each member of the group should be given the participant's guide for the upcoming session
- Each member should be asked to read chapter 6 in the book and complete the questions in the participant's guide. (As you complete the questions yourself, be prepared to share your own notes, to help the group open up to discussion.)
- Pray for your leadership of this group. Pray for the members who will attend your group.
- Remember that this topic deals with finances and financial choices. Make it clear to the group that we will not be discussing personal finances, but rather reviewing scripture to understand God's perspective on the gifts we give.
- This study is probably unlike any study of financial giving you and your group has experienced. Expect to find clarity, freedom, and a new perspective on gifts! The focus is on what the Bible actually reveals about giving.

PRAYER TIME:

- Pray for an open heart to truth from God's Word
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal truth and bring understanding
- Pray for each member to learn something from this study that will transform their perspective and actions

INTRODUCTION:

- Review Acceptable Gift Truths:
 - #1: The amount matters
 - #2: You determine the amount
- If you gave a financial gift, or any kind of gift this week, how did this study change your perspective?
- What stood out to you this week?

NOTES:

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? DISCUSSION – CHAPTER 6: BECAUSE I CAN

The main truth we want to understand in this session is: We are to give according to our ability

Look up and read 2 Corinthians 8:11-12

- How did Paul say these early Believers were to determine the amount of their gift?
- Would this be the same amount or same percentage for everyone?
- What do you think it means to give according to your ability?

Is giving according to our ability found anywhere else in Scripture?

Look up and read Acts 11:29

- How did the first church determine the amount to give?

Look up and read Mark 12:43-44

- How pleased was Jesus with the amount the widow gave?
- How could she have put in more than everyone else since her amount was less than everyone else's?

Look up and read Deuteronomy 16:10, 17

- How were they to determine what to bring for an offering?

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? DISCUSSION – CHAPTER 6: BECAUSE I CAN (continued)

Let's consider for a moment the right perspective for giving from our ability and where our ability really comes from.

Consider the following passages when God's people gave according to their ability?

- Exodus 35:4-29 and 36:3-7: How much was the offering for the Lord? (more than was needed)
- Acts 2:43-45: How were everyone's needs met? (everyone gave and shared)
- Philippians 4:18: How much did Paul receive in the offering? (more than he needed)
- Corinthians 8:13-15: What was the outcome Paul had in mind if the Corinthians gave based on ability?
- Could it be that if everyone gave according to their abilities – like in these verses – God's objectives could be met throughout the entire world? No hunger? No lack of basic needs? Spread of the Gospel?

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? DISCUSSION – CHAPTER 6: BECAUSE I CAN (continued)

What if you have made poor financial decisions in the past or encountered a financially devastating situation and your ability seems limited, what do you think God expects of your gifts? (Confess any mistakes you may have made, turn the situation over to God, and give according to the ability you now have, no matter how large or small)

Look up and read Mark 12:41-44

- Was it the size of the gift or the ability of the woman that pleased Jesus?
- Did she give from her ability even though it was small?
- Do you feel a tension in trying to determine what is your ability? To know how much is acceptable to God? Is that a good or bad thing?

DISCUSSION – BRINGING IT HOME

So we have seen so far that in giving gifts that please the heart of God...

- Acceptable Gift Truth #1 - The amount matters
- Acceptable Gift Truth #2 - We determine the amount
- Acceptable Gift Truth #3 - We give according to our ability
- Key – Scripture consistently teaches that we are to give according to our ability; to give from what the Lord has blessed us with.
- Key – We should be thankful and consider all that God has given us, from which we can give back to Him.
- Key – The needs of the world can be met when Believers give according to their abilities.
- Key – When we fully examine all our abilities, most of us realize we can give more than we realize.

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NEXT SESSION PREPARATION

- Read chapters 7-8
- Complete the participant guide questions
- Pray for other group members
- Be on time for session 4
- Be ready to participate in the discussions