



Group Leader Guide Instructions

1. Start Here—The Overview is a bottom-line recap of the message. It serves as a transition from your previous group activity, such as worship or prayer, into the group discussion.

2. Connection
This is designed to get people talking. If you already have good conversation going, you may skip this and get right to the discussion.

3. Quick Recap
This is not the discussion time, but a foundation for the discussion time. In some cases, a group member may not have heard the message. This will allow them to have some context for the discussion. It also gives others a time to refresh and remind themselves of the major points of the message. Read through this with your group, but don't spend too much time here.



It's All About the Heart

Robert Morris

OVERVIEW

Giving is all about the heart. Joy-filled giving is what God desires from us. Jesus said, “Give and it will be given back to you.” This principle of giving applies to all areas of our life. Genuine gratitude is powerful, and a heart of gratitude is vital for creating a lifestyle of generosity.

CONNECTION

Speed Friending: Give everyone 30 seconds to describe themselves.

QUICK RECAP

Key Scriptures: Luke 6:30–38; Deuteronomy 15:7–10, 14–15

- ***Deal with a selfish heart.***
The Lord is concerned with our hearts. God does not bless giving, rather, He blesses giving from a right heart attitude. It is true that when we give, we receive; however, that should not be our motivation for giving. We must deal with any selfishness in our hearts.
- ***Deal with a grieving heart.***
We shouldn't give and then grieve over that decision. Selfishness attacks us before we give, and grief attacks us after we give. If we realize that we are simply stewards, and everything belongs to the Lord anyway, we will have a correct perspective.
- ***Develop a generous heart.***
God said He wants us to not just give but to be generous. The first time we are born in the natural, we are born selfish. When we are born again, we are born generous. God wants us to be generous like He is generous.
- ***Develop a grateful heart.***
If we allow God to remind us every now and then that we were once slaves (Deuteronomy 15:15) and that everything we have is by His grace, it will help us to be grateful. All we have is the Lord's, and we can be more generous when we are grateful.

4. Group Discussion

This is where you begin to facilitate conversation. Remember, you are first and foremost a facilitator, not a teacher. Let the question guide the conversation and responses. It may take a few seconds for people to hear the question and think of a response before saying anything—that's ok, it's normal.

These questions are designed to be done in order, though you may skip a question or two for time.

GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What does having a heart of gratitude mean to you?
2. What have you been taught in the past about giving? Did these teachings have a positive or negative affect on you? Explain.
3. Why do you think we sometimes struggle with selfishness before we give and grief after we give? Can you think of a time you struggled with either selfishness or grief when giving? What are some practical ways we can work through those initial heart struggles and choose generosity with a grateful heart?
4. Why does God want us to give from a heart of gratitude? What is an example of giving from a right heart attitude versus a wrong heart attitude? What are the results of both?
5. Giving with a generous heart is not limited to money. What are some of the many ways we can give that are not monetary? What are some ways you can participate in the Bless A Life campaign?
6. We can give of our treasure, time, and talents. How does the way we spend our time, give of our treasure, and use our talents show where our heart is? In which of these areas are you the most generous?

5. Personal Application

God has called us all to be fruitful, so this section is designed to help us consider ways to take what we learned and apply it to our lives for our benefit and the benefit of others. As a leader, use your own personal testimonies to encourage others to do the same.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week, take time to really think about and honestly reflect upon having a heart of gratitude in these three areas of your life: treasure, time, and talent. As you think seriously about these things, journal your responses to these questions:

- **Treasure**

When you have extra money, where does it usually go? If you were to look at all the places your money goes, what would it say about where your heart is?

- **Time**

Where do you spend the most time? Are there areas of your life where you spend too much time? Are there important things in your

life where you don't give enough time (time with God, time with family, time investing in relationships)? If you were to look at where the time in your week goes, what would it say about your priorities?

- **Talent**

Write in your journal the gifts and talents God has given you that you are grateful for. Now, how often are you using the gifts and talents God has given you? Are you using them to build God's kingdom, are you using them for selfish reasons, or are you not using them at all?

6. Closing Prayer

This is just a sample of how you can close your group in prayer. Feel free to use your own version of a closing prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us to cultivate a heart attitude of gratitude. Thank You for all that You have done in our lives. Help us to be more like You and to give from a lifestyle of gratitude. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Tip Of The Week

Create A Safe Environment

Creating a safe environment is the key to building a relational culture in your group. Help members better relate with each other by connecting people with common interests, promoting sharing, and fostering an atmosphere of trust. The result will be a group that goes beyond the surface level.

Bless A Life

Share Stories

Each week, pick a person or couple to share a story about how giving and/or generosity has directly impacted them. The first week, you as the leader can share a giving story or experience.

Group Leaders CARE by:

- Greeting people as they walk through the door.
- Showing genuine interest in each individual person.
- Ensuring the relational care of your group members by being actively involved in their lives.
- Cultivating a safe environment in your group where others can feel the freedom to be authentic.
- Expressing genuine interest in each group member by connecting with them right where they are.
- Modeling to others in your group what it looks like to care for others and helping them feel connected and like they belong.