

# Participant's Guide

## A LIFE THAT IS TRULY LIFE!

Welcome to the Living Generously journey! When I read "whoever loses his life for My sake will find it," I want to know what that looks like. They're more than words; they're meant to change the way I live.

In this series, you will see a family take risks, experience suffering, doubt and joy. Moreover, you'll see what happens when this family chooses to embrace a generous life in the midst of uncertainty. And like them, you will be invited into a transformational process.

Living Generously is the first of three in a series on generosity that we have produced at Reimagine. Our films seek to bring Scripture to life, and serve as an effective tool serving pastors and small group leaders.

In Genesis 12, God tells Abraham something extraordinary. He tells Abraham that he will be blessed SO THAT he can be a blessing to the nations. Our goal is for you to discover what that means in your life, your relationships and your leadership. When we think of the joy of imagination, we often think of children. We want you to "Reimagine" what this can look like for you, and for your family. To see what other resources we have for you and your church, visit [TheReimagineGroup.com](http://TheReimagineGroup.com). To see other film series by Reimagine, check out [TheReimagineGroup.com](http://TheReimagineGroup.com).

Lastly, I'd love to hear your stories, and to answer any questions you may have. I never tire of talking about how we can live a generous life and free others to do the same. Feel free to email me at [jack@thereimaginegroup.com](mailto:jack@thereimaginegroup.com).

Blessings to you, your family and your church,

Jack Alexander  
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# SESSION 1

## FIRST

### OPENING QUESTION

1. How has someone else's generosity affected you? How did it encourage you to live more generously?

### FOCUS

In the Old Testament, God had very specific rules regarding sacrifices and offerings made to Him. Leviticus addresses these offerings in detail: burnt offerings, meal offerings, sin offerings, peace offerings, the list goes on and on.

But Jesus came and changed everything. In the Old Testament God had blessed his people with everything they had. But in the New Testament God the Father gave everything he had. Jesus gave himself. His generosity cannot be matched. He gave his own life so that we could be together with him. Mark 10:45 clarifies the generosity of our Lord, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." Jesus paid the price of his own life to free us from our self-centered, separation from God, way of life.

. As we look in the New Testament for guidelines on giving, we no longer find rules about 2-year-old rams and grain cakes made with oil. Instead we see teaching that focuses on our hearts. Luke 10:27 says, "He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.'" 2 Corinthians tells us that God loves a cheerful giver and we are not to give under compulsion. What a difference! From a list of specific do's and don'ts to a call to live a life of generosity.

These next five sessions are not about rules for giving. They aren't going to give you a checklist or a dollar amount. This study is not about our wallets, but our hearts.

### WATCH THE "FIRST" FILM/VIGNETTE

## THOUGHTS

In the film we watched for this week, one of the main characters, Frank, gave sparingly out of his abundance. His wife Cassie gave her time and resources to serve a missionary family. The gardener "Re" (pronounced "Ray") gave sacrificially of his time and used his gifts to communicate truth. But Frank's son Evan – well, Evan gave his all. He gave his favorite toy, one that he couldn't just run down to the store and replace. He saw a need, an opportunity to bless someone, an opportunity to give the "best sheep," and he simply did it.

Frank missed this child-like faith. He was giving his first and his best – but where was it going?

At the beginning of the film, Frank had a conversation with his financial planner, Allan. At Frank's request, Allan had put together a plan to hit a "finish line" that would cover every expense for the rest of his life. What was Frank's response? "Double it."

Fiscal responsibility is important – in fact the Bible is filled with great wisdom on working hard, saving money – all the things that Frank was, at the core, trying to do. BUT, in his drive to provide and protect, Frank had lost that child-like faith. He had forgotten, or ignored, that God asks for our first and best... and promises that He'll bless the rest!

Frank had forgotten that it is God who gives to us so that we can bless others.

Let's dig in.

## HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

1. In this week's film, Frank has his financial planner Allan take the net present value of everything he and his family will need and multiply it by 2.
2. What do you think causes Frank to think this way? How has this mindset affected you when it comes to your resources?

2. Before we go any further let's examine something important. When you look at Frank, do you see someone with far more to give than you? What about Re who only had his service to offer? Or Evan?

## AN ATTITUDE OF THE HEART.

1. Which of these is the hardest for you to give up?

- *Your time*
- *Your money*
- *Your stuff*
- *Your space*

2. When you face the opportunity to give or serve do you usually default to Re's way of thinking or Frank's? What causes that response?

### THE BIBLE SAYS

*He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27).*

3. Reread Luke 10:25-37. What is the standard of generosity? Who sets that standard? What does this story illustrate about true love? (Pay special attention to verse 27)

### THE BIBLE SAYS

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).*

4. Is our problem with giving all about the money?

5. What are your sheep? What's your "good sheep" and what's your "stinky sheep"?

## FIRST AND BEST

1. Reread Mark 10:45. What was Jesus' ransom price? What does that tell us about what God has called us to give?

*He gave his very self. This is true generosity, and Jesus calls us to follow him Mark 8:34-35.*

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

"What are your sheep?"

Evan had an airplane, Frank had watches and Re had his service. We all have something to give: time, gifts, our resources, the list goes on. What they did with what they had didn't reflect their level of financial ability – it reflected their heart, their view of God.

Where is your heart today? Does your heart take joy in an opportunity to honor God through giving? Or does your heart search through dusty drawers to find what it will give to God?

Spend time talking to God this week about where you aren't giving your first and best. What is God asking you to give? Time? Money? Service? Let's give our first and best this week. What we offer Him reflects our heart!

## DIG DEEPER

Questions to ponder this week as you pray about this lesson.

1. Which character would you say you are most like?
2. Are you willing to test God and give your first and your best?

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Things to do this week as you apply this lesson to your life.

- Ask God to show you where you need to be more generous in your life, and ask Him to prepare you to give your best "sheep."
- Trust God's prompting to give this week. Whether it is your time, your attention, your resources or your talents. Step out in generosity and watch God work!
- Memorize Luke 10:27.

## NOTES