

Greed & Generosity

The Back Story

Genesis 12

The Main Story

Genesis 13:1-18

The Truth About Greed & Generosity

- (1) Greed is a **deadly spiritual poison**
2 Peter 2:6-9/ Ephesians 5:5-7

- (2) Lot's problem was not **money** – it was the love of **money**
1 Timothy 6:9-10/ Proverbs 23:4-5/ Proverbs 19:22

- (3) Greed flows out of our desire to be **respected** & **happy**

- (4) Ironically, greedy people are **despised** and **never satisfied**
Proverbs 15:27 & 28:25/ Ecclesiastes 5:10 & Proverbs 10:22

- (5) The path to respect, satisfaction, and success starts with **generosity**
Proverbs 11:24-25/ Matthew 20:25-28/ Philippians 2:3-5/ 1 Timothy 6:10-11

Growth Group Homework

For the week of December 2, 2012

Because this is the last meeting of the fall quarter, the homework is shorter than normal. As usual, your final meeting will include a look back on how God has worked this past quarter, along with completing Feedback Forms. Our winter Growth Group quarter will begin the week of January 13, 2013. Have a great few weeks off celebrating the birth of our Lord! Merry Christmas!

QUICK REVIEW: Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. The Christmas season is here and what comes to our minds, what we like about it and what we hope to experience can result in a variety of interesting answers. To find out how the people in your Growth Group are the same and different, answer the following questions:

- * First Christmas song that comes to mind:
- * First Christmas character that comes to mind besides Santa (Baby Jesus is not an answer – He's God, not a character):
- * Favorite thing to do on Christmas Eve:
- * Favorite thing to do on Christmas Day:

2. As you look back on this quarter and our Genesis study, what are one or two things about your Growth Group experience that you have appreciated most? (It can be time spent together, how your group has encouraged you to continue to live your life for Christ, a service project, spiritual breakthrough, growth challenge or anything else.)

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Read the following verses and jot down what they say about a healthy perspective on our finances and generosity.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." [18] But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. [NIV]

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power

and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.
Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.
[12] Wealth and honor come from you;
you are the ruler of all things.
In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all. [NIV]

Proverbs 23:4-5

Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
have the wisdom to show restraint.
[5] Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone,
for they will surely sprout wings
and fly off to the sky like an eagle. [NIV]

Luke 12:15

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." [NIV]

1 John 3:17-18

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? [18] Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. [NIV]

2. One of the keys to building generosity into our life is learning to be content with what we have. As most of us know, this kind of contentment can be a challenge. What insight and hope does Paul give us in moving toward this kind of contentment?

2 Corinthians 6:10

sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything. [NIV]

Philippians 4:11-13

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. [12] I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. [13] I can do everything through him who gives me strength. [NIV]

What would be your greatest challenges in being content with what you have?

How can the principles in Matthew 6:25-27,33-34 help us grow in our ability to be content with either much or little?

Matthew 6:25-27

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? [26] Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? [27] Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? [NIV]

Matthew 6:33-34

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. [34] Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. [NIV]

THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

As followers of Christ, we are able to celebrate the Christmas season because of the amazing gift God has given us – the gift of his son Jesus, born that we might have life through his death and resurrection! Could there be any greater gift of generosity? Your time together this week will conclude by taking Communion and remembering this great gift God has given us through his son Jesus.

To prepare for Communion read Luke 2:1-7 & 22:19-20. What are you thankful that Jesus has done for you?

Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. [2] (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) [3] And everyone went to his own town to register.

[4] So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. [5] He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. [6] While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, [7] and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. [NIV]

Luke 22:19-20

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

[20] In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. [NIV]