

In God We Trust

A Life Group Series on Generosity
November 2019

Life Group Leader Guide



About This Series

A note to our Life Group Leaders...

Our "In God We Trust" Life Group Study coincides with our annual generosity campaign of the same name. Each week, WE will take a look at what Jesus says about generosity and money and discuss how WE can live a more generous life. WE strongly encourage you to do ALL three weeks of the studies with your group in the weeks leading up to Commitment Sunday, November 24th. If you have any questions or concerns about this series, please contact Michele at michele@weomaha.com.

Sermon Series Overview

In God We Trust became our national motto in 1956. But is it more a motto or reality? We trust in many gods: security, youth sports, money, self-image, control, and comfort. This November, WE are going to explore what it means to trust in God first and fully.

Life Group Study Overview

Over the course of three weeks, our life groups will take a look at one story. The story of the Good Samaritan. WE are going to investigate and discuss what Jesus teaches us about generosity and money in this short parable.

Week 1 Quotes

"God's claim on us reaches to every single area of our experience. No part of ourselves should be withheld from God."

"Generosity says, 'I belong to God. My security and my hope is found in Him. I will put God first in life and be grateful for and share my blessings with others.'"

BIBLE READING PLAN

This month, WE will read and reflect on one section of Luke 10:25-37.

Week of November 3rd - Luke 10:25-29

One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?" The man answered, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind. And, Love your neighbor as yourself." "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!" The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Reflect & Respond:

What does Jesus say is the most important commandment?

The expert asks, "And who is my neighbor?" - What is your answer to this? Who do you consider your neighbor? Is your answer broad or focused?

How does your view of who your neighbor is relate to your level of generosity?



Discussion Question

1. Jesus spoke about money more than He talked about anything else. Yet, when it comes to talking about money, we often fall silent. Why do you think we are so uncomfortable when it comes to talking about money?
2. What other gods do people have? Why do you think we tend to gravitate to these things and away from God?
3. What things do you put your trust in? Now, rate those things in descending order. Where does God fit in this list? Why?
4. When it comes to honoring God by loving yourself, how are you doing? Why do you feel this way? How can you change this?
5. How would you describe your attitude toward money? Do you feel it is healthy or unhealthy? How did you develop this type of relationship with money? Is it pulling you further from or closer to God?
6. Craig mentioned that being generous helps us love ourselves and others better. Share some examples of how you have experienced this in your own life.
7. Where does your ultimate trust live? Is it: In money I trust? Or is it: In God I trust?

Wrapping Up

Pray

Today, as you gather together to pray, think about trust. Take time to thank God for being a Father that you can place your trust in.

Make Plans To Meet Again

Remind everyone that you will be meeting again next week. If you need to make plans regarding location or meals, now is a great time to do that. This way, you can include the info in your reminder email.



About This Series

Week 2 Quotes

"Generosity restores us to God's image. God is generous to us. We, at our best, are generous to others."

"Compassion has nothing to do with affinity. Compassion has everything to do with our humanity."

*"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."
-John Wesley*

"Every sunrise is God's invitation to emerge from rest and practice kindness."

BIBLE READING PLAN

This month, WE will read and reflect on one section of Luke 10:25-27.

Week of November 11th - Luke 10:30-32

Jesus replied with a story: "A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side."

Reflect & Respond:

Why do you think these people kept walking past the man?

Have you ever found yourself walking away instead of offering help? Why did you do this? How did you feel after you did it?

Have you ever found yourself in the shoes of the Jewish man - in need of help but people keep passing you by? What did you think of those people? How did experiencing this affect how you react to people in need?



Discussion Question

1. Craig points out that "Application is more important than knowledge." Are you an information gatherer or an applier? Why do you think this? How does being a gatherer or applier affect your faith life?
2. Share a time you experienced a "side of the road" moment. Who passed you by? Who came to your aid? Did you have to reach out to a friend/relative in order to get help? Did you have to try more than one person?
3. At some point in our lives, we have all been the priest. We have "kept traveling" when we could have stopped. What excuses did you make for not stopping? What would it have cost you in that moment to stop? What did your not stopping cost the person you passed by?
4. When you hear the word compassionate, what comes to mind? When you hear the word generosity, what comes to mind? What barriers exist to you being compassionate? Are these barriers real or excuses?
5. What resources do you have available to give? Do you readily give them? Do you give in love?
6. The purest form of generosity is when you do something for somebody with no expectation of anything in return. When have you experienced this - either as the giver or recipient? How did it make you feel?
7. When we are generous, we take a risk that allows us to trust more fully in God. How can you take that risk? What steps can you take starting now toward living a life of generosity? How can you be more like the Samaritan and less like the priest?

Wrapping Up

Pray

At some time in our lives, we have each experienced the gift of generosity. Take a moment to go around the room and have each person show gratitude to God for this generosity. Close with any prayer requests or other celebrations your group members may have. Before you leave, commit to praying for one another throughout the week.

Make Plans To Meet Again

Remind everyone that you will be meeting again next week. If you need to make plans regarding location or meals, now is a great time to do that. This way, you can include the info in your reminder email.



About This Series

Week 3 Quotes

"Samaritans and innkeepers - they are fueled by compassion."

"She believes in abundance, not scarcity. She is giving her available resources. She expects nothing in return. She trusts that ultimate provision comes from God."

"It is not enough just to cognitively know this stuff. It's about doing it. Application is more important than the information."

BIBLE READING PLAN

This month, WE will read and reflect on one section of Luke 10:25-27.

Week of November 18th - Luke 10:33-37

Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here. Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits? Jesus asked. The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

Reflect & Respond:

As you read this passage, what are your initial thoughts about the Samaritan's actions?

Have you ever found yourself in the role of the Samaritan? What prompted you to act?

Why do you think Jesus told this story in response to the attorney? How does this passage affect your thoughts on generosity?



Discussion Question

1. How did Craig's examples of generosity within the church affect your attitude toward generosity?
 2. What steps are you willing to take to live a life of generosity?
 3. How will you live in a manner that bases your behavior on the abundance of God instead of the scarcity of the world? How does living this way look to you?
 4. We are called to love God with our hearts, minds, souls and strength. How does greed hinder this? How does living generously set us up to love God more fully?
 5. How will you apply the lessons you have learned over the past three weeks? What is the biggest thing you realize you need to change?
 6. Moving forward, how will you change the way you handle money?
 7. What tangible steps can you take to live with gratitude rather than envy?
 8. How is it that you practice generosity moving forward so that you can be restored to God's image, put God first in your life, and resource Christ's church to prevail?
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Wrapping Up

Pray

Tonight, as you begin your prayer time, have each person share one way they hope to practice generosity. Pray over these things as a group, asking God's help in moving past the barriers we create so that we may live the generous life He intended for us. Commit to supporting one another in prayer as you each work toward your goal.

Make Plans To Meet Again

As you make plans for your next meeting, discuss ways your group can practice generosity together. Make a plan to do this.

