

Series - Going Deeper – Living Generously

Date/s - 17 March 2019

Scripture - 2 Corinthians 8:5-15, 9:7-13

Speaker - Pastor Ben KC Lee

### Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[www.thesource4ym.com/games/](http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/)

[www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html) < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

### Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “O Praise The Name”, “Here As In Heaven”, “Goodness Of God” or “You Are Good”.

### Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Reflect on the different motivations behind our giving; and
2. Be encouraged to grow in our nature to give to God out of an act of worship.

### Word [45 min]

Pastor Ben preached about living generously as believers, from 2 Corinthians 8:5-15, 9:7-13.

Pastor expounded on five motivations behind giving:

First motivation: Guilt (“Have to” giving)

- Pastor Ben shared that the strength of this approach would be that guilt can be effective in bringing in some money.
- However, its weakness remains that it is unbiblical- It brings no joy and doesn’t help people outgrow materialism. Pastor Ben emphasized that attitudes matter to God. We should not give reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7).

Second motivation: Responsibility (“Ought to” giving)

- Pastor Ben shared that this approach feels better than the guilt motivation, and in the process, we learn responsibility (refer to 2 Cor 8:7, which implies a level of responsibility about giving).
- The drawback of this motive is that giving solely out of responsibility limits the joy and the amount given considerably. Duty can imply an obligation, a lack of choice, and an undesirable sacrifice. Life is so much more fulfilling if we can learn to live with joy and (eternal) purpose!

Third motivation: Needs (“Want to” giving)

- The advantage of this approach is that giving to satisfy needs, feels good personally. You often can immediately see the impact of your gift. This feels great, because the gift has served a purpose, often impacts people’s lives directly, and solves a problem. Pastor Ben also shared that Paul illustrated the importance of letting the church know about financial concerns and giving opportunities (2 Cor 8:13-15).
- However, the truth remains that some people will not approve of or see the need. As such it provides a very subjective baseline.

Fourth motivation: Thanksgiving (“Can’t Help It” giving)

- Pastor Ben shared from 2 Cor 9:13, teaching that giving is a way of thanking and praising God for all that He has done for us. Being generous can affirm the worth of the person or ministry, as it acknowledges that they are worthy of generosity, or over and above giving, which is a great way to say, “thank you.”

- Yet, once more, this motivation is limited by our personal and subjective perception of thankfulness.

Fifth motivation: Worship (“It’s my nature” giving)

- Pastor Ben preached from 2 Cor 8:5. Even under the pressure and affliction of persecution and poverty, the Macedonian Christians “gave themselves first to the Lord.” Their financial decisions flowed out of their relationship with the Father, as they responded generously to the needs of others, abounding in joy and demonstrating the mercies received from God. They even begged to have the privilege of sharing financially in Paul’s ministry! Likewise, when it is our nature to give to God, giving becomes:
  - o An act of worship
  - o A confession of the gospel (2 Cor 9:13)
  - o An act of trust (1 Tim 6:17-19)
  - o An offering to God (Philippians 4:18)

There are only strengths to this motivation.

Pastor Ben concluded his sermon with an exhortation to increase our respective level of giving. As we spend time in God’s presence, He can refine us and burn out impurities, such as selfishness. As we make God our focus, we adopt His desires and priorities as our own.

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Why did our Lord make wealth the subject of so many of his parables and sermons? Why do you think being generous is important to our Lord?** [10 min]
  
- 2. Of the five motivations taught by Pastor Ben, which motive guides you most in your giving?** [10 min]
  
- 3. Read 2 Corinthians 8: 3 - 5. To what extent have you caught the generosity of spirit, to give out of worship to God? What are some struggles preventing you from giving even more generously?** [10 min]
  
- 4. How has this study and reflection changed your thoughts on stewardship? What steps do you need to take to “excel in the grace of giving”? (2 Corinthians 8:7)** [10 min]

## Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We will give generously towards His Kingdom with heart of faith and love.

## Announcement

### 1. **Joining the Family, Saturday, 30 Mar | 1:30 – 4:30pm | Faith Chapel**

Joining the Family class will help you to understand God's heart for the Church and His call for us to be identified with a local body of believers. This is a pre-requisite for Associate Membership. Sign up at the Information Counter or online at [bit.ly/rlcjoiningthefamily](http://bit.ly/rlcjoiningthefamily) by Sun, 24 Mar.

#### **Church Vision:**

A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations.

#### **Mission:**

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.