



# am I a **Generous Giver?**

## Week 4 – Prompted Giver

### Table of Contents

**Heart** – A brief devotion or story to *prepare our hearts*

**Head** – All you to need *prepare your head* to teach the lesson

Introduction

Lesson

Conclusion

**Hand** – Optional *Hand's On* activity or discussion questions

**Homework** – Putting the lesson into *action during the week*

**Handouts** – *Learner and Leader Handouts* to be used in class



# am I a Generous Giver?



## HEART

### Goats For Jesus<sup>1</sup>

*Read 1 John 3:16-20*

When Dave and Joy Mueller felt God prompting them to move to Sudan as missionaries, all they knew was that they would be helping to build a hospital in that war-ravaged land. How could they know that goats would be in their future?

As Joy began working with the women, she discovered that many were widows because of the devastating civil war and had no way to earn a living. So Joy had an idea. If she could provide just one pregnant goat to a woman, that person would have milk and a source of income. To keep the program going, the woman would give the newborn kid back to Joy – but all other products from the goat would be used to support the woman's family. The baby goat would eventually go to another family. The gift of goats given in Jesus' name would change the life of numerous Sudanese women – and open the door for Joy to explain the gospel.

What is your equivalent to goats? What can you give a neighbor, a friend, or even someone you don't know? Is it a ride? An offer to do yard work? A gift of material resources?

As believers in Christ, we have the responsibility to care for the needs of others (1 John 3:17). Our acts of love reveal that Jesus resides in our hearts, and giving to those in need may help us tell others about Him.

*O Lord, my heart is filled with love  
For others who have urgent needs  
So help me share in every way  
What I can give through words and deeds.*

God gives us all we need, so let's give to others in their need.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from "Our Daily Bread", October 4, 2009.



## HEAD

### Introduction

Have you ever had a moment where you felt God tugging on your heart to do something? You hear that voice inside or have that gut feeling to do something you haven't even thought of. If you are like me you have had times when you have ignored that voice and just continued on with life, later to wonder if you should have done something in response. And other times when you have reacted and felt the excitement of responding to God and helping others.

One particular moment for me happened a couple of years ago during The MET's annual missions emphasis in the month of December. Pastor Sal announced that they were going to collect a special offering for missions the following week. He asked people to consider giving above and beyond what they normally give for this special offering. My wife and I looked at one another and decided to pray about how much we should give. A few days later we talked about the offering and God had laid the same amount on each of our hearts separately. The bigger question now was, "where is this money going to come from?" We had been saving for a second car and decided to use a portion of that money as our offering. I truly believe God honored that sacrifice we made for His Kingdom. He delivered a car a few months later well within the price range of the money we had left.

I remember another distinct moment a few months ago when I was out running errands with my toddler son. I felt God prompting me to do something when we were on our way to McDonalds for lunch. While stopped at a light, I saw a man holding a sign that said, "dreaming of a double cheeseburger". How interesting I thought that I had not notice that person before and the double cheeseburger is a McDonalds' creation. It was at that moment that I decided to buy an extra sandwich while we were at lunch. So before we left the restaurant I purchased a double cheeseburger and a glass of water. On the way back to the man I took the opportunity to explain to my son that we were showing God's love to this man by meeting a physical need. The man was still there so we pulled over and gave him the sandwich and water. What a wonderful moment. I



felt the joy of showing someone the love of God and responding to the gentle prompting He gave me. Plus, I was able to teach my son how we as Christians can show the love of God to people in practical real ways.

What we often fail to realize is that responding to the promptings of God is worship just like our regular financial giving to the church. It is a true test of our heart for God. Is your heart in the right place to hear God prompt you? Will you be willing to respond to His call?

“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers” John 4:24 (NASB).

## **Prompted Giver – Lesson**

### **Introduction**

Once we have reached the point of being able to expand our giving, a door to a whole new world is opened. We make ourselves available to the special promptings of God to support opportunities that arise out of the blue. Just think of the Israelites, who felt prompted to give to the construction of the Tabernacle in Exodus 25:2 (NIV),

“Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for Me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.”

The Israelites probably felt an extreme amount of joy and excitement knowing that they were contributing to the sanctuary in which generations of their people would worship God. We too can experience that kind of joy and excitement knowing that we are helping make an eternal difference in people’s lives today.

#### **1. A Servant Heart.**

John 15:13 (NASB), “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”

Philippians 2:5 (NASB), “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.”



As a Christian this should be a quality that we display all the time. However, it is probably one of the least visible qualities in our churches today. Many times this is why people think that the church is full of hypocrites. We teach about serving and loving one another, but fail to practice what we preach. We need to grasp the fact that we are God's plan for bringing the gospel to the world and Jesus is the example set before us.

“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve”  
Matthew 20:28a (NASB).

Once we can develop a servant heart, and put others ahead of ourselves, the giving of our money to support God's work will come naturally.

## **2. Make yourself and your resources available to God.**

Luke 18:22-23 (NASB), “When Jesus heard this, He said to him, ‘One thing you still lack; sell all you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come follow Me.’ But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.”

Too many times we put ourselves in the position of the rich young ruler. We refuse to make ourselves and our resources available to God. Maybe we need a refresher. **Our resources are not really ours; they are God's! We are just stewards of them.** Remember that a steward manages another's possessions and money.

Just imagine if you went to your bank tomorrow and asked for all of your money or even just part of it and they told you that you could not have it because they were using it for something else. That something else would benefit the bank and not you. What would your reaction be? Can you imagine what God's reaction is when we do the same thing with what he has given us to manage? So why do we react this way when God asks us to give some of His money back to him?



This attitude should not just apply to our financial resources either. God wants every part of our lives to be fully devoted to Him. Just like the old hymn “Take My Life and Let It Be” says,

“Take my life, and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee...

Take my silver and my gold;  
Not a mite would I withhold.”

God wants our life along with our money. Are we willing to make that resource available to Him? For it is only by His grace that we are alive in the first place.

### **3. Listen to God.**

1 Samuel 3:10 (NASB), “Then the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel said, ‘Speak for Your servant is listening.’”

Listening to God for many of us is a hard thing to do. We live in the midst of a fast paced, overly busy life. All of the noise and clutter seems to drown out that ‘still small voice’ of God. And when we do slow down to spend time with God, we are the ones doing all the talking. It is when we are just ‘with’ God and are quiet, that we hear Him and we feel closest to Him.

“Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” Psalm 46:10 (NASB).

God will accomplish His plans and He desires us to help Him. But if we are too busy focusing on other things besides God we will miss out on the opportunities. Take the time to listen to God so when He speaks or prompts you, you can respond just like Samuel, “Speak for Your servant is listening.” It is when we stop and listen to God that He reveals the most about Himself.



#### **4. Respond to God's prompting.**

Isaiah 6:8 (NASB), "Then I (Isaiah) heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"

'Here am I. Send me!' Is there a better response than that? I think not. Isaiah's response demonstrates to us that he was ready. He showed no hesitation in answering God. Isaiah knew what his answer was before God even asked the question. This just doesn't happen by itself. Isaiah had prepared himself. He had a servant heart, made himself and all his resources available to God, and he listened to God.

When God calls you to give financially to His work will you be in a position to answer Him? We need to keep in mind that when we don't respond to God's prompting, there are eternal implications. Let's make sure we can answer God when He calls. How we respond to God's prompting is the biggest indicator of our maturity. Let's demonstrate to the world that we can do more than just talk the talk, but that we can walk it too. The first step is opening our wallet when God prompts and then trust Him with the future.

### **Conclusion**

The focus of this lesson has been on financially giving to God's work above and beyond your normal tithes when prompted by God. This is the final step along the spectrum of giving because it requires the most spiritual maturity from the believer. You may not be there yet and have been asking yourself this question the whole time, 'does God really prompt people to give extra?' It is only when we gain the maturity to see others through God's eyes that we will be in the position to respond to God's prompting. The real question is, 'Are you going to respond?'

"The LORD bless you, and keep you; The LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace" Numbers 6:24-26 (NASB).



## HAND

### Discussion Questions

1. Does giving and serving permeate all parts of your life or only certain parts?
2. Can you think of a moment when you felt prompted by God? When was it? How did you respond?
3. Is there anything in your life that you hesitate to make available to God? Why?
4. Read this quote and respond to it. "So many people see God everyday, but don't recognize Him."
5. What other ways, besides financially, can God prompt people to give? Has God prompted you to give something besides money?
6. Read 1 John 3:16-20. Are there any implications on we have been talking about?
7. How do these points we've discussed apply to our giving at The MET?

## HOMEWORK

1. Take time to evaluate your heart. Are you generous and servant hearted? How do you treat those closest to you? Do you put their needs ahead of yours? Do you willingly give up the last piece of dessert? Will you skip a lunch break to help a co-worker finish a project? How can you expect to treat people you don't know with a generous, servant heart if you don't first treat those closest to you with one?
2. Find all the passages you can that talk about serving. Take time this week to meditate on those.
3. Make an effort to listen for God's prompting and pray for opportunities.
4. Evaluate your budget and financial situation to determine if you are able to respond appropriately when God prompts you to give. Consider living below your means.
5. Start praying about what God wants you give on "Big Give Sunday" for missions.



6. If you have children, explain to them about “Big Give Sunday” and help them plan how they want to support the missions’ endeavors at The MET.
7. Contact the church office or a pastor about taking a spiritual gifts inventory to help you be a good steward of your treasure, talents, and time.



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# am I a Generous Giver?

## HANDOUT | LEADER

### Prompted Giver – It's about the obedience to respond

*I respond to God's prompting by going above and beyond my regular giving at The MET.*

“Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for Me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.”  
Exodus 25:2 (NIV)

1. A Servant Heart. *John 13:5-16, 15:13; Phil. 2:5-8*
2. Make yourself and your resources available to God.  
*Luke 18:18-29*
3. Listen to God. *1 Kings 19:11-13; 1 Samuel 3:1-10*
4. Respond to God's prompting. *Isaiah 6:8; Mark 14:25-32*



# am I a Generous Giver?

## HANDOUT | LEARNER

### Prompted Giver – It's about the \_\_\_\_\_

*I respond to God's prompting by going above and beyond my regular giving at The MET.*

*"Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for Me from each man whose heart prompts him to give."  
Exodus 25:2 (NIV)*

1. A \_\_\_\_\_. John 13:5-16, 15:13; Phil. 2:5-8

2. Make \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
Luke 18:18-29

3. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. 1 Kings 19:11-13; 1 Samuel 3:1-10

4. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. Isaiah 6:8; Mark 14:25-32

