

JOURNEY OF GENEROSITY

GROWING TOGETHER



TRUST



TRUTH



TREASURE



TIME

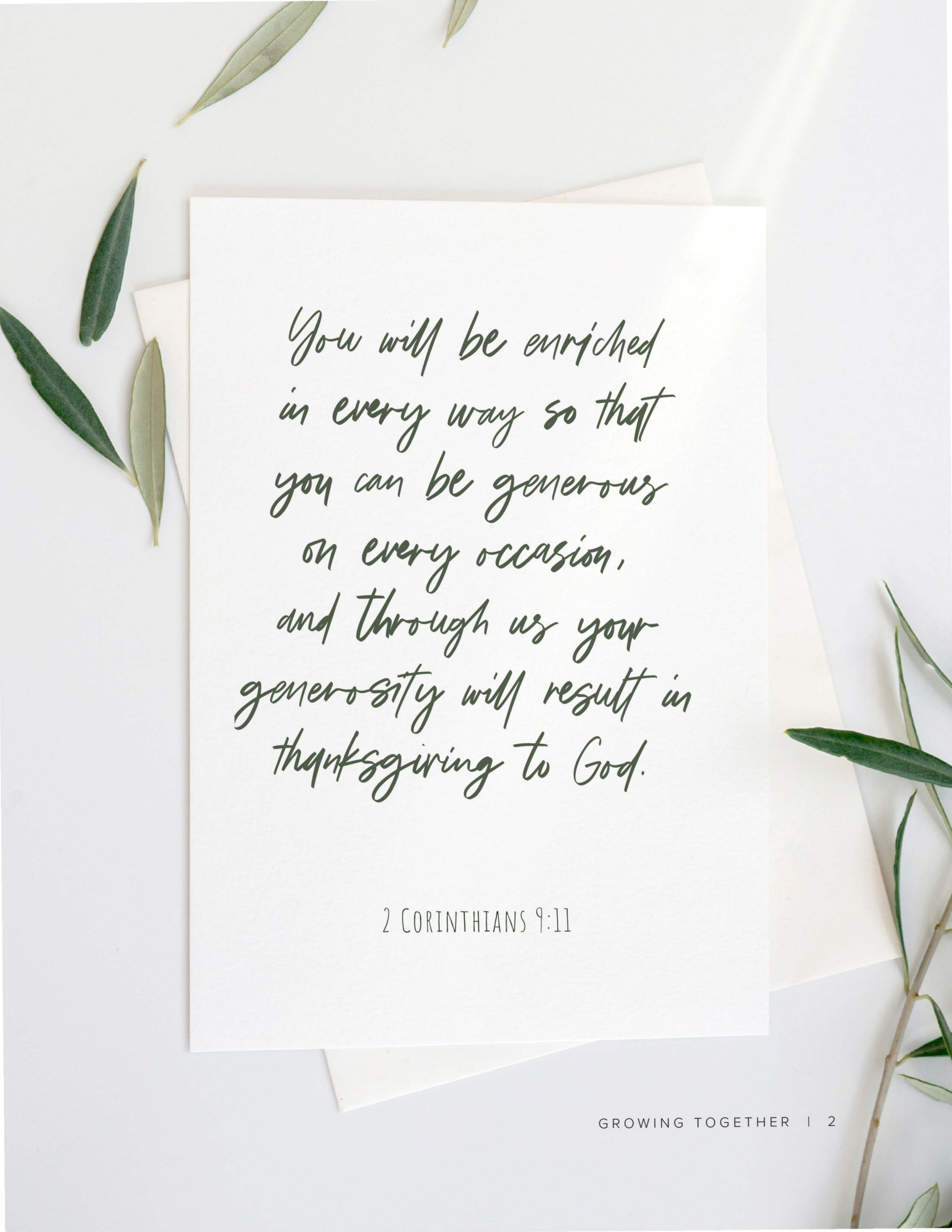


TALENT



TOUCH

NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



You will be enriched
in every way so that
you can be generous
on every occasion,
and through us your
generosity will result in
thanksgiving to God.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for taking this next step! I'm so excited that you are joining me and others on this next step in our Faith Journey!



We firmly believe that we are not meant to walk this journey alone. Participating together and connecting with one another in genuine and meaningful ways is essential for our growth and flourishing in our faith. This week-long adventure is intended to provide us with a corporate time of worship and learning, personal times of consideration and reflection and a small group experience for interaction and sharing insights together.

I believe you will find the topics in this series relevant in your everyday life. These areas of growth relate to significant aspects of our lives and faith as we seek to align ourselves with God's will and purpose.

This experience will catalyze profound growth in our faith and deepen our relationship with God and one another.

So, once again, thank you for joining us in the Growing Together series. May this series, and particularly this week's Journey of Generosity ignite a passion for spiritual growth and encourage unity within our community. Let's walk together as we seek to grow in our faith and experience the abundant life God has planned for us.

GROWING TOGETHER,

David

A pair of hands, one wearing a beige knitted glove with blue polka dots, holds a rustic terracotta bowl filled with ripe red cherry tomatoes and one unripe green one. The background is a soft-focus green field.

**It is better to give
than to receive.**

ACTS 20:35



WEEK 3

Growing in Gratitude & Generosity Together

The word “stewardship” has gotten a bad rap lately, so I want to try to reclaim it because it is both a good word and an important concept of our Christian experience. It simply means - “managing something for someone else” with a grateful and generous heart. This entire 6- week study has in many ways been about stewarding or managing well, the things God has given us... on His behalf. We’ve looked at Trust and Truth...now we turn our attention to Treasure. It is so important that we recognize that everything we have and everything we are, is a gift from God. Additionally, we must learn the appropriate response and responsibility that come from this truth. The response focuses on growing in our Gratitude and the responsibility focuses on growing in our Generosity. This week, join me as we continue on our adventure of Growing Together as we go on a “Journey of Generosity” together.

SESSION 1

**Attend the
Weekend
Services**

Getting Started

- When you hear the word “stewardship,” what comes to mind?
- Who is the most generous person you know?

Watch the video at
mynw.cc/curriculum
or scan this code



Questions for Consideration



1. How have others been generous to you?
2. How does giving demonstrate your trust in God?
3. What struggles do you have with generosity?
4. What blessings have you received from being generous?

Key Application

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY & REFLECTION

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-15

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

⁹ As it is written:

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰ Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.¹⁴ And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

INDUCTIVE STUDY TIPS

1. Observation: What does the passage say?

- Circle repeated words and phrases.
- Underline the promises.
- Draw a box around any commands.
- Mark every reference to God with a triangle.
- Is there cause and effect (e.g. words like therefore, because, so that, etc)?

2. Reflection: What is God telling you?

- What area in my life needs repentance?
- What words in this passage encourage and strengthen me?

3. Application: What is my response?

- Journal any thoughts you may have and conclude with prayer.

30 Questions

RANDY ALCORN

Please take some time before our Saturday session to read through these 30 questions. Come back prepared to share two questions that stood out to you and why. You do not have to answer the questions, just share why they are causing you to wrestle. Though some of these questions might feel like there is only one right answer, they are meant to provoke consideration not prescribe a behavior. Please use these questions to explore how God may be working in your heart.

1. Am I viewing myself as a manager or trustee of what God's given me, or seeing myself as owner and controller of my own stuff? Are there things that God would have me manage differently if I acknowledged them as really being His?
2. Am I striving to use my income, influence, and privileges as God directs? Or am I assuming I know what He's asking me for (10% giving) and can use the rest as I choose?
3. As I continue to realize that Jesus gave everything by His death on the cross to purchase me, is there a new level of sacrifice I want to give and surrender to Him?
4. At what points in my journey with God have I realized His generous mercy on my brokenness and sin? Do I hold others to a higher standard than God holds me? Can I give radically to others even though they have brokenness and sin in their life?
5. Does the thought of sacrificial generosity make me anxious because I feel I don't have enough to make ends meet? Do I live trusting God to provide all that I need in the same way He provided His son for me to be redeemed? Or have I compartmentalized my trust for my salvation, putting my daily needs in a different category?
6. Is Christ's undying love my true treasure, or do I actually treasure other things more? Is my money an indicator of my true treasure? Is it my reputation, comfort for my family, or recognition? Or do I live my life knowing that His love and grace is all I need?
7. Does the thought of sacrificial generosity make me anxious because I might have to carefully look at my spending and give some things up? Are there things I've decided are non-negotiable? The place I live? The car I drive? Do I live believing that my ultimate treasure is in heaven and not in the comforts I desire on earth?

8. How much money do I need? Will my answer be “more?” Or can I set a finish line for myself, and give away everything beyond that?
9. What does it mean to give responsibly and wisely? How can I honor getting out of debt while giving generously? How can I honor saving for the future or estate planning while giving generously? Since Jesus praised the poor widow for giving away everything, is it possible that He is asking me to worry less about saving for the future and to give more now?
10. Am I trustworthy to make financial decisions entirely on my own, or am I potentially biased by greed, comfort, or culture in such a way that it would benefit me to share my financial and giving goals with some other mature Christians in my community? Who might some of those people be?
11. If the Bible commands us to bear one another’s burdens in Christian community, are there opportunities within my community that God might be calling me to bear? Do I assume that this isn’t my role because of my culture, or am I looking for such opportunities?
12. Has having more money caused me to feel more in control of my life and circumstances, and has that control become an idol for me? Is Christ inviting me into a new level of surrender where I trust Him with control of my life and future instead of trusting my money for that control? How can I step into this practically?
13. If an outsider were to look at how I use my time, my energy, and my resources, what would they learn about my priorities? Would that outsider see my time, energy, and resources being put primarily toward a hope and vision of renewal for our city and world?
14. Do I live as if I’m focusing on heaven, where I plan to live forever, or on earth, where I’ll live one-billionth of my existence? In light of eternity, am I happy about where I’m placing my focus?
15. If it is nearness of God that I ultimately seek, what if I dared to pray, “Bring anything into my life – take anything away from my life as long as I get to be closer to You?” What scares me about that prayer? What excites me about that prayer?
16. Has God raised me up, with the financial assets and opportunities He has entrusted to me, for just such a time as this? (Esther 4:14) Has He called me to join a great team of His children in freeing up money and possessions to reach out to the needy and fulfill the Great Commission?
17. What am I holding onto that’s robbing me of present joy and future reward? What am I keeping that’s preventing me from having to depend on God? What am I clinging to that makes me feel like I don’t have to depend on Him to provide, like I used to before I had so much? What does He want me to release that could restore me to a walk of faith?

18. In light of 2 Corinthians 8:14 and 9:11, does God want me to assume that each financial blessing He entrusts to me is not intended to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving?
19. Am I treating God as owner and CEO/CFO of “my” assets, or am I treating Him merely as my financial consultant, whom I pay a fee (10% or greater)?
20. Once they’ve finished college or are working on their own, would inheriting wealth (beyond items of special sentimental and heritage value) help my children’s eternal perspective and walk with God? Or would it have a corrupting influence on their character lifestyle, work ethic, or marriage?
21. Would God ever say to me, when I stand before His judgment seat, “You blew it – you sold those shares and gave them to feed the hungry and evangelize the lost, and then two years later the market peaked?” Or would He say, “Well done, My good and faithful servant?”
22. Is it ever wrong to give to God now rather than wait until later? What’s the eternal downside to giving now? What’s the eternal downside of delaying giving until later? Am I really in danger of giving too much too soon? Or is the only danger giving too little too late? “But if I give away most of my assets now, what will I give from later?” Is the answer “From whatever God chooses to provide?” If Christ commended the poor widow (Mark 12) for giving to God everything she had – considering her faithful, not irresponsible – how much would I have to give away before He would consider me irresponsible?
23. Why do I want to hold on to my wealth? Am I trying to prove something? What, and to whom? Is it pride? Power? Prestige? Selfishness? Insecurity? Fear? Am I a control freak? Or is it just because it’s normal, and I’m going with the flow of my culture? Does God want me to go with that flow? Or to do something different, maybe radically different?
24. Am I living to hear others say of me, “He/she’s a great success” or to have God say to me, “Well done My good and faithful servant?”
25. Instead of asking “Why should I give this away?” does God want me to ask “Why shouldn’t I give this away?” Should I put the burden of proof on keeping rather than on giving? When money comes in, should giving rather than keeping be my default, the rule not the exception? Unless there’s a compelling reason to keep, should I normally give? (Why give? The answer, Biblically, couldn’t be more obvious. Why keep? When we already have so much, that’s what demands an explanation.)
26. Am I hanging onto excess money as a backup plan in case God fails me? Is my fear of health catastrophes and old age creating an inertia in my giving, because I imagine I must provide everything for myself in case something goes wrong? Considering that

the vast majority of people in history and most in the world today have nothing stored up for retirement, am I too preoccupied with putting treasures in retirement funds? Are You calling me to work without a net -or with less of a net - trusting You'll catch me in case of a fall?

27. How can I better communicate with and pray with my spouse so we can walk together down this exhilarating road of giving, leading each other but not leaving each other behind?
28. What am I doing to train my children to be generous givers - and not just donors, but disciples?
29. How are you calling me to steward my influence to share this message with my friends? Who could benefit from these questions?
30. 5 minutes after I die...what will I wish I would have given away while I still had the chance? Help me spend the rest of my life closing the gap between what I'll wish I'd given then and what I'm actually giving now. Empower me to help others do the same. Will You, God, for Your eternal glory?

Which questions stuck out to you? Why?

SESSION 4

Live at Church
Saturday
at 4 p.m.

Watch these videos:
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or scan this code



Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

MATTHEW 5:15

Renee Lockey Video

A Texas physician, discusses what it means to live on a fraction of her salary while making a concerted effort to give the majority of it away.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. What is your reaction to what Renee heard God say to her? “I want you to work like a doctor and live like a nurse.”
2. If you put yourself in Renee’s shoes and think about “living below your means” in order to be more generous, what goes through your mind?
3. What do you think contributed to Renee’s greater sense of Freedom?

Bishop Hannington Video

Shot on location in Bundibugyo, Uganda, this is a look into the story of Hannington Bahemuka, a man who believed generosity was the key to help rebuild his war-torn town.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. What kind of emotions do you feel when you see people with so little being generous? Can you imagine giving your only chicken (whatever that might be in your life) for building God’s Kingdom?
2. Does the fear of having too little hold you back from giving away more?

Greg & Alison Baumer Video

As a young family just getting started, Greg and Alison Baumer made a decision to live in a way that to some may seem foolish. They want to be generous now and order their lives so they can actively be involved in funding Kingdom projects today. Influenced by a community of friends who have decided to live a transparent and generous life shaped by friendship, community and shared experiences, Greg and Allison are on a mission and living a great adventure.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Greg mentions he and Alison are more inclined to spend, whereas his friend John is more inclined to save. Who do you most identify with and why?
 2. Greg mentions that his car is a daily reminder that his value is not in stuff, or how he looks in the eyes of others. Is there anything in your life that creates a similar reminder... or should there be?
 3. How do you respond to their commitment to financial transparency and creating a "Board of Directors for Life" with others? Does that sound scary or exciting?
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I Like Car Video

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Share an emotion you felt while watching this video.
 2. What did you think of Kathryn's decision to give away everything she had been saving up for a car, to a widow who was in need? What is one word that describes that for you?
 3. Did you notice that even though it was friends who provided Kathryn what she was needing (the car), she received it as a gift from God noting "God had a car for me!". How might this correlate to Matthew 5:15 and 2 Corinthians 9:11-13?
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SESSION 5

Live at Church
Saturday
at 5:15 p.m.

Watch these videos:
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You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11-13

Daily Devotions

Hearing someone's story and how they applied God's Word can provide fresh perspective and help us gain clarity, understanding or encouragement. Join us each day on our app, website, Facebook or YouTube page to hear what a staff member has learned about the verses we look at each week in this small group study.

You can locate the video "Daily Devos" in these ways:

Website: www.mynw.cc

NCC App on the Church Tab

YouTube page: youtube.com/ncclive

Day 1

READ ACTS 20:35

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

REFLECT

How have you experienced or expressed this truth in your life?

Day 2

READ MATTHEW 6:24

No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

REFLECT

What other "master" is competing for your attention and devotion?

Day 3

READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

REFLECT

How might you be putting your hope in wealth? How is it affecting your trust in God?

Treasure



Day 4

READ EPHESIANS 2:8-9

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

REFLECT

How has God’s generosity and grace toward you impacted your life?

Day 5

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

REFLECT

Would you describe yourself as a cheerful giver? Why or why not?

Day 6

Reflect on the verses from this past week, and use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.



