

life groups

NLC Weekly Sermon Study

Week of April 2, 2017

Sermon: Nothing New—More Blessed to Give



NEW LIFE
CHURCH

Schedule

30 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **Act and React**. This is a funny icebreaker game, where players use paper and pen to write down an event, or you can prepare papers ahead of time. Some examples you might include are:

- Winning the lottery
- Meeting a large, aggressive bear in the woods
- You just got fired from your job
- Swimming in the ocean and you see a dorsal fin coming right at you

Put the papers in a bag, box, or basket. Have players randomly select a piece of paper and react to the experience using words, gestures, and facial expressions. Players try to guess what happened. Set a time limit for the players to act out their event. You can give a point for each correct guess. You can also vary the game by making players act out their event without talking. This icebreaker can work with any group size and any age.

NOTE: Feel free to use as much or as little of the following study as you like, in whatever way flows most naturally for your group.

OPENING PRAYER

45–60 MIN **Nothing New—More Blessed to Give**

- Q1.** If someone gave you \$1 million with no strings attached, what would you do with it?

ACT 20:35 “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.’”

- You are more blessed when you give than when you get.

2 COR 9:11 “You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”

MAYBE YOU DON'T FEEL BLESSED ENOUGH TO GIVE

1 TIMOTHY 6:17 - 19 (NIV) “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain...”

- God gives specific scriptures for rich people, but many don't know how rich they are.
 - › A Gallup poll tried to define “rich,” and every wealth bracket

- thought the next higher wealth bracket was rich.
- **Wealth stats:**
 - › If you earn \$37,000 or more, you're in the top 4% in world.
 - › If you earn \$45,000 or more, you're in the top 1% in world.
 - › Listen: Over 3 Billion people live on 2.5 dollars a day
 - › In the eyes of most of the world, you are rich.

HAVE SOMEONE READ ECCLESIASTES 5:10

Q2. How do you measure how much money is “enough”?

MAYBE WE HAVE SEEN THIS MESSAGE ABUSED

- Some preachers have proclaimed, “Give \$100, and get \$1 million back!” or “You must give now, or you will be cursed.”

MAYBE WE ARE LOADED WITH FEAR

- In Bible days they would get paid daily wages, then they had to take a Sabbath. This was difficult, because they didn't get paid on the Sabbath day. It took illogical faith.

Q3. What fears do you have about tithing?

Three truths to help you become a giver:

1. Trust God with your giving and your tithe

MAL 3:6-9 “I the LORD do not change...Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’ “Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ “In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse...because you are robbing me.

- Tithing sounds CRAZY! This is the only place where God says, “Test me in this.”
 - › Maybe he knew this would freak us out.
 - › In order to tithe, I have to completely rearrange my life around God, and maybe that's the point!
 - › God doesn't want your money or your stuff. He just wants your heart.

Q4. Have you ever regretted tithing? Have you ever regretted giving?

- Living with 90% of your income with God's blessing goes further than living on 100% of your income without God's blessing.

Q5. Are you willing to put God to the test with your finances? Do you trust that He will take care of you as you faithfully obey Him?

2. You must have vision to give

Q6. When was the last time you had a family meeting to talk about more ways you can give?

- People give to vision, but they must have vision to give.

IS 32:8 “But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity.”

- › One guy pledged to give to spaces and places in our church. When the economy took a dive, he sold a piece of property to stay in the game.
- › Another guy lost his job and said, “I don’t have income to give, so I will give my time.”

3. Turn generosity into action now

PHILEMON 1:6 “And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ.”

Q7. What are the benefits of tithing?

TAKE PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAY OVER NEEDS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please refer to your weekend service guide for campus-specific announcements.