

TAKEAWAY:

Generosity isn't primarily about releasing money from our hands; it's about releasing our hearts to God.

INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS:

- What taboo statements, or false depictions of wealth from Christian circles have you heard before? What makes them false?
- If Jesus asked you to release the thing you hold most tightly, what would that be?

UNDERSTANDING:

Have a group member read Mark 10:17-31

- How did this sermon help you better understand this passage of scripture? Is there anything that was mentioned during the sermon that stuck out to you?
- The rich young ruler “ran” to Jesus and “knelt before Him”. What does this say about his eagerness to meet with Jesus and his humility as a rich man to bow before Jesus?
- The rich young ruler walked away grieved. Have you ever felt that kind of grief when confronted with something Jesus was asking you to surrender? What was it?
- Jesus calls the man to follow Him, not simply to donate more. How does framing generosity as discipleship rather than charity change the way you think about it?

APPLICATION:

- Is there something other than money—a relationship, a plan, a sense of security—that you find equally difficult to hold loosely before God?
- This week, spend time in honest prayer using this question as a prompt: "Jesus, is there anything I am holding more tightly than I am holding You?" Write down whatever comes to mind without editing it. You do not need to share the specifics with your group, but be prepared to share what the exercise revealed about your heart.

GO DEEPER:

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material.

You can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting and to deepen your study of our text from this week. Here are two "Going Deeper" discussion prompts that build upon the above provided questions without repeating them:

From Charity to Complete Surrender: Many of us treat generosity like a line item in our monthly budget, checking off the box of charity to feel like good Christians. Jesus challenges this mindset in Mark 10:17-31. He calls us away from simply donating our excess into a life of total discipleship. And he challenges the human tendency, even by his disciples, to ask God "What must I do to get" (Mark 10:17; Matt 19:27)

- How does Jesus' response to the rich man inform what it means to be a "good Christian"?
- How do we practically distinguish between "giving from excess and "giving up control"?
- In what ways do our possessions subtly become our identity and source of security instead of Christ?
- What specific fears surface when you think about moving from predictable charity to complete surrender?
- Peter points out that he and his fellow disciples actually did what the rich man refused to do ("We left everything"). Why is it dangerous to compare ourselves with others?

The Economics of the Kingdom: When Peter points out that the disciples have left everything, Jesus promises that anyone who leaves behind family or property for the Gospel will receive a "hundredfold now in this present age... along with persecutions" (Mark 10:29-30). How does the church community practically fulfill this promise of a hundredfold return today?

- How does the promise of a relational "hundredfold" return fundamentally differ from the financial promises made by modern prosperity theology?
- Why is the specific phrase "along with persecutions" a crucial, sobering anchor for understanding this passage correctly?
- How has the local church functioned historically as a surrogate family for those who have lost biological relationships due to their faith in Christ?
- What specific, actionable steps can our Life Group take to become the "hundredfold return" for lonely, marginalized, or isolated individuals in our community?
- How does keeping our eyes firmly fixed on the eschatological promise of "eternal life in the age to come" free us to live radically generous lives today?

QUOTES:

- "Grace is not a reward for the righteous, but a rescue for the helpless. When we ask 'What must I do?', we reveal that we still believe we can save ourselves." – **Martin Luther**
- "The human heart is a factory of idols... and its most natural religion is a contract of works: 'I will do this, if You will give me that.'" "Comparison is the death of true worship. The moment we look at our neighbor to measure our standing before God, we have abandoned grace for law." – **John Calvin**
- "Whatever takes the place of God in your life is an idol. For the rich young ruler, it was his wealth. For others, it might be reputation or comfort." – **Charles Spurgeon**
- "Generosity is not an elective course in the curriculum of discipleship; it is a core requirement." – **Tim Keller**
- "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." – **Jim Elliot**
- "The greatness of a [person] is the measure of his surrender. It is not a question of what we have, but of what has us." – **A.W. Tozer**

GROUP PRAYER: Have a time of prayer asking God to help you release whatever you are holding on to tightly so that you can follow Him closer.

