

Stewardship November 2020

Connect Group Session



We are asking all Connect Groups to devote one meeting during November to complete this session, and we pray that it will be a fruitful time together.

Breaking the Taboo

"I think one big problem people have with generosity is that it's a great unmentionable. We don't tend to talk about money, and we don't tend to talk about giving. I'd love us to break that taboo, because the Bible is not at all embarrassed to talk about these things and nor should we be."

Vaughan Roberts, Rector of St. Ebbes, Oxford

Starter: Share a time when you were bowled over by someone's generosity to you.

*"But as you excel
in everything –
in faith, in speech,
in knowledge,
in all earnestness,
and in our love for you –
see that you excel in
this act of grace also."*

2 Corinthians 8:7

What does the Bible say about Money?

Lots! Perhaps you can think of some well-known verses?



Now consider these:

Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-13, Matthew 7:7-11, James 1:17



1. Where does 'our' money really come from, and to whom does it ultimately belong?
2. How does seeing that 'God gives to us' shape the way we view the gifts we have and our own giving to God and others?

A thought to discuss: Imagine you're sitting around in a circle and you pass your wallet/purse to the person next to you. Now would you now give away more money, knowing that it wasn't 'yours'?

What does the Bible say about Generosity?

Watch this short video (6 min) which gives a real life story of one man's generosity and the impact it had on the mission of this Manchester church: www.vimeo.com/447012658



Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-9, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7



1. How can giving be both costly and cheerful? Have you ever given something sacrificially and had a real feeling of joy in the act? Share as appropriate.
2. What does "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" teach us about being generous?
3. What does God promise to those who give ("sow") generously?

A thought to discuss

If we're giving from a Christian heart, our giving should be both costly (cause sacrifices) and also make us cheerful (genuinely make us thrilled). If it doesn't tick both boxes, are we doing it right?

A thought about Tithing

How much should I give? At All Saints, the only people who know the sums involved are the person giving and a couple of people in the finance team. This makes it harder to talk about amounts. Above all we want to teach and encourage sacrificial giving from a cheerful spirit of generosity with whatever have - with the framework of also setting out the 'needs' of the church for the year ahead.

Though it's not a requirement, many Christians would follow a principle called 'tithing'. This principle comes from God's Law in the Old Testament, commanding his people to give the first ten percent of their income to God's work.



For some background, look up **Leviticus 27:30-34, Proverbs 3:9-10, 2 Chronicles 31:4-5**



1. What's your reaction to the command for God's people to tithe?
2. How do we balance the commands to tithe with the 'decision of our hearts' (2 Corinthians 9:7)?

Time to Pray

This year we're seeking to raise around £575k to support the mission and ministry of All Saints and the projects we support in places and nations beyond Lindfield. This amounts to an 8% increase from the previous year. We recognise that this comes at a time of global, national and personal uncertainty.

So please join us in prayer:

- being ever thankful for all that God entrusts us with: time, talents - and money
- For the gift of generosity to grow in us, our Connect Group and the whole church family
- Give thanks for our finance team who manage the money so well
- For cheerfulness, not compulsion, in our giving
- That as we sow, we might also reap a gospel harvest in Lindfield and beyond

A Final Thought

"Someone once said to me, 'You're only really giving when it costs you something.' And that can be quite a scary thing to do. And so I often encourage people, 'Just do it.' It can be a scary thing before you do. You're nervous about it. 'Will I be left short if I give this money away?'

But once you've done it, then you get a taste and you realise that God is faithful. Assuming we haven't been rash or thoughtless, God provides for our needs, and equips us to keep on being generous. More and more what I'm praying for is that people will discover the joy of giving - but that only happens once we start doing it."

Vaughan Roberts, Rector of St. Ebbes, Oxford

