

LIFE APPLICATION (02.11.14)

THEME: A ROUGH GUIDE TO GENEROSITY

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 8: 1-15

ICEBREAKER

- Take out your wallet/purse/handbag. Hold it for a few seconds and then pass it to the person on your left. Leave the wallet with them for the length of the icebreaker.
- How did you feel as you held your wallet/purse and then passed it to someone else. What does that feeling tell us about your attitude towards money?

DISCOVERY

- How does our culture encourage a lifestyle where money becomes an idol and our ultimate source of security? What can we do to minimise that influence?
- Briefly summarise the various motivations that Paul uses to encourage the Corinthians to be more generous in this passage
- If you were to rate them for yourself, which of these would work for you and which would not?

UNDERSTANDING:

- Consider these two equations

Severe trial + extreme poverty => overflowing joy + rich generosity

Compared with :

Overflowing ease + an abundance of wealth => severe depression + extreme miserliness

- Do you agree with these formulae or are they over simplistic? If so how?
- Can you think of examples in your own life or that of others where the first equation has proved to be true?

- How do you think we can begin to spot when the second equation is beginning to dominate our lives? What sort of attitudes prevail and what sort of actions do they result in?
- Paul talks about generosity as being a grace gift from God. What makes it a gift and why do we turn it into a burden?
- In his sermon, Dave mentioned the importance of giving to the local church in the form of a tithe (10% of our income). The tithe was a central part of giving within the Old Testament (see Leviticus 27:30, Proverbs 3:9 and Malachi 3:10). Do you agree with tithing? How would you argue for or against it either from the bible or from personal experience?

APPLICATION

- What are some practical and immediate ways in which you can be more generous in the next week?
- In what ways could you be more generous this week without spending any money?
- Pray as a group that fear of financial insecurity will be replaced by faith in God and his provision. Pray that this will be reflected in our generosity and giving