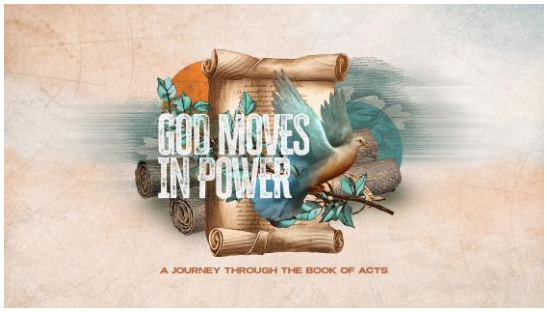


Group Discussion Guide | October 29 & November 1
God Moves in Power through Generosity

Go over the agenda for life group time with your group:

For this life group time, your group's goal is twofold:

(1) To finish discussion on the ***Created to Serve*** material that you have not yet covered.
(2) To dive into the theme of this week's sermon: Generosity!

SECTION 1: Created to Serve

Opening Question and Scripture (5 minutes)

In our first week discussing *Created to Serve*, we asked everyone to answer this question: On a scale of 1–10, how confident are you that you understand the specific purposes for which God has created you? (1 = no idea; 10 = fully confident). Has your number moved at all over this experience? How so?

Discussion and reflection on Part 6: Explore Your Experiences (20 minutes)

Reflecting on our own experiences is important. Take a few moments to look over Part 6: Explore Your Experiences, especially your notes on page 36. *Allow a few minutes for people to review the material. This also allows those who did not spend time with the material before to get an overview of what is there.*

- What feels important for you to share with us about your experiences and how they have shaped you? Choose one of the questions on page 36 to answer if that's helpful.
- How does it change an experience when asking how God might use it?
- Can you think of a time when something you went through allowed you to encourage or help someone else?

Discussion and reflection on "Discover the Bigger Picture" (15 minutes)

Take a few moments to look over the Discover the Bigger Picture section, especially your notes on page 40. *Allow a few minutes for people to review the material. This also allows those who did not spend time with the material before to get an overview of what is there.*

- What stands out? What patterns did you notice? Are there themes that emerge?
- If you're serving somewhere now, how will your discoveries impact that service?
- Are you considering exploring a new way to serve?

As we talk in terms of how we serve as individuals or families, it's also important for us to think about how we can serve *as a life group.*

- Given what we're noticing about how God created each of us to serve, what would it look like for us to serve together as a group?
- Is there a next step we can take?

There is a QR code on page 41 of the guide that takes you to serving opportunities at The Creek. Go to thecreek.org/outreach *for information on how to serve as a life group. You can also reach out to Brock or Rachel with any further questions.*

SECTION 2: God Moves in Power through Generosity

This week we begin a two-week focus on generosity. In Acts 2 and 4, the early church describes itself, and one quality stands out: extreme, joyful generosity. Dan's message told us why - the early church was generous because God is generous. Father, Son, and Spirit continuously *give.* As a result, when we grow closer to God, our lives take on his generous character.

For many people, generosity can be difficult to talk about. So, here's how you can help:

- Share honestly about your own journey with giving, struggles included.
- Talk about money the way you'd talk about any other area of discipleship.
- Cheer on a first gift, a recurring gift, and growth toward the tithe and beyond.
- Make sure no one leaves group feeling ashamed or singled out.

Reflection Questions

Dan began by asking us to picture the healthiest church we can imagine - vibrant, deep, centered on Jesus, filled with the Spirit, the kind of church you'd love to bring a friend to. Take a moment to reflect:

- Who is the most generous person you've ever known? What made their generosity – or their personality - stand out to you?

Discussion of sermon and Scripture (20 minutes)

Read Acts 4:32-37. In his sermon, Dan described the generosity of the early church as extreme. It wasn't an extra $20 in the offering basket. People sold land and houses, no one claimed their possessions as their own, and "there were no needy persons among them" (Acts 4:34). Generosity was a core part of the church's DNA.

- What surprises or challenges you most about the generosity described in Acts 2 and 4?

- Dan said generosity was as unmistakable in the early church as a person's most noticeable feature. If someone looked closely at our church, or at your life, would generosity stand out? Why or why not?

The heart of the message was simple: Because God is generous, God's people are generous. Dan showed how the generosity of our one God is revealed through the distinct, yet inseparable, persons of the Trinity:

1. God the Father is generous. Creation, life, breath, and every good and perfect gift come from him (Acts 17:25; James 1:17). Jesus said that if imperfect parents know how to give good gifts, how much more will our Father in heaven (Matthew 7:9–11).
2. God the Son is generous. Jesus gave his time to children, 150 gallons of the best wine at a wedding, his touch to a leper, and finally his life on the cross (Mark 10:45).
3. God the Spirit is generous. The Spirit is himself a gift, and he gives gifts to every believer, gifts that are "given to be given" (1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 4:10).

As you reflect on each one, consider:

- Which of these pictures of God's generosity speaks to you most right now? Why?
- Have you ever thought of generosity as part of God's character, rather than just something He asks of us? How does that change the way you see giving?

Dan shared that he grew up in poverty with a scarcity mindset, and that his heart began to change through a close friendship with a deeply generous man. In the same way, the more time we spend with Jesus, the more we become like him, much like learning a language through total immersion.

- How did your upbringing shape the way you think about money and giving? Do you lean more toward scarcity or abundance?
- Money touches every part of life: the practical, the emotional, and the spiritual. Which of those three feels most tangled up for you when it comes to giving?

Prayer and next steps (15 minutes)

Whether it be serving or generosity, discernment doesn't have to end tonight! As you leave, here are some ways to keep going:

- Carry this question with you: What seems to be consistently emerging via your gifting and via God's invitations to becoming more generous?
- Use the information on page 41 in *Created to Serve* to explore serving opportunities at The Creek or to meet with someone on the Formation and Outreach Team. For more information about serving as a group, you can visit thecreek.org/serve/group-projects.

Keep paying attention. God is still shaping you, and He will continue to show you new ways to love and serve others in every season of your life.

To close your time together, spend a few moments in prayer. Thank God for his generosity as Father, Son, and Spirit. Ask him to replace fear and scarcity with trust, and to make your group, our church, and each of you more like him. You may choose to break into groups of 2-3 to pray together or remain as a whole group.