Bible Study 1.1

FOLLOWING JESUS´EXAMPLE

Generously Loving

The Bible study is not lecture based but designed instead for group discussion. This time is designed to allow the members of your congregation to begin internalizing the teaching from Sunday and begin learning to read and use the Bible in a practical way. The study questions are designed to be read just as they are written, however feel free to express them in your own words if needed.

Encourage everyone to speak. Your discussions will give you, the leader, the opportunity to get to know what your congregation is thinking and learning as they begin to reflect on what generosity means to them personally.

READ

Read the following Bible verses and then discuss the following questions with your midweek group.

Philippians 2:1-11

[1] Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, [2] then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. [3] Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

[5] In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
[6] Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
[7] rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

[8] And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! [9] Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, [10] that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think of someone you know that fits the description of a generous person. What qualities does he or she have?

2. The Generous Church Project is all about becoming effective stewards: learning how to love, live, serve and give generously to advance the Kingdom of God. In this passage, Jesus willingly left heaven and came to earth to show us what generous and selfless love is. What are some other examples of how Jesus generously loved others?

3. The Bible tells us that God loves us and He desires for us to love one another. Describe a time when you experienced the generous love of another person in your life. What are some practical ways we can love generously like Jesus?

4. If you were to flip through the pages of the gospels, what examples would you find of how Jesus generously lived with purpose, doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit?

5. What is your purpose here on earth? What obstacles get in the way of living our lives with purpose? How can we overcome these obstacles?

6. In Philippians 2:5 we read: "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus". How would you describe Jesus' mindset? What was his attitude toward others?

7. Jesus demonstrated His extravagant selflessness in making Himself nothing and taking on the form of a servant. John 13 shows Jesus' demonstration of servant-leadership by stooping down and washing His disciples' feet. What are some things that we can do in our church and community that reflect this same attitude of Jesus?

8. Jesus demonstrated His generosity in obediently giving that which cost the most. He willingly, unselfishly, and lovingly gave up His life. What are some examples of ways we can be generous givers?

9. If we define the Generous Church as a community of effective stewards who know how to love, live, serve and give generously to advance the Kingdom of God, what is our church currently doing to fulfill that mission? What are you personally doing ?

10. To become a Generous Church we must first realize that we don't do this alone. We live in community with one another. What are some practical ways your church can become generous, reaching out to those in need, generously loving, living, serving and giving?