



“During the third week of Advent, our focus is on Joy, the natural response to thankfulness. The joy-filled early church found itself transformed through their devotion to the Lord and this led them to be incredibly thankful and incredibly generous. Biblical Generosity as seen in the early church in the book of Acts can be shocking, unnerving, surprising and, honestly, unsettling. Our tendency when we read these passages is to immediately start doing hermeneutical gymnastics to keep from having to live like these early disciples. What if our efforts to avoid engagement with these verses, actually keeps us from experiencing Joy?”

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY:

Thankfulness Activity- how has God blessed you this week?

MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 4:34a

“There was not a needy person among them...”

SCRIPTURE READING:

Acts 2:43-47

“43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 4:32-37

“32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. 34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold

35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. 36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

Acts 11:27-30

"27 Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). 29 So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers[a] living in Judea. 30 And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul."

Galatians 2:10

"10 Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do."

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

"Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How do you feel when money is talked about in church? Be honest.
2. If tithing isn't a New Testament/New Covenant concept but radical generosity is, what should our giving look like?
3. Is our generosity supposed to only be with our finances? What else can we be generous with?
4. In what area do you tend to be generous most easily?
5. How have you experienced radical generosity from the Lord through someone?
6. If you are finding yourself struggling with being generous, how do we work on being more generous?

CLOSING PRAYER ACTIVITY:

Invite someone to close the group in prayer.