

Life Group Notes

These notes are to serve you as you lead your group.

*Please feel free to select the passages and **only use the questions which are most relevant to your group** and for the way you want to lead the session. (There are more questions here than you'll need)*

- *Please choose (or adapt) the questions which you believe will **bring about the most honest, faith-building and life changing conversations**, and add others if you want to.*
- *The readings and questions develop from one section to the next. Please **take time to move through the ones you want to use, giving time for discussion and sharing - ideally leading to a response to God's word.***

Life Group Notes

Theme: Saying Yes Saying 'Yes' to Generosity

Last week we looked at the Fear of the Lord, a topic which can be confusing. This week we're looking at Generosity, which is easy to understand, but which we sometimes find difficult to put into practice.

Setting the scene

- 1. Has there been a time when someone's generosity has made a big difference in your life?**

Read **Matthew 25:31-46**

This is a challenging and encouraging section of Jesus' teaching. Here we see that God sees, knows and cares for those who are in need, even when they might feel unseen by him. Those who are hungry, thirsty, naked, sick or in prison might easily feel abandoned, yet God has not abandoned them. He cares, and expects others to care too. More than that, notice the wording used... "I was hungry...I was thirsty..." In this way God himself identifies with those in need. He is not watching only as judge, it is as if he is the one in need himself.

- 2. How does it encourage you to know that God sees and knows you, and your needs, going as far as to identify with you in times of need?**
- 3. Sometimes when reflecting on difficult, or even atrocious situations, we ask "where was God when...?". There are no quick or easy answers to this question, but based on this passage, what do you think Jesus might say in response?**

[Help the group reflect especially on God's self identification with those who suffer. The root of the word 'Compassion' means to 'suffer with'. Far from being distant, Jesus appears to be saying that God suffers with those who are in need, and that we can trust him with all matters of justice and injustice too.]

- 4. What does this passage show us about God's expectation on us to provide for those in need?**

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Paul writes this in the context of receiving an offering from the church.

5. What principles of giving do you notice here?

[There are several!]

6. What are the roles of the (a) the sowers / givers? (b) God

[Help the group to see that even though the people are giving, God is the provider/supplier of all they need. This passage encourages us to trust God for his supply.]

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19

7. What are Paul's commands and promises to those Christians who are rich?

8. What holds us back from being more generous?

9. In what ways are we also tempted to put our trust in our money, instead of in God?

10. What might change if we were increasingly generous in sharing what we have?

Application

It may be that a time of worship, reflection, or response is appropriate for your group, thanking God for all that he has given and for the way he has provided, often through the generosity of others.

It may also be appropriate to take time to reflect on the challenge to generosity presented in these scriptures, and listen to how God would want us to respond in practice.