



# DRIVE IT HOME

*God is preparing to capture your heart with a grand vision to address a compelling need. It will take courage to say "yes." What song or thought from the sermons motivates you to live courageously for the things that matter to God?*

**Family Time:** Find someplace in your house to hang up a piece of paper and, with your family throughout the week, make a list of all of the things God has given to you. See how large your list becomes as you notice the abundance of his gifts to you.

## **Discuss as a Family:**

What does a God-sized dream look like?

What is a God-sized dream for our family?

How could we be generous and use the gifts God has given us to accomplish some God-sized dreams?

If your child brought home a bank from Nittany Kids, help them brainstorm ways THEY can fill their banks. Challenge them to be creative to find ways they can help accomplish a God-sized dream!

**Photo Shoot:** Take a photo of your family and post it to Facebook or Instagram, tag Nittany Bible Church, and use the hashtag #MAKEROOM and share your family's God-sized dream!

**Prayer:** Lord, fill me with courage to partner in your mission.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE STEWARD'S ROLE**

A steward manages resources that someone else owns. The steward does not own the resources, just as Nehemiah did not own the palace kitchen, but managed it on behalf of the king of Persia. The king trusted Nehemiah to oversee the preparation of quality food for the king and his court.

Nehemiah demonstrated the reliable heart of a steward as he managed and cared for the king's resources. The decisions he made were based on the king's will and what he wanted done.

The king was certainly concerned with Nehemiah presenting him high quality and good tasting food. But there was more to his job than that. The real challenge of this responsibility was that the cupbearer was the first to taste the food given to the king in order to guarantee that it had not been poisoned to harm the king.

Nehemiah was courageous!

# LIFE GROUP STUDY

## Why It's Genius to be Generous

### Introduction: The amazing John Saville!

#### Our "Secret Pact"

- John had a \_\_\_\_\_!
- I had an \_\_\_\_\_!
- We made a \_\_\_\_\_!

#### Three things happened in my life:

1. Rarely a day went by that I didn't think of John. Every need raised the question - "What would John want me to do?"

2. I strangely became far more meticulous about balancing "his checkbook" than my own.

3. John and I became best friends as he bought extravagant lunches and I told extraordinary stories at our quarterly celebrations.



**BRIGHT IDEA:** To be smart, spend carefully. To be wise, save regularly. To be genius, give extravagantly.

**Four reasons it's genius to be generous:**

1. Generosity \_\_\_\_\_ our lives.

Acts 20:35, Proverbs 11:25

2. Generosity \_\_\_\_\_ us with others.

3. Generosity helps us \_\_\_\_\_ in what matters.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

*MATTHEW 6:19-24*

4. Generosity \_\_\_\_\_ our hearts.

**Question: If generosity is so smart, why isn't everyone doing it?**

Because \_\_\_\_\_ is powerful and deceptive.

Matthew 13:22

Because of the lure of \_\_\_\_\_ worship.

Matthew 6:24

Because it demands \_\_\_\_\_.

Matthew 6:19

Because of temporal myopia.

Matthew 6:23

**BREAKTHROUGH CONCEPT #1**

Generosity is the gateway to intimacy  
with God.

### **Application: Three questions brilliant people ask**

1. Am I using the money entrusted to me in accordance with the \_\_\_\_\_ wishes?
2. Am I carefully keeping account of where all the \_\_\_\_\_ funds are going?
3. Am I becoming “best friends” with the “\_\_\_\_\_” by the privilege and opportunity of managing His resources?

### **Epilogue: The amazing John Saville story continues.... Forever!**

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. When you were growing up, how would you describe your family’s view toward money? Toward generosity?
2. Who is the most generous person you know? Who has blessed you by their generosity?
3. How would you describe where you are today on the journey toward generosity? How big of a priority is it for you and what are some barriers to being more generous?
4. Chip said, “Generosity works.” Brainstorm a list of ways that generosity makes for a richer, better life. How has this principle of “generosity works” played itself out in your life?
5. If we were to look at your life in the past, where have you been tempted to follow the world’s thinking about money? Are you tempted to believe and behave as though money will bring security, significance, purpose, or happiness?



# DRIVE IT HOME

*God's desire is for everyone to know and love Jesus. He has asked you to participate in that mission. Talk about how Jesus' grace could heal the brokenness in our communities as many people come together to help. What is it about God's mission that inspires you? Who is your ONE?*

## **Discuss as a Family:**

What is NBC's God-sized dream? Our dream is to help more people find their way back to God and to make a space where people can discover the grace and goodness of God.

How will this dream (new building and renovation of existing building) help us accomplish God's vision for Nittany Bible?

This dream starts with ONE! Have each person choose someone that they want to start following Jesus. Write "PRAY FOR ONE!" on a piece of paper and draw an outline of a church building on it. Then write the first names of the people you are praying for on the inside of the outline of the church you just drew. Pray together for each of your ONES. Set a time each day when you will pray as a family for your friends to see and discover Jesus.

**Photo Shoot:** Take a photo of your family and post it to Facebook or Instagram, tag Nittany Bible Church, and use the hashtag #MAKEROOM and share your family's God-sized dream!

**Prayer:** Lord, I believe that our communities need to see more of your glory. Use me in your mission. Help me reach \_\_\_\_\_ with your love and truth.

*(your one)*

## **ENGAGING ON A COMMON VISION**

The nature of how God accomplishes his mission has been demonstrated throughout the Bible.

God causes one ordinary person to see a disturbing situation that breaks his or her heart. This heaven-born discontentment grows to a point where that ordinary person can no longer keep it quiet, and they share it with others.

A potential crisis occurs in the moment that the vision is shared. The bearer of the dream risks being rejected as a community of people assesses the dream. God moves through his spirit in that moment to create a swell of affirmation and collaboration so that his community can step forward together, trusting God.

When a group unites around a compelling vision, others will declare, "Look what God has done!"

# LIFE GROUP STUDY

## The Principle with Secret Power

### Introduction: The Little “Green Bug”

#### What I learned...

- You can give but not be \_\_\_\_\_.
- Giving is an \_\_\_\_\_; generosity is a matter of the heart.
  - o I was self-righteous.
  - o I was proud.
  - o I was “works” oriented.
  - o I felt superior.
  - o I was rigorously religious, but relationally challenged.
- Stewardship is not an \_\_\_\_\_ to fulfill, but an \_\_\_\_\_ to seize.



**BRIGHT IDEA:** Stewardship is the path. Generosity is the adventure.

**The genius behind the in-depth relationship I enjoyed with John Saville is ....**

## **BREAKTHROUGH CONCEPT #2**

God owns everything. I am His money manager.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)

“The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,” declares the Lord Almighty. (Haggai 2:8)

Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

You are not your own; you are bought with a price. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

### **Summary: The “Oikonomia” Principle**

All that we are, and all that we have belongs to God and has been temporarily entrusted to us to manage according to His wishes.

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

*1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-2*

**The real issue is not “stuff” but \_\_\_\_\_ . Can God trust you?**

**The Setting:**

Correction of the Pharisees and instruction of His disciples concerning wealth.

**The Story:**

Luke 16:1-11

- Mismanagement occurs and dismissal soon follows.
- Two options are considered and a third is taken.
- A commendation by the owner – a good lesson from a bad example – “he was shrewd.”

The dishonest manager used his present temporal opportunities (stewardship) with a view of receiving future rewards. This made good business sense and according to Jesus, makes good spiritual sense as well.

**The Teaching:**

Faithfulness with material wealth is a prerequisite to being entrusted with spiritual wealth and rewards.

**The Test:**

Two basic financial practices that demonstrate God is our #1 priority.

1. Generous stewards give the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

Proverbs 3:9-10

2. Generous stewards give \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Corinthians 16:2

**Application: Three questions wise stewards regularly ask**

1. Am I using the money entrusted to me in accordance with the Owner's wishes?

2. Am I carefully keeping account of where all the Owner's funds are going?

3. Am I becoming "best friends" with the "Owner" by the privilege and opportunity of managing His resources?

**A Snapshot:**

I \_\_\_\_\_, want to develop a deep, personal relationship with you, dear God. Today, I recognize that all I have and all I am belongs to You. I commit, today, to discover by Your grace, where and how to invest the time, talent, and treasure entrusted to me. Amen!



# DRIVE IT HOME

*It is amazing what teams of diverse people can do when they are working on a God-given task. Which group most inspired you by their participation in the project? What can you do to participate in the vision of what God wants to do here in our city?*

**Family Time:** Have you ever been on a team where everyone worked together? What did each person do to contribute to the team? It's true, so much can be accomplished when everyone works together!

As a family, work together to build the ultimate fort! Allow everyone to contribute something to make the fort possible. Send each family member on a search throughout the house to seek out and come back with items to make the fort really amazing. Think about the needs of others. Someone may bring their favorite blanket. Someone may bring all of their pillows to make it comfortable. Someone may rearrange the living room to create a space and framework for the fort. Someone may bring a snack to share. Work together to build an awesome fort.

## **Discuss as a Family:**

- What do you appreciate about the items that other family members contributed?
- Each of us can help NBC in the ways that God has gifted us. Everyone can give and every gift matters. What can we bring to our church body to make it awesome?

We have a God-sized dream to help people find their way back to God. Our prayer is that this space will allow us to invite more people to see and discover the grace and goodness of God! Nittany Bible Church needs everyone to work together to accomplish that dream.

- How can our family contribute to NBC's God-sized dream?

**Photo Shoot:** Take a fun photo of your family in your fort and post it to Facebook or Instagram, tag Nittany Bible Church, and use the hashtag #MAKEROOM

**Prayer:** Lord, I will give my part, added to the investment of others, to see you do something that is more than we can imagine.

## THE BRUNO STORY

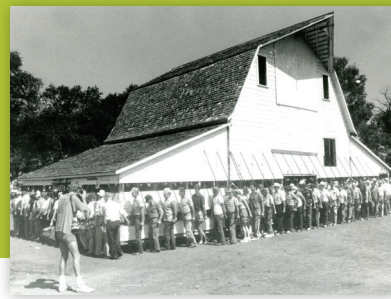
Newspapers recounted the story of what happened just outside of Bruno, Nebraska on July 3, 1988.

*In the 1980s, Herman Ostry of Bruno, Nebraska, struggled with his barn flooding after road construction diverted water his way. So his son, Mike, measured the barn's boards and ran some calculations.*

*Mike Ostry discovered that, theoretically, a group of people could pick up the 16,000-pound barn and take it to higher ground. With 344 people lifting at once, each person would be responsible for carrying only about 58 pounds.*

*So on July 30, 1988, hundreds of people grasped onto a steel frame fitted into the barn and pulled up. Not only did the barn come off the ground, but volunteers moved it more than 100 feet up an incline.*

*"Everyone was kind of in awe because no one knew what to expect," said Chris Dvorak, Herman Ostry's daughter.*



# LIFE GROUP STUDY

## Why God Prospers Generous People

### Fact #1 – God blesses generous people!

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus Himself said: **‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’**” (Acts 20:35 – Jesus)

**Give, and it will be given to you.** A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you”. (Luke 6:38 - Jesus)

A **generous man** will himself **be blessed**, for he shares his food with the poor. (Proverbs 22:9 - Solomon)

He who is **kind to the poor** lends to the LORD, and He will **reward him** for what he has done. (Proverbs 19:17 – Solomon)

When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the alien, the fatherless and the widow, **so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.** (Deuteronomy 24:19 - Moses)

**Honor the LORD** with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be **filled to overflowing**, and your vats will **brim over with new wine.** (Proverbs 3:9-10 - Solomon)

One man **gives freely**, yet **gains even more**; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will **prosper**; he who refreshes others **will himself be refreshed.** (Proverbs 11:24-25 – Solomon)



**BRIGHT IDEA:** Generous living produces emotional \_\_\_\_\_, spiritual \_\_\_\_\_, and material \_\_\_\_\_.

**Fact #2 – God provides clear criteria for becoming a generous person!**

1. Genuine generosity gives the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

Proverbs 3:9-10

2. Genuine generosity is regular and \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Corinthians 16:2

3. Genuine generosity is \_\_\_\_\_ to our income.

1 Corinthians 16:2

4. Genuine generosity is \_\_\_\_\_.

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-4

5. Genuine generosity is \_\_\_\_\_, voluntary, and \_\_\_\_\_.

So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:5-7

**Fact #3 - is Breakthrough Concept #3...**

### BREAKTHROUGH CONCEPT #3

God prospers me not to raise my standard of living,  
but to raise my standard of giving.\*

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever. Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8-11

\* Randy Alcorn in *The Treasure Principle*

**Fact #4 - The key to becoming habitually generous and experience habitual happiness is \_\_\_\_\_!**

• Faith says - Refuse to chase the wind.

Ecclesiastes 2:11

• Faith says - Enjoy God's provision.

1 Timothy 6:19

• Faith says - God rewards those who step out and \_\_\_\_\_ Him.

Hebrews 11:6

**Action:** "The Parable of the Pump"

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Do you feel happy when you have been kind and generous with your time, talent, and treasure?
2. What specific steps would you need to take to fulfill God's criteria and be generous in God's eyes?
3. Discuss Breakthrough Concept #3. Do you agree or disagree with it?
4. Where do faith and generosity intersect? What step of faith is God asking you to take?



# DRIVE IT HOME

*What did you learn about facing challenges from Nehemiah's life? Try to come up with as many synonyms for "endurance" as you can in 60 seconds. What makes you first think of giving up on a project? What inspires you to endure?*

## **Discuss as a Family:**

Nehemiah had to overcome obstacles and challenges as he worked to fulfill his God-sized dream. There are many obstacles and challenges that we can face as a family when trying to be generous with our time and money.

- What does it mean to be generous? Look up the definition of generosity.
- What is easy for you or your family to be generous with?
- What is hard for you or your family to be generous with?
- What are some obstacles we face with showing generosity with our time and money?
- What are ways we are already generous with our time and money?
- As a family, what are some specific ways we can be more generous with our time and money?

**Photo Shoot:** Take a photo of your family and post it to Facebook or Instagram, tag Nittany Bible Church, and use the hashtag #MAKEROOM and share how your family plans to be more generous!

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us endure in your mission even when it is hard.

## **WHEN... NOT IF**

The question isn't if you'll face hardship. It's just a matter of when, what, and how the challenges will present themselves.

Even when you have engaged in a God-honoring mission, you should expect to encounter someone or something that opposes you. Jesus is our example of staying true to the most important mission even when Satan put obstacles and temptations in front of him.

Because he endured, he is able to aid us when we face hardships.

Say a bold, "Yes!" as you partner with God in his mission. Plan for opposition to come and trust Jesus to help you stay on course.

# LIFE GROUP STUDY

## How Does God Measure Generosity?

### Introduction:

A familiar story that is often misunderstood and misapplied.

As He looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. “I tell you the truth,” He said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

*LUKE 21:1-4*

### **BREAKTHROUGH CONCEPT #4**

God does not measure generosity by the size of our gift, but by the size of our sacrifice.

## The Christmas Story: A graduate course in generosity

### **YOUR MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION**

The Father  
John 3:16

### **YOUR LIFE**

Jesus  
Mark 10:45

### **YOUR FUTURE**

Mary  
Luke 1:26-38

### **YOUR REPUTATION**

Joseph  
Matthew 1:18-24

### **YOUR TIME**

The Shepherds  
Luke 2:15-17

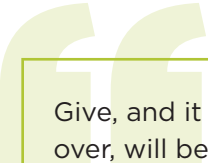
### **YOUR MONEY**

The Magi  
Matthew 2:11

### Three observations:

1. Generosity is not so much a virtuous act, as it is a virtuous \_\_\_\_\_.
2. God does not measure generosity by the size of our gift, but by the size of our \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Increasing levels of generosity bring increasing levels of \_\_\_\_\_.

### Generosity is to love as thunder is to lightning:



Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

LUKE 6:38

## **A special guest with a special story:**

1. Generosity always begins with God; it is the visible expression of His infinite, incomprehensible love for us.

James 1:17

**Question:** Are you living with the constant awareness that you are the object of God's infinite and unconditional love?

**Application:** List 25 specific blessings from God before the end of the week and share them with a friend.

2. Our generosity is the visible expression of our love (response to God's love) for God.

John 14:21

**Question:** Where are you on your generosity journey with God? What "next step" do you sense God's Spirit prompting you to take?

**Application:** Ask God to show you a specific way to stretch your generosity muscle and where and what He directs you to give.

3. Generous living begins with the "training wheels" of money and possessions and graduates to making our "very lives" a gift to God as a perpetual act of worship.

Romans 12:1-2

**Question:** Why is it so critical to remember that God wants the very best for us as we grow in our generosity?

**Application:** Memorize Romans 12:1-2 this week.