

The Blessed Life

Week 3 | The Principle of the First

BOTTOM LINE

When God is first in our lives, everything comes into order.

GOAL OF THE GROUP

The complete 6-week series is wrapped around one question – How do we experience the blessings of God in our life? The truth is, we cannot separate the principal of setting God IN FIRST PLACE, in all things, including money, and experiencing His blessings.

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 6:1-6, Matthew 22:36-38, Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Exodus 13:1-17, 1 Corinthians 10:26

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share:** When something is misaligned, everything that follows it is out of alignment. There are major examples like a building with a twisted foundation that creates a wall out of alignment and leads to a door binding in the frame. Something as simple as a button down shirt and starting the first button in wrong place leads to all the other buttons out of place.
 - Can you think of something you saw or experienced that was out of alignment? What happened as a result?
- Reflect:**
 - How does alignment apply to our lives, and not just the physical objects in our lives?
 - What can it look like when our life is out of alignment?
 - Have you ever felt that your life was out of alignment? If so, what do you think started the misalignment?
- Read Deuteronomy 6:1-6 and Matthew 22:36-38 and Discuss:**
 - Who does God say to make first in our lives? Why and How?
 - Why is He intentional to make this the first commandment?
- Read Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Exodus 13:1-17, 1 Corinthians 10:26 and Discuss:**
 - Describe the situation that the Israelites were in. What did God give or provide them?
 - Think about what is God asking them to give Him in return. Is He asking for the leftovers of what we produce or other?
 - What is God asking the Israelites to acknowledge? Why is this important?
- Read and Reflect:**
 - When you were born, what did you bring into this world? Everything you have now, where did it come from? When you die, what are you taking with you?
 - What is God telling you through His Word and What is He asking you to do?
 - As a natural outpour of your love for Christ you will be generous with everything you own and everything you control. How does this allow for you to experience the blessed life?

“When someone asks you why you tithe or give, what is the story you will tell them?”

K

TRY THIS

Once again, consider the topics of money, time, possessions and encouragement. As a couple or individually, assess where you are being generous right now in your devotion and where you are holding back. Last weekend Kensington introduced a 90 day tithe test. Check out more at kensingtonchurch.org/tithetest. If you are not already tithing, will you consider the challenge and give from the first of what you produce?

The Blessed Life

Week 1 | It's All About the Heart

BOTTOM LINE

"Where your treasure is there your heart will be also" and "The issue of tithing is never about dollars -- it's always about devotion"

GOAL OF THE GROUP

For this series, "The Blessed Life" is a six-week series on generosity, blessing and devotion. We believe that we are intended to for a blessed life or a life of blessing as sons and daughters of a generous God. Yet, at times, we mistake the priority of money, possessions, and time and fall into a trapped life instead of a blessed life.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 6:19-24, Proverbs 23:4-5, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, 2 Corinthians 9:6-13

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share:** What does a person who is experiencing "the blessed life" have, show, or value?
 - Ok, let's dive a little deeper. When it comes to money, time or encouraging words, who taught you how to be generous? If it wasn't for these people, how would your view of money, time or words be different?
 - Let's be honest: When it comes to church and money, what are some of your fears, worries and frustrations? How have these thoughts held you back from the blessed life?
- Reflect:** Grab a notepad or your notes phone app and think about these two questions. Write down your reflections:
 - Do I want to experience more of God's blessing in my life?
 - What needs to change for that to happen?
- Read and Discuss Matthew 6:19-24, Proverbs 23:4-5, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, and 2 Corinthians 9:6-13:**
 - What are the common themes in these verses?
 - How do each of them connect to the blessed life?
 - If God is a God of generosity and amassing wealth, why do these themes focus on the condition of the heart?
 - Consider this quote on the condition of the heart and generosity - "The issue of tithing is never about dollars -- it's always about devotion". What is your reaction to a statement like this? How is your reaction influenced by the scriptures we read?
- Read & Discuss:**
 - Wealth is the substance of what you own and control. It is multilayer, simple yet complex. How has the entanglement of your heart and your wealth affected your relationships with others, spouse, family, God, life and joy?
 - As a natural outpour of your love for Christ you will be generous with all of your wealth, everything you own & everything you control. How does this allow for you to experience the blessed life?
- Read & Reflect:**
 - Fact is some Christians are...
 - Generous with money but selfish with their time
 - Generous with time but selfish with their possessions
 - Generous with their possessions but selfish with encouragement
 - And some are just selfish with their money
 - Truth is the percentage God is after is 100% ----- 100% of our devotion
 - Go back to the two questions we reflected on in question 2. Let's do it again:
 - Do I want to experience more of God's blessing in my life?
 - What needs to change for that to happen?

"Money should be mastered, not served."

Dave Ramsey

K

TRY THIS

Consider the topics of money, time, possessions and encouragement. As a couple or individually, assess where are you being generous right now with your devotion and where are you holding back. Think about a way to take a step forward in the next week in each of these areas. Share your response to the two reflection questions above with someone that encourages and challenges you.

The Blessed Life

Week 2 | The Test of the Heart

BOTTOM LINE

God doesn't want your money, He wants your heart, and He wants your life to be a life of delight and to live in the experience of His blessings.

GOAL OF THE GROUP

For this series, "The Blessed Life" is a six-week series on generosity, blessing and devotion. We believe that we are intended to for a blessed life or a life of blessing as sons and daughters of a generous God. Yet, at times, we mistake the priority of money, possessions, and time and fall into a trapped life instead of a blessed life.

SCRIPTURE

Malachi: 3:6-12, Matthew 23:23-24, 2 Chronicles 31:4-10, Psalm 24:1, Revelation 19:7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share:** Few people actually enjoy taking tests. And probably less people would welcome being tested by a situation or person.
 - Have you ever thought there is a connection between being tested and your heart? Why or why not?
- Reflect:**
 - When you receive a paycheck or some form of payment, what is the feeling you experience? If you were asked to give away a portion of that payment, what would your response be?
 - When the offering is taken at church, do you experience any of the following?
 - Joy & Thankfulness
 - Guilt – I should give more.
 - Skepticism – What do they even do with this?
 - Anger – My money is my money and what I do with it is none of your business.
 - This discussion is not about God taking anything away from you. It's about more fully experiencing the GIVING NATURE of God. Do you question if you've personally experienced blessing from God's giving nature?
- Read Malachi 3:6-12 and Discuss:**
 - What does God say about Himself in this scripture?
 - What is He saying about His people and asking of them?
 - What question does God's people ask of Him? What is God's answer?
 - What does God want us to receive more than anything else?
- Read Matthew 23:23-24 & Discuss:**
 - Why does Jesus scold the Pharisees even though they are tithing a tenth of their earnings?
 - Is the idea of tithing something between you and the church or you and God? Why?
- Read 2 Chronicles 31:4-10, Psalm 24:1, Revelation 19:7 and Discuss:**
 - A tithe is what percentage of income or possessions?
 - When you give, whose treasure are you actually giving?
 - When you tithe, who is getting blessed?
 - Why give to the church if you give to other places?
 - Has your view on tithing changed? What is God asking you to do today?

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
2 Corinthians 9:7

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TRY THIS

You are probably in one of a few places on tithing today. You are either doing nothing, doing something but not tithing, tithing, or going above tithing. Think about a way to take a forward step to experience the giving nature of God. Stepping forward will be a mix of faith and math. Pray about what that step will look like for you and/or your family. Here are three steps to consider.

- If you're doing nothing, then start doing something.*
- If you're doing something, then start tithing for 3 months.*
- If you're tithing, then ask God for more to be generous with.*