

# Group Guide: Give What Makes You Happy

Based on 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

## Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to His truth about generosity, and to free the group from any past wounds or misconceptions about giving.

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## Ice Breaker

Share a time when you experienced more joy in giving a gift than receiving one. What made that experience memorable?

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## Key Scripture

*"Each person should do as he or she has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver." - 2 Corinthians 9:7*

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## Key Takeaways

- God's heart for generosity is simple: Give what makes you happy**
    - Cheerful (hilaros) means happy, glad, joyful
    - God loves a cheerful giver, not a reluctant one
  - Three characteristics of what cheerful giving is NOT:**
    - Not impulsive (it's intentional)
    - Not resentful (it's joyful)
    - Not coerced (it's willing)
  - Cheerful giving is the overflow of a grace-formed trust**
    - It flows from trusting Jesus with what He's entrusted to us
    - You won't experience God's faithfulness until you take the step of faith
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# Discussion Questions

## Understanding the Message

1. How does Jesus' statement "It is more blessed to give than to receive" challenge or confirm your current view of generosity?
2. The sermon mentioned that money is "the chief competitor for our hearts." Why do you think Jesus talked about money so much? What makes it such a powerful competitor?
3. What's the difference between impulsive giving and intentional giving? Why does that distinction matter?

## Personal Reflection

4. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the "cheerfulness" of your giving? What factors influence that rating?
5. Have you ever experienced giving that felt more like obligation than joy? What was missing in that situation?
6. The sermon mentioned three places to give: your local church, things you're grateful for, and things that break your heart. Which of these resonates most with you right now, and why?

## Addressing Past Wounds

7. Mike acknowledged that this topic has been "weaponized" in many people's pasts. Has your experience with church giving been positive or negative? How has that shaped your current approach?
8. What would it look like to "declaw" this topic and take it back for what it was meant to be?

## Practical Application

9. The sermon emphasized giving is "proportionate to what you have right now." How does this relieve pressure compared to a one-size-fits-all approach?
10. In the testimony video, the couple talked about keeping their "hands open" before God. What would it look like for you to have more open hands with your finances?

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## Going Deeper

**Read Proverbs 3:9-10 together:** *"Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest. Then your barns will be completely filled and your vats will overflow with new wine."*

- What does it mean to honor God with "first fruits" rather than "leftovers"?
- How does this principle apply beyond just finances?

**Read 2 Corinthians 9:6:** *"The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously."*

- How have you seen this principle play out in your life or the lives of others?
  - What keeps people from "sowing generously"?
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## This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

**Option 1: The Planning Step** Prayerfully decide on an amount or percentage to give regularly. Write it down and commit to it for the next 6 months.

**Option 2: The Joyful Step** Give something this week (money, time, resources) and pay attention to the emotions you experience. Journal about whether it felt reluctant, obligatory, or joyful.

**Option 3: The Open-Handed Step** Identify one area of your finances where you're holding on tightly out of fear. Pray specifically about surrendering that area to God's care.

**Option 4: The Gratitude Step** Make a list of organizations or causes you're grateful for. Consider giving to one of them this week, no matter how small the amount.

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## Reflection Questions for the Week

- What story am I telling myself about money—scarcity or abundance?
  - Where do I need to trust God more with what He's already entrusted to me?
  - What would change in my life if I truly believed "it is more blessed to give than to receive"?
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## Closing Prayer Points

- Pray for freedom from fear, guilt, or shame around giving
- Pray for wisdom to know what your next step in generosity should be
- Pray for joy to replace reluctance or resentment

- Pray for those facing financial difficulties in the group
  - Thank God for His generosity toward us through Jesus
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## Leader Notes

- **Be sensitive:** This topic carries wounds for many people. Create a safe space for honest sharing.
  - **Avoid pressure:** Don't make anyone share their giving amounts or practices if they're uncomfortable.
  - **Focus on heart:** Keep steering the conversation back to the heart behind giving, not just the mechanics.
  - **Share your journey:** If appropriate, briefly share your own journey with generosity (struggles and victories).
  - **Provide resources:** Have information available about how people can give to your church if questions arise.
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## Additional Resources

- Scan the QR code on the back of church chairs for quarterly financial updates
  - Review the church's annual budget (available upon request)
  - Connect with the prayer team for financial prayer needs
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*Remember: The goal isn't to pressure anyone into giving a specific amount, but to help each person discover the joy of trusting God with what He's entrusted to them.*