



GENEROUS GIVING

By Jeremy Stephens

As microchurch leaders we need to make disciples who grow in the grace of sacrificial generosity. But those conversations can sometimes be a little awkward or we can be unsure how to lead those times. This resource is a guide to help us have critical conversations about giving money.

Our spiritual formation towards Jesus and away from greed, materialism and selfishness depends on our grace-filled, Jesus-centered generosity. But we are not mature and we all need to grow in giving. We all need to move away from being captive to our finances and towards the freedom Jesus has given us through sacrificial giving. Our microchurches need conversations about giving finances that lead us to concrete applications.

This guide can help the conversation but it's critical that the culture of the conversation is saturated with the leading voice of Jesus. We all need to be free to give our money according to how Jesus is leading us. Without compulsion but with conviction from the Spirit, we should give anywhere Jesus leads us to give. We must continue to challenge each other while also maintaining grace and freedom for each individual to give how Jesus leads them.

If the conversation was a math formula it might look like:

$$\boxed{\text{Generous Conversation}} = \text{Grace + Love + Conviction + Repentance + Community + Challenge + Freedom}$$

Enjoy this guide, lead the conversation in a way that fits your people and follow our messiah who gave his life away.

INTRO: GENEROUS STORIES

Where have you been blessed by someone's generosity? How did it feel?

Where have you blessed someone else with generosity? How did it feel?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GIVING: A BIBLICAL MINDSET

Circle the words in each verse that illuminate a biblical mindset about giving.

“Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.” — Proverbs 19:17, NIV

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. — 2 Corinthians 9:7, ESV

But since you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you — see that you also excel in this grace of giving. — 2 Corinthians 8:7, NIV

The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously. — Psalm 37:21, NIV

John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” — Luke 3:11, NIV

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 ancestors, as it is today. — Deuteronomy 8:18, NIV

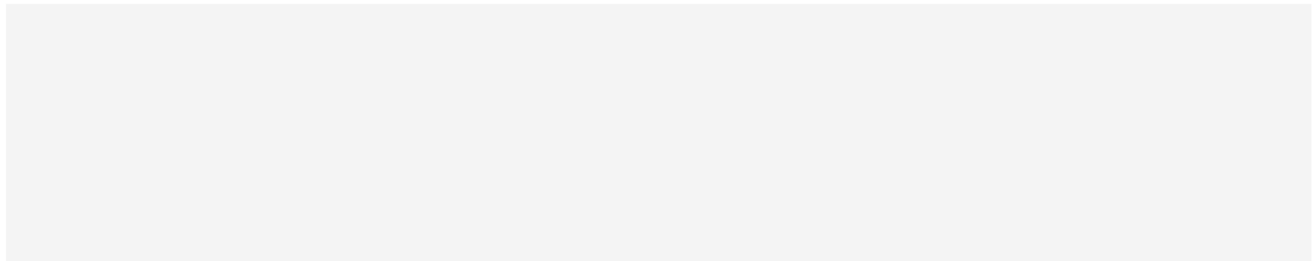
Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops. — Proverbs 3:9, NIV

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. — Hebrews 13:16, NIV

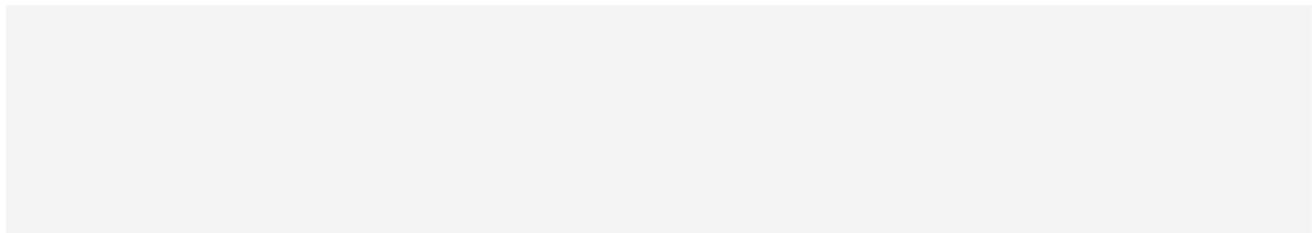
“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” — Matthew 6:19–21, NIV

“Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.” — Deuteronomy 16:17, ESV

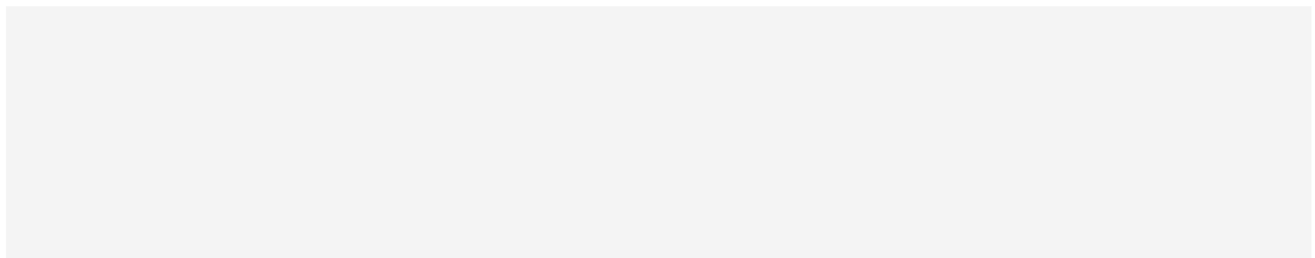
What keywords from the verses should shape our thinking about money?



What themes stand out to you from what the Bible teaches about generosity?



How do these verses and themes challenge the standard American concept of money, wealth and giving?



A GENEROUS LIFE: BENEFITS & THREATS TO GENEROSITY

What benefits do we reap in our spiritual formation when we are disciplined in sacrificial giving?

What cultural factors keep us from giving in disciplined sacrificial ways?

Order these barriers to generosity (1-10) according to what keeps you from giving.

<input type="checkbox"/>	I have debt	<input type="checkbox"/>	I work hard, other need to also
<input type="checkbox"/>	I fear not having enough	<input type="checkbox"/>	I need retirement savings
<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't have enough, I need more money	<input type="checkbox"/>	I question their use of my money
<input type="checkbox"/>	I buy too much stuff	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have hobbies
<input type="checkbox"/>	I earned this	<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't budget so I don't know what I can give

What holds you back from being generous and growing in the grace of giving?

A GENEROUS LIFE: FROM A CONVERSATION TO CONCRETE APPLICATION

Time to be honest with no condemnation, if someone looked at your budget and lifestyle would they describe you as generous?

Without guilt, what should you be giving monthly, annually so your life is shaped by generosity? What is a financial goal you can make to continue to grow in generosity?

Motivated by Christ's love, where do you need to spend less so you can be sacrificially generous?

While living in the Philippines and helping church plants in the slums of Metro Manila I witnessed church leaders encouraging and collecting offerings and giving from some of the poorest members. Initially I questioned this leadership and behavior. How can we ask the poorest of the poor to give money? It felt wrong to me. When I finally got the courage to ask why they were taking the gifts of the poorest members the answer rocked my world. "Why would we withhold from them the grace of giving?" The poorest folks can only give a little. The widow's mite. And when thinking economically it doesn't move the needle, yet there is a grace THEY receive from giving even the smallest amount. Why would I refuse them that grace? From that conversation I've been able to grow, not only in my giving, but in offering others the opportunity for grace through the path of giving.

DESTINATIONS FOR GENEROSITY

We need to give, generously, sacrificially but with freedom for the amounts and destination according to how we feel Jesus is leading us. We are the stewards, he is the king. We must listen to Jesus.

DECIDE HOW WE GIVE AS A MICROCHURCH

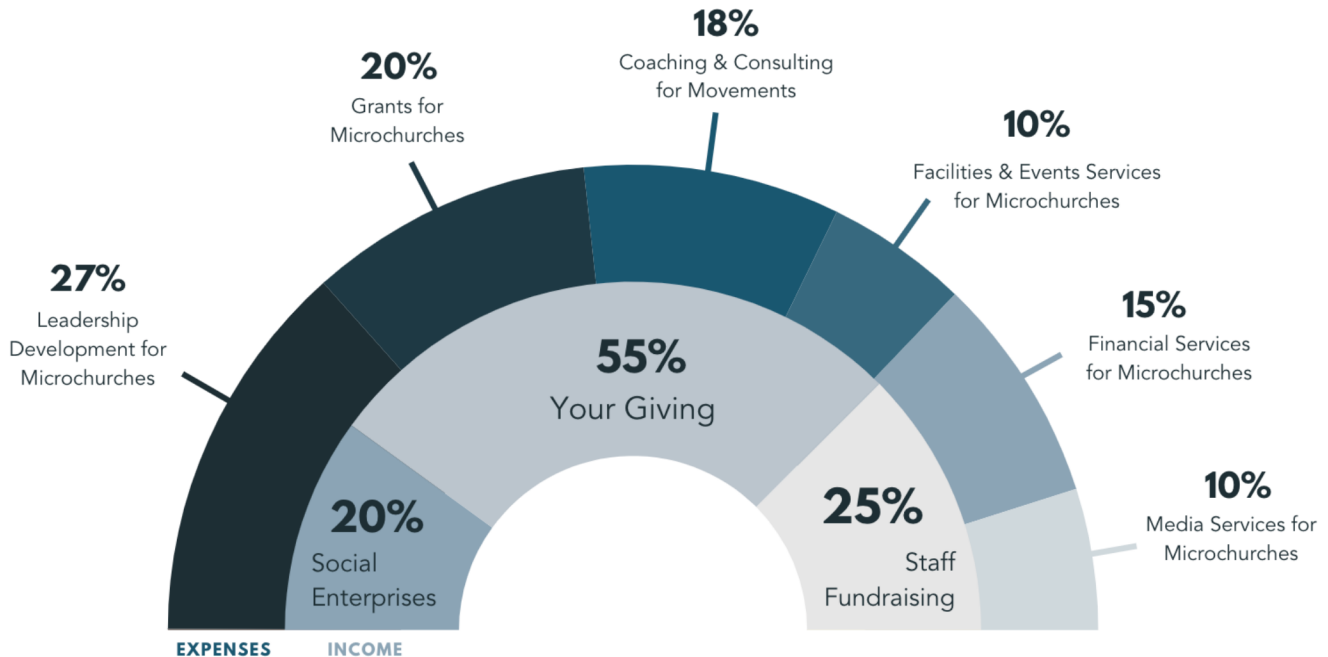
- We agree where to give as a unified microchurch (We agree to transfer money to specific destinations together.)
- We commit as individuals to give wherever Jesus leads each individual (We agree to commit to giving generously but the destinations are up to each individual.)
- A mixture of both.

POSSIBLE DESTINATIONS

Let's take a minute to advocate for a few destinations for our giving. We ultimately are all free in Jesus so just because we advocate for a few destinations does not mean these are the only possible destinations for our giving. Because of Jesus we are free with the freedom he gives us to give where he leads us.

1. Underground Infrastructure (accompanying PDF)
2. Specific Microchurch(es)
3. Other _____

UNDERGROUND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS \$550,000 PER YEAR



We help microchurches be the church Jesus is calling them to be. Our modest budget of **\$550K** funds cornerstone services (facilities, finance, media and leadership development) which serve microchurches in the Tampa region and heroic missional people all over the globe.

We have multiple revenue streams to create a stable and robust funding model. 45% of the budget comes from individual staff fundraising and social enterprises run by each department. The remaining 55% comes from radically generous people like you!

Thanks for praying and discerning if and how Jesus is inviting you to join us in saturating the cities of the world with active missional communities.

See how our budget infrastructure equipped us to serve microchurches in 2023 on the next page.

Here's some of what we saw happen with \$550K last year.

140+ MICROCHURCHES

throughout 5 mini-networks, or what we call Area Collectives, in Hillsborough, Pinellas, USF area, Polk, and Pasco County

with an average of

62 PEOPLE IMPACTED

per microchurch (that's 8,000+ people!)

In 2023 alone, our departments served microchurches in a variety of ways, including

\$42K GIVEN IN GRANTS,

200 EVENTS & GATHERINGS

hosted at our HUB including worship nights, training and classes, pastoral gatherings, celebrations of life, banquets, and more.

520

LEADERS SERVED

both nationally and internationally, by stewarding the stories and ideas of our community through coaching, consulting, and online learning environments.

80+ MEDIA PROJECTS

for microchurches, ministries, start-ups, and other grassroots organizations needing assistance with websites, logos, print materials, and more.

400 LOCAL MISSIONARIES SERVED

To watch our overview of this at our last Partner's Brunch, and to see ways you can give, please visit www.tampaunderground.com/donate.