



How to Have Conversations about Generosity

Sacrificial Generosity

Paul wrote the following to Timothy, a young leader in a new church, in 1 Timothy 6:17-19: Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life. (NLT)

To experience the true, abundant life that Jesus talked about in John 10:10, we must learn to be generous with our time, talents, and treasure. Paul affirms this by encouraging being rich in good works and being generous. God owns everything, but he has asked us to be good stewards of the resources he has given to us. This is called **stewardship**.

But talking about how we spend our time and our money in our Life Group can be tricky. Some might even suggest that this is much too personal of a topic to be discussed in a group. Jesus reminds us that where our treasure is, that is where our hearts are (Matthew 6:21). If we can find ways to support each other in how we use our time, talents and treasures, we can grow spiritually together, and find the true abundant life Jesus described. Here are some suggestions.

The overarching principle of talking about generosity in our groups is that no one should tell anyone else what good works they should do or how much they should give. Rather, we should create an environment that makes it possible for people to share their plans or goals in serving or giving, and without judgment, supporting them in their process of growing in generosity. Here are some ways to help people share those plans and goals for generosity in their time, talents, and treasures.

Time

Everyone's calendar is full these days, and we have a tendency overbook ourselves. This often means that people don't have time to do the good things they would like to do. To open this conversation up, you can **ask your group members to share ways that they are currently volunteering around the church, or goals for what they would like to do at church**. They can also share how that volunteer position has encouraged them. Several good things can come from this conversation. Those who have not been able to volunteer can hear some positive stories about how you grow as you serve, and this can be an encouragement to those who would like to get started. You may also find that people choose to start volunteering together, to add to the connection of your group and the encouragement to serve. You might even decide to have your

group serve all together in one particular area. This helps us all to be aware of how we are spending our time, and being good stewards of what God has given us.

Talent

God has blessed each person with certain talents, gifts, and personalities that are unique to them. The Bible refers to gifts given to us by God's Spirit as spiritual gifts. When we use these abilities for the good of God's kingdom, we find great satisfaction. Sometimes people are unaware of their own spiritual gifts, and think they have nothing to give. It can be helpful to take a **Spiritual Gifts Survey**. These surveys ask questions that can help determine a person's gifts. This can help encourage them with ways they may be able to be good stewards of what God has given them. The group could even take the survey together, and then discuss the results in one of your meetings.

CrossCity offers a free Spiritual Gifts Survey that you can find on our website under Next Steps. Scroll to the bottom of this section until you see Spiritual Gifts Survey. You can also access it directly through this link: <https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/spiritual-gifts-survey/?id=902352>.

Treasure

How we use our money is the most difficult part to talk about in a group. This is where it is very important to keep the conversation limited to goals people have set and how they would like to grow in this area. You can visualize giving as a ladder with steps to the ultimate goal of what the Bible calls tithing, which is giving 10% of your income to the local church. The steps on that ladder include giving sporadically, regularly, systematically, or by a percentage. It is not too difficult to share which of those steps you are on, or if you aren't even on the ladder yet. Depending on where each person currently is with their giving, they might want to set a goal to take one step up. Someone who is giving sporadically might want to set a goal to give regularly, no matter how often or how much, but with a regular plan in mind. Someone giving a percentage might set a goal to increase their percentage by 1% or more. Or some might decide to take the huge leap and just start giving 10%. God promises that we cannot out-give him (Malachi 3:10). **Ask your group members to share their goal with the group.** Then you can all pray for each other to be faithful stewards of your treasure. Some may have stories to share about how they have trust God and started giving, and how he has blessed them through that process. This can be very encouraging!

CrossCity offers a free membership to [Ramsey+](#) which has a variety of tools to help you with all your financial questions, including the Financial Peace University class. Call the church office for more information. Your group might even consider taking FPU together!

If your group can explore these questions together, you will experience the true life God has designed for you together!