



When Giving Doesn't Make Sense | Shawn Johnson | 12.05.21
Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

Describe the time in your life when Christmas was the most magical for you? How old were you?

SHARE

Welcome back to Group! This week, Shawn continued our series of *Kingdom Builders* by challenging us to Jesus' invitation to living generous lives. He shared with us three things he has learned about generosity: Giving is a God thing, giving can be difficult and obedience brings peace. As we approach the end of the year and anticipate 2022, it is a great time to remind ourselves of this calling on our lives as followers of Christ. As Shawn reminded us that being generous is one of the greatest things we can do for our spiritual journey! It is close to the heart of Jesus as well as one of our core values here at Red Rocks Church.

Before we jump in, check in with each other by asking one of these questions:

Where did you see God in this week?

What is one way you were able to share in the work God is doing around you?

GROW

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

As we just read, Paul is speaking to a people who have very little to share while reminding them that God gives in abundance. There is so much joy that we all experience when we give generously out of delight and not out of duty; giving out of freedom that we have in Christ and not from fear. We need not to give out fear, God says that our lack of generosity will reap sparingly. In fact, God says that He loves a cheerful giver (9:7), one who gives out of delight. It is important to consider when God says there are certain characteristics that He loves. God loves when we give cheerfully. Being generous not because we have to out of duty but because we desire to out of delight, being generous because it is at the very heart of God.

What thoughts do you have when hearing about the difference between giving out of delight and giving out of duty?

Paul says that we have the wrong perspective of who God is if we sow sparingly and lack generosity. When we give out of duty, this is sowing sparingly. We must remember the heart of who God is that He loves so deeply to the point He gave us everything and it was out of His great joy and delight. When we begin to fully understand God's grace and His generosity towards us, we will then have His perspective on giving of ourselves for others.

When being reminded of God's grace and generosity towards us, how does this shift your perspective when thinking about living a generous life?

M O V E

Read Mark 12:41-44

This week, Shawn reminded us that giving isn't about our circumstance, it is about our faith. In the story we just read, when Jesus spoke of the poor widow who gave out of her poverty, he gave us an invitation to sacrifice. Being a disciple of Jesus means laying down all we have for the Kingdom of God. Giving from your surplus is not sacrifice, giving should cost us something.

Which of the two (poor widow or those who gave out of surplus) do you think is most descriptive of the average Christian in America generally today? Discuss within your group.

Jesus wasn't sharing this story to make us feel sorry for the widow or even to make us feel shame, He is sharing this story to remind us that being generous costs us all something, and it requires much faith and belief that God is who he says he is.

Generosity is the way of Jesus. It looks different in every moment. It may be giving of your finances to help a friend or a family in need. It could be opening your home to share a meal and fill the hearts with joy of community or even stopping long enough in the rhythm of your day to be that listening ear. Whatever it is, generosity costs us all something yet we know as followers of Christ that God delights in our generous giving because it is at the very heart of His Father.

When we think of this poor widow who gave everything she had, how does this story connect you to the way of generously giving? Share with your group.

We know that being generous can be difficult, especially if it is asking of us more than we want to give of ourselves. Tell of a time when you have experienced generosity from another? Did this experience change your perspective on generosity? If yes, how so?

This Week's Challenge

What is one way you will press into Jesus this week?

Ask God to give you an opportunity to be extremely generous this week.

P R A Y

We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time-sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate groups (or calls if you are an online group) to share more freely.

T O G O

*Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.
Ephesians 3:20*