

---

[SERMON NOTES]

**Possessions** (*Genesis 14:11-24*)

People of God \_\_\_\_\_ out of obedience to God.

\_\_\_\_\_ know who it all belongs to anyways.

People of God are \_\_\_\_\_ in God.

\_\_\_\_\_ % of Americans say they are \_\_\_\_\_ to enjoy life.

The average American has \$6,720 \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ in 10 people find little or no meaning in their \_\_\_\_\_.

Generosity is never an \_\_\_\_\_.

---

[QUICK REVIEW]

Looking at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

---

[MY STORY]

We all walk through life having meaningful experiences that can build up certain attachments to various possessions throughout our lives. **What are some of your most prized possessions? Why is it that they are so meaningful to you?**

**Have you ever had to give away something that had immense meaning to you? What was that experience like?**

---

[DIGGING DEEPER]

As followers of Jesus, the entirety of our life and faith should be built around the reality that we love because he first loved us. We give back because of the priceless gift of forgiveness and freedom and purpose that has been given to us. There are countless ways to live our lives in response to the goodness of God in our life, and **this week we are going to do things a little differently and get super practical as we consider several ways to free us up and be intentional in living generously.**

There are two helpful disciplines that we can engage in that will allow us to be faithful to Jesus with our possessions: the practice of **Simplicity** and the practice of **Generosity**. Practicing simplicity involves *letting go of our possessions* in order to free us up to more readily engage the practice of generosity, which involves *giving these possessions away*. They go hand in hand.

The three categories of possessions we talk about here at FIRST are our **time**, our **treasure**, and our **talents**. We are called to steward these things because they ultimately belong to God.

**Time.** We all have the same amount of time: 24 hours a day, 168 hours in a week, and 8,760 hours every year. We can never get back the time we spend, and in our busy, hurried society, we must be ruthlessly intentional with the way we spend it. *Let's consider what simplicity and generosity may look like in regards to our time...*

- **Simplify:** What are the things you need to say “no” to in your life? What are the activities that most distract you from your faith? *What does it look like to simplify your time and focus on what matters most?*
- **Be Generous:** What are your best “yeses?” What are the God-given activities and responsibilities that you can prioritize? What are the best investments you can make for the sake of your relationship with Jesus and his kingdom? *What would it look like to be generous with your time for the sake of Christ and his mission?*

**Treasure.** We all have a set amount of money and physical possessions at our disposal. Jesus warns that we cannot serve both God and our possessions, so we must take a hard look at the hold they may have on us and how we go about using them. *Let's consider what simplicity and generosity may look like in regards to our treasure...*

- **Simplify:** Consider your finances. What are excesses that you could cut back on for a season? Consider your physical possessions. What do you no longer need? What has a hold on you that you need to let go of? (example: clean out your closet and give away any clothes or shoes you haven't worn in the last year)
- **Be Generous:** Consider your finances. Dream and discern what you could give generously to and give on purpose. What is something you could fund that you are passionate about? What are the needs around you that you could meet? Tithing is a common practice of giving 10% of your firstfruits to God. Pray about what percentage you could give as an act of trust to God. Consider your physical possessions. What could you give away to those in need? How could you utilize your possessions to love God and love others well? (example: using your house to be hospitable)

**Talents.** God has given each of us specific passions, abilities, giftings, and talents that we are invited to leverage for the sake of the kingdom and mission of Jesus. We get to participate in the work of God in this world, and it is an opportunity that we do not want to miss out on. *Let's consider what simplicity and generosity may look like in regards to our talents...*

- **Simplify:** What are some of the areas of your life where you are serving or working more out of obligation than out of your gifting and calling? What might it look like to cut back on these things to make room for serving out of your unique giftedness?
- **Be Generous:** Consider joining an existing area of service or leadership that is in an area of gifting and calling for you *or* brainstorm and get creative if there is none. Where might God be inviting you to partner with him where only someone like *you* can fill the need? *What does it look like to be generous with your talents?*

---

### [WEEKLY READINGS]

Studies say that someone who reads their Bible 4 times or more a week improves their joy, happiness, contentment, and overall approval of their life. (1 Tim. 4:8-10,16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). As a church, we believe that! Below are passages of Scripture to dive into to pull deeper on our weekend's message. We encourage you to take notes in your Bible, and ask yourself: *What does this teach me about God? Myself and others? And how do I follow Jesus better?*

**Matthew 19:16-30**

**Luke 19:1-10**

**Acts 5:1-11**

**Matthew 6:19-24**

**Matthew 25:14-30**