

2021

Deep Pockets | Group Guide

Week 3

A perspective on generosity



Overview

When you think of God, what adjectives come to mind? Because of the pace and stress of our modern lives, we often miss and misunderstand God. From the beginning, God has shown himself to be generous. From the extravagance of creation to the extensiveness of his plans for our lives, God's work evidences a giving heart. When we understand his generosity, we are more capable of living generously. When we give, we give from deep pockets.

Week Three

It's hard to be generous living from a deficit and being distracted. However, when we choose to live with intentionality, generosity becomes a source of purpose and gives us that illusive sense of accomplishment. In a world where what matters least screams the loudest, how do we keep our focus? How do we minimize distractions and maximize impact? We choose giving over getting because, no matter how you slice it, our time is limited. But, what we do with it doesn't have to be.

Big Idea: The battle for our time is spiritual.

Scripture: John 15:17-19 (ESV). I Peter 5:8 (TLB). Ephesians 5:15-16 (NLT). Ecclesiastes 4:5 (NLT). John 17:4 (ESV). John 19:30 (ESV). 1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV).

Action Items & Takeaways:

1. The battle for our time is spiritual.
2. We must not just listen to Jesus, we must live like him too.
3. The enemy attacks us directly and indirectly. Your responsibility is to be aware of both and fall for neither.

Group Guide:

1. With all the resources we have and the ease with which we can distribute those resources, why haven't we solved more problems than we have as a culture?
2. In your life, why is giving of your time one of the hardest things to do?
3. "The battle for our time is spiritual." What does this statement resonate with you? Is your time with God fulfilling? With people?
4. Read 1 Peter 5:8
The enemy is looking to attack us Direct ways so that our time is used on things that aren't a part of God's plans. His attacks, more often than not, come in the form of tempting us away from the warmth and safety of the fire of God and into the dark forest where we will be consumed with fear, lose our bearings, begin to trust our own wisdom. Do you have current or past examples of these direct attacks?
5. Read Ephesians 5:15-16 & Ecclesiastes 4:5
The enemy also attacks us indirectly. It is this indirect approach that is slowly choking the life out of the Christians and as a result the church. For the enemy today, it's much easier to distract us than to debilitate us. What are some examples of his indirect attacks on you or the people around you?

6. Read John 17:4 and John 19:30

In order to defeat the enemy as he attacks, we must not only listen to Jesus, but live like him too.

Can you imagine dying with this kind of peace, this sense of accomplishment?

Jesus' life was also full of distractions, people who needed him, religious rules.. But how was he able to Accomplish and Finish the work God had for him to do?

7. Jesus was sent to accomplish the largest mission ever conceived, **being generous with his time even with distractions and chaos around:**

- a. The woman at the well- generous with his time.
- b. The restoration of Peter- generous with his time.
- c. Raising Lazarus from the dead- generous with his time.
- d. Praying lunch into existence for a few thousand people- generous with his time.
- e. The Centurion's servant- generous with his time.
- f. Having dinner at Mary and Martha's- generous with his time.
- g. Submitting to Pilot before he died to save the world- generous with his time

So, how can we do the same? How can we spend our time doing things that matter when the world seems to be falling apart around us?

(Resisting the rush. Putting up boundaries against the devices and distractions. Welcoming the people that others label wastes of time.)

8. Read 1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV)

What are you doing with the time you have been given?

What are you doing with the gifts you've been given?

How can we encourage one another to use our gifts to fuel the engine of generosity that is our life?

Resources:

- These things I command you, so that you will love one another. "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. John 15:17-19 (ESV)
- Be careful—watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart. 1 Peter 5:8 (TLB)
- So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. 16 Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Ephesians 5:15-16 (NLT)
- Fools fold their idle hands leading them to ruin. Ecclesiastes 4:5 (NLT)
- I glorified you on earth, having **accomplished the work** that you gave me to do. John 17:4 (ESV)
- When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. John 19:30 (ESV)

- As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV)