

counter cultural

week three

Week 3

Generosity Has Epic Rewards



Key Verse: *“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.’ ” Acts 20:35*

I. Introduction (15 minutes)

- **Break the Ice:** Tell the youth that you are going to quiz them on the things that you have been studying over the last couple of weeks and let them know that whoever answers correctly will get a reward. (Don’t tell them what the rewards will be, but plan to offer varying prizes...some good and some poor. You may want to give away a penny, a paper plate, some candy, a t-shirt, etc.)
 - Question #1: What was the key phrase from last week’s lesson? (Answer: Generosity beats materialism.) Pick a prize randomly to give to the person who gets the answer.
 - Question #2: What was the big idea from Week 1 of Counter-culture? (Answer: God’s culture is not a culture of getting and hoarding, but it is a culture of giving and serving.) Pick a prize randomly to give to the person who answers correctly.
 - Question #3: Who won the game “Rock, Paper, Scissors” last week? Pick a prize randomly to give to the one who answers correctly.
 - Question #4: What was the Bible story that we read in Week 1 as we talked about the generosity of God? (Answer: The feeding of the 5000.) Pick a prize randomly to give to the person who answers correctly.
 - Question 5: What was the key verse...NOT the story...from last week’s study? (Answer: Matthew 6:19-21.) Pick a prize randomly and give it to the one who answered correctly.
 - **Say,** “Today we are going to continue to look at the counter-cultural ways of God. We’re going to continue to look at the idea that God’s culture is a culture of giving and generosity rather than a culture of accumulating and hoarding. And specifically, we are going to talk about the fact that generosity has epic rewards.”

II. Discussion (35 minutes)

- **Discussion Question:** How do you feel about getting rewards from God? (Acknowledge that many believers have a hard time accepting rewards from God, but also affirm that God rewards

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the faithful throughout the Bible and the greatest reward to strive for is deeper intimacy with the Father.)

- **Discussion Question:** What kinds of rewards do you think God gives...and do you think He gives them immediately or makes us wait on the reward?
 - Ask for a volunteer to **read 1 Kings 17:7-16**
 - **Say**, “I don’t know what strikes you from this story, but one of thing that grabs my attention is the fact that there was not a whole lot of joy in this story until this widow decided to be generous. But, a second aspect of the story that is notable is that the widow received an immediate, epic reward for her generous act of faith.”
- **Discussion Question:** Have you ever received an unexpected, but immediate reward for an act of faith or generosity?
 - **Say**, “There are times where God does not make us wait to experience the rewards of our faith. But, as we all know, there are also times when God challenges us to follow Him even when we see no rewards or benefits in sight.
 - **Read Matthew 25:31-46** (The Parable of the Sheep and Goats)
 - **Ask**, “As Jesus spoke about this important end time event, why do you think He placed so much emphasis on generosity?”
 - **Ask**, “How long did these people wait to receive the reward for their generosity and how great is the reward?”
 - **Say**, “All of the things that Jesus mentions in this parable are things that we tend to pass off to the paid staff of our churches now. What do you think we are giving up – and losing out on – by passing these opportunities to other people in the church?”
- **Discussion Question:** In an “instant gratification society,” how difficult is it for you to “store up treasures in heaven” rather than having an immediate return for your kindness?

III. Action (10 minutes)

- **Action Question:** What is one thing you can do this week to imitate the radical generosity of God?
 - **Say**, “A \$10,000 gift does not necessarily receive a greater reward than a \$50 gift. It’s listening to God’s voice and trusting His leadership that generates the greatest rewards.”
 - If your group has been praying about a group project to help the hurting around you, discuss the possibilities and how you think God may be leading you at this point.
 - **Close with a time of group prayer**