

Money is the root of all evil

Leader Guide

LEAN IN // 5 minutes

1. When you were growing up, what was hard for you to share? Why?

Sample answers:

- *A special toy, doll, action figure - afraid someone would steal, break it*
- *My first car - I worked so hard to buy it, didn't want it damaged*
- *Food - At school, didn't have much, worried about not having enough*
- *My close friend - I didn't want to lose them to someone else*
- *Time with a parent - wanting attention, affection*

Leader note: Transition: "Today, we're going to look at a story Jesus tells his disciples to remind them of how a wrong view of God can have disastrous results..."

Just a reminder to your group: Jesus speaks in parables to illustrate what life looks like when someone lives under God's gracious and good rule (i.e. His Kingdom). As your group reads through the parable, the Master represents God, the servants represent his disciples. The context of this section in Matthew is before Jesus' arrest. Jesus is preparing his disciples on how they should live in response to God's Kingdom being established through Jesus, especially as He will be leaving their physical presence to die on the Cross and rise from the dead.

LOOK DOWN // 20 minutes

Read Matt 25:14-30

2. What do you learn about responding to God's generosity?

Sample:

- *One should see God as the owner (14)*
- *God is entrusting his wealth to his servants (14)*
- *One should respond based on what one has been given (15)*
- *The servants who were given (5, 2) respond well by investing it (16-17)*
- *The servant who was given (1) responds poorly by burying it (18)*
- *God celebrates His servants work when they invest (20-23)*
- *God wants to entrust his faithful servants with more (21, 23)*
- *How one views God - either generous or not ("hard") - affects behavior (24-25)*
- *God doesn't want his servants to miss out and regret wasting what they've been given (28-30)*

Leader note: The point of the parable is to help the disciples see God as their generous master, whose entrusted them with life and resources to manage well for His purposes. The warning is found in the third servant's view of God. He saw his master as "hard", which was not only untrue and insulting, it caused

the servant to waste his gift and miss out on His master's affirmation, celebration and entrusting of more. And in case a group member inquires the parable is directed to Jesus' disciples so vs. 30 is not reflective of the servant being cast to hell, but a result of despair or loss.

LOOK OUT // 15 minutes

Leader note: Help your group see that the way life was meant to be lived with God is a giving kind of life - think John 3:16. Why? Because God is a giver and not a taker. He owns everything and yet we can act like it's ours. And He knows we will live our life based on our perception of His generosity towards us... a life trusting in His abundance or a life protecting ourselves from scarcity.

3. Where do you see people demonstrate generosity? How do you see it there?

Sample:

- *Financial gifts to non-profits, churches, organizations*
- *People using their time to volunteer/serve others*
- *People sharing information to better others/improve society*
- *Letting people in their lane during high traffic*
- *When people are in crisis, others rallying too comfort, bring food, etc.*

4. Where do you see people struggling to be generous? How do you see it there?

Sample:

- *With money, no margin to give*
- *Sharing learnings/innovations, fear of not getting credit, reward*
- *Time - too busy, other priorities*
- *Kindness - family, neighbors, strangers*
- *Talents/Abilities used for work but not for church, world*
- *Connecting resources to help others in their problem, career or situation*

5. Describe someone who sees God as generous. What does that look like?

Sample:

- They are humble/not arrogant
- They give of their time, talent, treasure
- They are joyful/confident
- They see their life aligned with God's purpose
- They see others needs and want to help
- They want others to know God's generosity in Jesus

LOOK IN // 15 minutes

Leader note: We all want to be generous. No one decides to be miserly in our approach to giving, whether it's money, time, talents. We see this play out in different areas of our lives. With all that we have been given, God is calling us to use them His way and see His generosity overflow our lives.

6. Where is it easier for you to live like God is generous? Where is it more difficult?

Sample:

Easier

- *When there is extra money in my account*
- *When I have some free time*
- *I see my family as a gift, give them everything.. My time, my money, etc*
- *Giving my time, money to ministry*

More Difficult

- *When I have other plans for my money*
- *When I am really busy*
- *Giving money to the church, using my limited time to serve*
- *Reacting to the needs of my neighbor or co-worker*

7. What might your life look like trusting in God's generosity?

Sample:

- *Greater freedom/joy*
- *More Peace - I'm using my life for God's purpose*
- *Rethink how I view "my" time, "my" talents and "my" treasure as God's*
- *More loving by trusting in God's gift in Jesus*

LIVE IT OUT // 5 minutes

Leader note: Living as people who respond to God's generosity should influence the relationships of the people around us. Help your Life Group dream about the possibilities if you engaged in this together this week in your spheres of influence.

8. What kind of impact could your group have demonstrating God's generosity?

Sample:

- *It could impact the way people sit in traffic with me*
- *It could look like bringing food to a family in need*
- *It could look like getting out of work early to give my family more time*
- *It could look like giving to the church for the first time or regularly*
- *It could open our group up to outsiders to potentially grow our group*