

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your next step.

With your Bible or YouVersion, read Acts 20:35, Proverbs 11:24-25 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.

In these verses we learn that the key to a blessed life is being generous in giving to others.

- Describe a time when you gave generously to someone else. How did that act of giving make you feel and what did you learn from that experience?

Read Haggai 1:5-6.

This verse illustrates the bag mindset people have towards giving—feeling like they never have enough.

- What are some of the reasons that keep you from giving generously? What can you do to overcome these excuses?

Read Deuteronomy 28:3-14.

This passage illustrates the basket mindset of knowing there is more than enough with God.

- What are some specific things that you currently have more than enough of? Think about intangible things like time or space too.
- Could you give some of those things away to someone in need? How will you go about giving these things away over the next week?

Read Proverbs 3:9-10 and Luke 16:10-13.

These verses illustrate the barn mindset and being faithful with the infinite blessings God has given us.

- Describe what generosity looks like in your life. Which mindset do you currently exhibit? Why do you think that is?
- What are some specific areas in your life that you feel God is calling you to be more generous than you have before?
- What are some specific ways that God has blessed your life? What are some changes you're willing to make to be more blessed?

NEXT STEPS

Here are some specific things you can do this week to help you take steps towards living a blessed life.

This week make a concentrated effort to bless someone in need—a charitable cause, a ministry, or our church. Stretch your generosity and watch how God impacts and blesses you and the recipients of your blessing. Consider giving money, resources, possessions or even your time.

Pastor Craig mentioned that Pastor Jentezen Franklin had a fourth B-word mindset in his message. Watch it online for another angle on living the blessed life. Check it out at www.jentezenfranklin.org/watch.

Use these prayer tips to guide your time with God this week to expand your conversations both in person and online:

- Thank God for all of the blessings He has given you throughout your life. Spend time praising Him.
- Have an honest conversation with God about the things keeping you from being as generous as you should. Seek His help in removing these excuses.
- Pray and ask God to stir within you the heart of a cheerful giver.
- Ask God to reveal some people or causes that He would like for you to increase your generosity towards.
- Pray for someone you know that is in need. Seek God's guidance on ways you can help them this week.
- Meditate on the story in Luke 12:13-21. Pray for a heart that is rich towards God.

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With your Bible or YouVersion, read Luke 16:1-13.

In this parable, Jesus instructs us that if we are not good stewards of worldly wealth, then God will not trust us with true riches.

- If someone was to look at your checkbook today, what would they learn about your priorities based upon how you spend your money? Do you think your priorities align with God's?

Read Matthew 6:19-24 and Ecclesiastes 5:10.

These verses show us that we cannot serve both God and money, and that there is no satisfaction in the love of money.

- Describe a time in your life where you placed your trust in money and not in God. How did the situation ultimately turn out? What did you learn from this experience?

Read Leviticus 27:30, Deuteronomy 14:23, and Malachi 3:7-11.

These verses emphasize the importance of giving the tithe to God and returning to God what is His.

- What does tithing currently look like in your own life? Is it something you do well or is it something you struggle with?
- How have you seen your life blessed because of your tithing? How have you seen others blessed because of your tithing?
- How has tithing affected your faith and relationship with God? What things have you learned about God and His blessings?

Read Matthew 23:23 and Proverbs 3:9-10.

These verses instruct us to give to God His tithe first rather than waiting to give it last.

- It requires faith to give first. If you give last, it doesn't require faith. Describe a time when you gave first. What blessings resulted from your act of faith?

NEXT STEPS

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If you are not currently tithing, consider taking the Three Month Tithing Challenge. Commit to tithing for three months and if you do not see God's blessings in that time, your money will be refunded. You can learn more at <http://internet.lifechurch.tv/giving/three-month-challenge>

Make a list of some of the blessings you have experienced in your life as a result of tithing. Keep this list in a place where you can see it so it serves as a reminder of the blessings of tithing and will be an encouragement during times when you struggle with tithing.

Use these prayer tips to guide your time with God this week to expand your conversations both in person and online:

- Thank God for the blessings He has given you as a result of giving back to Him through the tithe.
- Pray and ask God to bless others through your tithe. Pray for the projects, people, and ministries supported through our church.
- Discuss your struggles with money with God in prayer. Ask Him for strength in overcoming your fears.
- Commit to God in prayer that you will place your faith and trust in Him and not in money.
- Pray and ask God to help you shift your priorities away from material things and back towards Him.

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With your Bible or YouVersion, read Proverbs 22:9 and Luke 6:37-38.

These passages tell us that when we are generous and give to others, we will be more blessed.

- What types of people, situations, or causes do you tend to be most generous in giving towards? Why do these things catch your eye and touch your heart?

Read Revelation 3:14-21 and Genesis 32:9-12.

These verses illustrate two wrong responses to God's blessings: pride and shame.

- How have you struggled with pride when it comes to God's blessings in your life? How have you been able to overcome that pride?
- Why do you think so many of us react with shame when it comes to the blessings God gives us? How should we respond to God's blessings?

Read Luke 10:25-37 and Isaiah 32:1-8.

These verses illustrate two types of growing givers: the spontaneous giver and the strategic giver.

- Describe a time when you gave spontaneously. What blessings did you experience and what did you learn from your act of spontaneous giving?
- Describe your plans for giving and how well you are currently carrying out your plans. If you do not have a plan, what do you think a plan of giving should look like in your life?

Read Mark 12:41-44.

Jesus illustrates the best type of growing giver in this passage, which is the sacrificial giver.

- Why is giving sacrificially so difficult for most people? What are some specific things you can do to start being a more sacrificial giver not just of your money, but of your resources and time as well?
- Describe someone you know that gives to the degree that the woman Jesus saw gave. How are you challenged by those who give that sacrificially?

NEXT STEPS

Here are some specific things you can do this week to help you take steps towards living a blessed life.

Become a spontaneous giver this week by sharpening your generous eye. Ask someone who you know that's generous or just ask God to direct you in prayer. Try getting your friends and family involved too.

Write out a strategic plan for giving if you have not already done so. Evaluate your budget and your finances and intentionally find ways where you can give more towards those things that you are passionate about that catch your generous eye.

Use these prayer tips to guide your time with God this week to expand your conversations both in person and online:

- Pray and ask God to instill within you a more generous heart towards others.
- Confess to God your struggles with your pride when it comes to God's blessings. Ask God to help you remove that pride.
- Pray and ask God to give you opportunities this week that will allow you to give spontaneously to others.
- Seek God's guidance in prayer in helping you create a giving plan. Ask God where He wants you to give.
- Commit to God in prayer that will strive to give more sacrificially in all areas of your life.

TALK IT OVER

THE BLESSED LIFE THE HEART OF SERVING - WEEK 4

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take the next step.

With your Bible or YouVersion, read John 13:3-17.

Jesus shows His disciples in this passage how and why we should serve others. Through His act of washing the disciples' feet, Jesus illustrates the difference between knowing and doing when it comes to serving others. He also teaches us in this passage that serving leads to a path of blessing.

- How well are you aware of the needs of others in your life? Share some things that distract you from being aware of those needs.
- If you don't learn to serve in secret and in the insignificant or small areas that no one else wants to, then you won't serve in public. How are you currently serving others in small and insignificant ways?
- Describe your attitude about serving. What areas of service do you do well, and where do you need improvement?
- How have you seen your life blessed as a result of serving others?
- Describe a time when you got "messy" in order to make a difference in serving others. How did that experience impact your life?

Read Matthew 20:24-28.

Jesus teaches us in these verses the importance of serving with a heart of humility.

- One trait of a heart to serve is we must go low in order to bring others up. What does humility look like in your own life?
- What do you think God is asking you to do to develop a more humble heart?

NEXT STEPS

Try these specific things you can do this week that will help you serve others so that you can live and experience the blessed life:

Intentionally do something this week to serve others. You can do something on your own or with a group. Be creative and let God lead you to whom He wants you to serve. A great place to start is within your church. Consider serving in one of the ministries at your campus such as Host Team, LifeKIDS, SWITCH, or any of the other ways your campus offers.

If you have been moved by God during this series and want to learn more, consider reading Robert Morris' book entitled *The Blessed Life*. This book gives an in-depth look at what generosity should be like in our lives and the blessings that can result from being generous. This book is available at most major bookstores and online.

Use these prayer tips to guide your time with God this week to expand your conversations both in person and online:

- Pray and ask God to help you be more aware of the needs of others in your life.
- Ask God to help you see how He is preparing you and blessing you when you serve in secret.
- Seek God's guidance through prayer to discover whom He wants you to serve.
- Commit to God in prayer that you will step up and serve others in the ways that He is calling you to serve.
- Pray and ask God to help you develop a heart of humility when serving others.
- Thank God for those who have served you. Ask God to help instill a heart of service within you.

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep Talking It Over online.
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