

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides
December 10th

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. What is one thing that you want for Christmas? What would be the perfect gift?

Bible Study Questions

1. What kind of home did you grow up in? One that was generous to others, one that spent a lot on stuff, or one that strictly held onto money.
 - What approach do you tend to take toward money?
2. Read Luke 12:16-21
 - What false assumptions do you notice about this rich man?
 - How did Jesus challenge those assumptions?
 - How does this story impact the way that you look at your stuff?
3. What do you think that Jesus means by saying that we should be “rich toward God”?
4. How did God show generosity toward us? What difference does that make?
5. What wisdom have you learned in navigating good budgeting and saving while at the same time being generous with what God has given you?
6. Living a generous life isn't just about money. It includes whatever we have in our hands. What are some of the non financial resources that you think about that we are to wisely steward?
7. Is there any way that you can take an action step of being extra generous this season?

December 10th: The Grinch Within: Stinginess

One of the iconic images of Christmas is that of Ebenezer Scrooge who holds onto money and rejects generosity. Another image is Santa who generously gives toys to everyone. While we reject one and praise the other, only one lives in the real world. Santa has elves who does his work. Scrooge is being practical and is guarding his limited supply of money. More often than not, we adopt the Scrooge aspect to generosity. The good news though is that Jesus frees us and we find the answer in Luke 12:13-21.

- I. **Stinginess: A refusal to spend or be generous with available resources**
- II. **False assumptions:** In Luke 12:13-21, we find a man who lives with three false assumptions.
 - **Our resources are for our own consumption:** The man assumes that his riches and his crops belong to him and therefore should be contributed to his own pleasure.
 - **The good life is found is a life of self consumption:** The man envisions an early retirement where he can eat, drink, and take life easy. Ironically, he does this without the community in mind meaning that he is isolated.
 - **Resources are limited:** Barns are built to contain his wealth. He cannot part with the wealth because he never knows when he might need it.
- III. **Jesus corrects our assumptions:** Jesus introduces an unexpected factor to the story. He dies suddenly and all of his wealth is left behind. Jesus then states that this is what will happen to anyone who stores up things for themselves instead of being rich toward God.
 - **We are to steward the resources that God has loaned us:** Everything that this man owned had been given to him by God. The day would come when he would die and they wouldn't go with him. Therefore, we are to steward what God has given us.
 - **The good life is found in spiritual riches:** Ironically he found himself before God experiencing an eternity of spiritual poverty. A good life is found in communion with God and with others.
 - **God is the source of unlimited resources:** If all that he had was from God, then God is the source of resources. God can give whatever wants as he pleases.
- IV. **We can be rich toward God because through Jesus he has generously given to us:** Being rich toward God involves investing in our relationship with him and that which he treasures the most, other people. God doesn't just tell us to do this, but lavishes his generosity on us. The greatest gift of all is

the giving of his one and only son, Jesus. It is because of this gift, that we can respond with generous hearts.

Conclusion

If we want to be free of stinginess and not being Scrooges, then the starting point is to shift our perspective to a stewardship mindset. Then ask some important questions. What has God placed into our hands? Then in light of God's generosity, how can we use that to serve him. This may involve financial generosity, but can apply to other resources such as time and resources.