

(From Generouschurch.com)

Welcome to the

“How to powerfully preach on money, stewardship and generosity”.

training video for church leaders:

If you will watch the videos in this training and go deep on the content you will be able to powerfully preach on money, stewardship and generosity with a new boldness and effectiveness grounded in the right motivation.

In this training we are going to teach you lessons we've learned in preaching for over 25 years and from working with great teachers on money for close to 10 years.

You will learn:

- The absolute best time to preach on money so that people will let their guard down and listen.
- How to choose the right theme in preaching that meets people where they are.
- Creative ways to call people to action that will have them excited about talking about it after the series is over.
- How to create financial and generosity vocabulary that gets into the DNA of your church.
- The 3 keys to successful church-wide integration of this preaching - reach the smallest child to the oldest adult with the right message.
- You will learn effective principles that we have learned from great preachers like Andy Stanley, David Jeremiah and Tim Keller.

Here is how we suggest you go through the training:

- Watch one of the video training sessions based on the 8 principles.
- After you watch a session, download the 'take action' PDF and completing the short exercises to apply the principles to your church.
- Go deeper by watching or reading the integrated "bonus content" included after each session.
- Move onto the next principle.

Principle 1: DON'T PREACH ON MONEY ONLY WHEN YOU NEED IT

This session will introduce you to some of the foundational elements on powerful preaching when it comes to money. Here are some of the things you will learn:

- Why the best time to preach on money is when your church is financially healthy - it sets up a context for people to lower their guard.
- The most important question to ask yourself as you prepare to preach: FOR versus FROM!
- Examples of churches that have done it well and not so well and what we can learn from them.
 - Is it tied to a capital campaign or when the budget isn't being met?
 - This will get a wall.
 - They know there is an ask coming.
 - Do your people know what you want for them when it comes to their finances or just what you want from them?
 - Do they actually know what you want for them in their generosity?
 - It is what we want for them not from them.
 - God doesn't need our money so we should walk with confidence in the principles of scripture.
- When you preach on money disconnect it from the ask.
- Let them know this is something you want FOR them in their generosity and finances. They will let their guard down and listen.
- A church had a 6-week Bible Study teaching on finance and money. The only reason they went through it was because there was a capital campaign coming.

- Principle 2: ESTABLISH A MULTI-YEAR STRATEGY FOR PREACHING
- The best way to lay a solid foundation for your people's understanding of Biblical generosity is to establish a multi-year strategy that will communicate the key principles of stewardship and generosity. In this lesson you will learn:
 - How Jesus' focus on possessions should inform our preaching
 - The 4 "big Truths" that you need to be sure to communicate over time.
 - A multi-step strategy to drive your teaching into the DNA of your church even when you're not preaching on it.
- Long term vision on preaching on this topic.
- How do we nail down what our congregation need to hear. There is a lot of information, but we need to determine the key issues. You will not cover it all in one series.
- With over 2000 verses. 1/5 of the Sermon on the Mount is dedicated to our possessions. He talks more about how we handle our resources and specifically our finances. We shouldn't care about our housing etc. The Christian life is framed largely in how we are going to live in this physical world where we have physical needs.
- If Jesus spent that much time on it, maybe we should too.
- Matthew - you cannot serve two masters.
- Because heart and treasure are in the same place
- The only thing next to the pull of the heart of man is mammon (money or possessions or what we think will provide for us).
- Our people are struggling with these issues. YOU MUST SPEAK ON IT.
- Have to attack it head-on but layer it out over a period of time. How are we going to plan for this 2 or 3 years ahead?
- How can I frame all this into a series of messages.

Four things to make sure you preach on:

1. The Lordship and ownership of God. It is all His and will come back to Him.
2. God's purposes on earth. There is nothing that is accidental.
3. He invites us into partnership. Offers us all He has for all we have. He is not helping us out. We are being invited into being a part of it.
4. We possess many gifts to partner with God. He has placed things in us and us where we are so His purposes can be revealed through us. What are our gifts.

Recommendation:

- Create a master plan of key ideas. Map them over a period of time and see how they match any other series we need to be doing.
- Align key ideas with small group teachings so they match those ideas.
- Include the key ideas in between series in very natural ways.
- Make sure your teaching is what you want FOR them and not what you want FROM them.

- What are the principles, Biblical truths, what has God said about finances and money. Don't be afraid to talk about it.
- You will never make true disciples until you confront them in their journey.

Principle 3: DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN STEWARDSHIP AND GENEROSITY

One of the objectives on preaching on money, stewardship and generosity is to establish a common vocabulary within your church culture. In this lesson you will learn:

- A clear definition of stewardship and generosity and how both terms apply to our lives.
- The distinction between stewardship and generosity
- A “higher” level of giving based on what God would want me to do.

<http://sunvalleycc.com> - View video on 5 levels of giving motivation. Three values that guide Pastor Scott Ridout from Sun Valley Community Church:

Helpful principle to differentiate between generosity and stewardship. They are related but not the same.

Stewardship = Obligation. Things I am responsible for.

I have house payments, children, things I am obligated to that I do happily and joyfully because it's part of my responsibility in life. I budget for it, it's planned and I operate within certain boundaries. Managing our resources from a godly perspective for God's purposes. What has God given us and how do we relate His principles to it. Looking at resources and responsibilities and covering the two.

Generosity = Opportunities. Looking for opportunities to give not because I have to but because I want to.

2 Cor 9:6-8: “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 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. And God is able to bless you abundantly so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”

These are a three-part series just there.

But let's focus on 'each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give'.

I am going to tithe to my local church but then there is another level of giving. What can I do? What would God have me to do? If I am doing it because God tells me to do, then that's still obligation. Generosity is going beyond that and what I want to do.

- What does God give us faith to do? I want to be involved in what God is doing.
- Excitement in giving can be ours. It can be for our people.
- We need to teach people in the Biblical principles of both.

Principle 4: HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT THEME

A key decision to make as you begin to preach on money, stewardship and generosity is where to start. As we looked at earlier it's best to develop a multi-year strategy for preaching that will build key foundational beliefs and values into your people that they will live out of. In this training you will learn:

- The 3 broad sermon categories to consider in the stewardship and generosity space.
- Why a holistic series on stewardship is a great place to start if you've never preached on the topic.
- How the Bible addresses every area of our financial lives beyond just giving
- The obligation and opportunity of the generous life and what that means to your people.

Three broad sermon categories:

1. Holistic Stewardship Series. 4-5 weeks time, talent, influence, relationships, God's truth. Not just money. Every area of life that God entrusts to us. This is a great way to start.
2. Holistic financial Stewardship Series. More about giving, investing, savings, debt - every part of finance and stewardship that we deal with the Bible teaching on.
3. Generosity Series. Benefits of generous giving. Can I preach 3-4 weeks on generosity? Have a look at the scriptures.

Two sides of generosity.

Obligation and opportunity. 30 minutes unpacking what happens to people who choose to live a generous life.

TOPICS (Just a few):

- Freedom
- Purpose
- Eternal rewards
- Relationships that go deeper. There is so much.
- God's heart to the poor, all different ways to give.

You don't have to do it overnight. If you have never done this before you need to plan. Maybe a 3-year plan. How would I cover these important topics over a three-year plan? That way you can preach sequentially.

Principle 5: HOW TO INTRODUCE THE SERIES IN THE RIGHT WAY

So you've developed your 3-year strategy. You now know what you want FOR your people when it comes to money, stewardship and generosity. So how do you kick off the series in the right and most effective way? This training will teach you how to do this and covers:

- The absolute best time to introduce a series on money.
- How to introduce it in a way that people will let their guard down
- Why Jesus' teaching on money and possessions helps your people understand why you are teaching on it.
- A bold challenge that will shift people's paradigms right off the bat.

Key point: Talk openly about the financial condition of the church before the series begins.

- When you get up to start the series talk opening about this. Start series when church is financially healthy. Let them know we are not behind budget and giving is great. Start by saying thank you for your generosity because we are healthy right now.
- The reason we are doing this is because the scriptures tell us this is important.
- Tell them what you want FOR them and why you are doing this series.
- Say over the next 4-5 weeks we are to be talking about money, stewardship and generosity. You know God wants so much for you in this area. He wants you to experience for yourself - 1 Tim 6:17-19. He wants you to have the freedom from materialism. He wants you and your family to be healthy and stable in this area. This is what we want for you and why we are doing this series.
- Let them know they are in good company and most people don't know there are over 2000 passages 15% of Jesus teaching dealt with money and possessions. He used them to teach deeper truths. Jesus talked about it all the time. Scripture is so deep on it.
- Could be so bold as to say if God puts on your heart that you want to give and you doubt my motives then give somewhere else. It provides a platform for people to let their guard down.
- If someone comes up and says this has stirred my heart and I have given a significant gift somewhere else, would you celebrate that gift? If you would, you are ready to set up that series with the right heart.

Principle 6: TREAT THE TITHE AS THE STARTING POINT

Some church leaders believe the tithe is the Biblical standard for today. Others think that the new covenant means the tithe is no longer applicable. Everyone's got an opinion, and few agree completely. So what is your view of the tithe? This lesson will help you develop your own understanding of the tithe and its role in a generous life.

You will learn:

- Why the tithe is the starting point of generosity and not the finish line.
- The goal of tithe teaching and its not to get people to give.
- Why your life and how you live out your belief on the tithe should be an example for others to follow.
- How to increase your own faith by teaching people to give.

(Dan Hall) If you teach the tithe, treat it as the starting point.

We want people to live an explosively generous life. If you teach the tithe is a principle and something we should start at teach it as the starting point of faith.

The goal: not to get people to give but to get people to live in faith.

Not about the money, its about the heart. God doesn't need our money; He wants our heart. Let the tithe be the beginning.

If you don't preach on the tithe, remember that grace always exceeds the law. Grace doesn't lower the standard, it raises it. God fills us in order to reach it.

If under the law, it was 10% what would it look like under grace.

We want people to live in partnership with God. They will see that they cannot out give God.

As you lead your people, let your life set the example.

Don't let your preaching on the tithe simply to get money out of the people but because you see they will be freed.

Challenge people, if you have never given and you think I am trying to manipulate you, then give somewhere. Your faith will be increased to say that. You then have to live under the same faith as you are asking your people to live because you are having to live by faith.

Let the OT be a framework for a more extravagantly generous life.

"Should Christians Tithe?" by Mark Driscoll (YouTube)

The tithe is a principle taught throughout Scripture, but many Believers today don't know how or if it applies to their lives. If giving is supposed to be cheerful, regular, and sacrificial, how does the tithe fit in?

This question comes from a corrupted heart. OK what do I owe? What's the bill? The issue is never the dollars but the devotion. In the OT there was the tithe. Tenth of your gross that went to the priests, additional 10% of gross to festivals, 3.3% to poor plus gleanings to poor plus tithes and offerings for funding temples etc. This was more than 25% of your gross. The average

American gives 2-3% of income to anything, average Christian 3-4% to church, ministries etc and OT Hebrew gave 27%.

In the NT it doesn't speak of tithing like that. Generally the Pharisees in a negative fashion who gave their money and not their heart. Ticking off obligatory financial necessities.

2 Cor 8:9. They were under extreme difficulty. Everything was in a hard place for these people, and they were poor and out of their poverty welled up generosity.

- Cheerful - glad to give to God first.
- Regular - lifestyle.
- Sacrificial - they felt it. Had to make lifestyle adjustments. For some people they will really feel it.

In the new covenant 10% is not the ceiling it is the floor we begin at. We do not hope to one day give 10%. It is the goal we start at. We teach generous, sacrificial, regular giving. What lifestyle adjustments does God want me to make. Less about percentage and more about the love of God.

Principle 7: DON'T APOLOGISE

Money and generosity can be a difficult subject to teach your people. And perhaps a natural tendency when preaching on it for the first time is to apologise...let's face it we don't want to offend anyone. In this session we will explore:

- The reasons why you shouldn't apologise for preaching on money, stewardship and generosity.
- The one time where you might want to think about apologising...the answer may surprise you.
- The role of preaching on money in shepherding your people's hearts.

This a direct principle. Don't apologise on preaching on money, stewardship, resources and generosity. They need it. Sometimes we qualify so much it loses strength.

- Don't apologise for preaching God's word.
- Don't apologise for giving your people tools to get free from materialism and greed.
- Don't apologise for releasing their skills set to be able to invest into God's purposes throughout the earth and His Kingdom
- Don't apologise for bringing people into a partnership with the Kingdom and see it with fresh new eyes.
- Don't apologise...unless you have not been preaching on it at all.

We should not apologise for taking up an offering.

When we look at scripture, they rejoice in bringing the offering and celebrating that gift. We can be robbing from them this experience of liberation.

Have we held them back because of our own insecurities.

Go preach the word, set them free, give them guidelines and truths to help them live an abundant life.

Matthew 6:21 "For where your treasure is there your heart is also". This is a verse which can suddenly become alive. The treasure and the heart are in the same place. You cannot separate them.

- I can't shepherd their hearts if I can't speak to their cheque books.
- We cannot bring people into spiritual maturity unless we speak on both of these subjects. They are interrelated.

“Connection between spiritual growth and generosity” with Patrick Johnson

Why is it important to see the link?

Good church leaders share a common passion – they want to see the spiritual growth of their people.

A focus group asked a group of pastors to list the things they would include to help people grow in their faith but not one said about being a good and faithful steward and be generous.

How? Bible Study, prayer, worship, fellowship etc.

Missing? Stewardship & Generosity

If you look at scripture you see that God connects this.

Irony = God sees the link

- Over 2500 verses in Scripture on money and possessions
- 15% of what Christ said dealt with money and possessions as an object lesson and that was more than what He said about heaven and hell combined.
- Jesus clearly stated that material possessions were the chief competitor with God for our hearts. Matthew 6:24 – You cannot serve God and mammon.
- The cultural context in which we attempt to grow people spiritually is dominated by money and possessions. If you look at internet and TV people are getting so many different messages about money and possessions and yet we remain silent.

So how can we disconnect spiritual growth from possessions and generosity?

We should also see the link.

The times.... they are a changin’

People are starting to connect there is a connect correlation between our spiritual lives and money.

David Platt “So what is the difference between someone who wilfully indulges in sexual pleasures while ignoring the Bible on moral purity and someone who wilfully indulges in the selfish pursuit of more and more material possessions while ignoring the Bible on caring for the poor? The difference is that one involves a social taboo in the church and the other involves the social norm in the church.”

Dan Hall “I came to the realisation that I couldn’t shepherd their hearts unless I learned how to shepherd their pocketbooks”.

Matthew 6:21 “Where your treasure is there your heart is also.”

Our choice:

We can be the REVELATION 3 Church, or we can be the ACT 2 Church.

Laodicea - The only Church where Jesus did not praise them first and then give them a warning. Christ went straight to the warning. They were lukewarm and I am going to spit you out of my mouth. They said, "we are rich, and we don't have a need for anything". He said, "you don't realise you are pitiful, blind and naked".

The painting where Jesus is standing at the door knocking, he is not knocking at the unbeliever's heart, that was to a church so wrapped up in their possessions, wealth and riches Jesus was standing there knocking saying come out I want to be with you. Are we any different?

Acts 2 church characteristic was that they were generous. They gave to those who had needs and God added to them daily.

What will be said about us? Will we grow people through generosity?

Are we going to grab the opportunity to grow or be lukewarm?

Andy Stanley said if you want to grow people spiritually through generosity you have to:

- **Preach it = motivation.** That is what stirs people hearts to live faithfully and live that life.
- **Teach it = education.** If they go home after being motivated and then think they can't do it, we need to educate them.
- **Celebrate it = punctuation.** Hold up stories of people giving time, talent and treasure. It says this is value in our church.
- **Apply it = authentication.** When we live like a generous leader there is authentication, and you can go to your people. When the church is led by generous leaders.

There is a direct correlation between how our people handle their money and finances and their spiritual growth and we need to be leading strongly as spiritual leaders in this area.

Principle 8: GET RADICAL!

Do you really want to push the envelope of radical generosity that takes people to new levels of understanding? In this session we will explore real life examples of four churches that called people to take unusual steps of generosity as a part of a series. These include:

- Giving the shoes off your feet
- Giving away an entire Sunday's offering

Your preaching will impact the minds and hearts of your people. These radical calls to action will impact their hands and feet!

When you preach on money, stewardship and generosity GET RADICAL.

You have the opportunity to do some radical things to get the point across.

Story 1: *A church was growing so fast they had not sat down and worked out their mission strategy. They had not worked out their mission budget. So for their generosity series they spent 8 weeks focusing on 4 missions they wanted to impact - 2 locally and 2 overseas. They talked about this blessed life of generosity. AT the end they took up a special offering the 100% of that would go to these 4 missions - outside the church. That offering was 4 x the normal offering was giving and there were 142 first time givers. An offering give away is a radical way of living what we are teaching. Giving outside. Giving generously and extravagantly.*

Story 2: *Spontaneous generosity. Outside the church they had a tractor/trailer. They found children in Africa who needed shoes. They started a missionary link. They asked people to take off their shoes right there and then, put them on the trailer and give them away. WOW, that took some courage. But people were taking off their shoes. When the children came out of Sunday School, they saw parents walking around with no shoes and wanted to know what happened and the children wanted to do the same thing.*

Story 3: *Kingdom Assignment. The church gives money to people in the pew, and they are asked to go out and invest in people in need. The people come back and share stories of how it impacted them. People often are so excited they raise more money to give away. This is radical because the church is giving money and not taking.*

Story 4: *If you are in need, come to this side and if you have more than what you need, we want you over there and pray and we want to match people's surplus to others needs.*

- Don't just preach.
- Come up with ideas that will help people live out the generosity and put feet to what you are teaching.