Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

(March 27th-April 2nd )

**Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)**

1. Gardening season starts soon. Do you garden? If so, what do you grow? If not, what garden produce do you most enjoy eating?

**Bible Study Questions**

1. Read Matthew 6:19-21
   * What do you consider to be the greatest treasures in your life?
   * Why does say that where your treasures are, your heart will be also?
   * Why does treasuring God make such a difference when it comes to generosity?
2. Pastor Michael talked about the importance of making a plan for generosity. Are there currently any habits in your life that help you in this area?
   * If not, then what kind of habits would be help you in this area?
   * Are there any bad habits that prevent you from a generous lifestyle?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7. How do we shift a giving mindset from being reluctant to cheerful? (Reading verses 8-11 might help)
4. One suggestion is to change the question from “how much do we need to give (to make God happy)” to “how much do we need to keep?” How does asking that 2nd question shift the way that we approach generous living?
5. What is the greatest obstacle that you have to living this out? How can you properly navigate that obstacle?

**March 27th**

**How to be Generous: How to Make it Happen**

One of the most incredible things about the early church was the way that they would generously share all that they had to make sure that no one was in need. Today will be wrapping this series with some practical steps to live a generous life.

1. **Set your focus on the right treasure:** In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus tells us to store our treasures in the right place. Our habit is to focus on earthly treasures with the belief that it will bring fulfilment. But when God is our treasure, it changes us to share in his generosity.
2. **Make a plan for generosity:** Generosity is not our natural language and we must be intentional about this. As a result, God gave the Israelites specific disciplines to help teach them generosity. The first grain that they were to harvest was to be given to God (Leviticus 23:10) as a reminder that their harvest was a gift from God. They were commanded then to leave some of their harvest behind for the poor (Leviticus 19:9). They were also commanded to give a tenth of their income to God’s work (Leviticus 27:30). The purpose behind this all was to develop a habit of generosity.

In 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul tells the Corinthians to “give what they had decided in their heart to give.” The point was that they were to plan to give something and then do it.

1. **Ask the right question: How much do I need to keep?** When it comes to giving, we often trying to figure out an amount that we need to give. What do we need to do to check off the box to make God happy?. A better question to ask is, “how much do I need to keep?”. Determine how much you need to live a comfortable life, and then make the rest available to give if God gives you the opportunity.

**Conclusion**

In the gospels, there is a story of a rich man that approaches Jesus asking about eternal life. Jesus tells him to sell all that he had, give the money to the poor, and then to follow him. This is the only person in the Bible that Jesus gives this command meaning that it doesn’t apply to us all. But he directed it toward this young man because he could see that wealth controlled his heart. In the book of Mark, there is an additional detail in the story. Jesus saw the man and he “loved him.” Jesus loved him too much to allow him to live a life enslaved to wealth. In the same way, Jesus loves us too much to allow us to live a life that misses out on the joy of sharing in his generous heart.