

Studies in Generosity

Part 4: Ministry

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of **DISCIPLE**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5



2022.7.24

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

- Read Luke 9:57-62. What do these three men have in common? What are their differences?

Which of those three men do you most resemble? Explain.

- Think back to the last time you tried to recruit help (moving a fridge, serving on the HOA, etc.). Was it easy or hard to find quality help? Mark the following chart:

"It was a cinch!
I had to turn away
quality volunteers."

"It was a royal pain!
I had to beg and bribe
people to find help."

In light of your experience recruiting help, reflect on Jesus' responses to these men.

Just two verses later (Luke 10:2), Jesus is telling us to pray for more workers! How do we explain that?

- Now focus just on the final volunteer (Luke 9:61–62). With what title does he address Jesus?

This man **seems** very respectful—politely asking permission for a reasonable sounding request. **Why** do you think Jesus refused his request? Is it **more** due to the fact that one does not say "no" to a "Lord", or to the difficulty of the mission ("The faint of heart need not apply!")? What do you think?

- Pastor Doug asked, "What does it mean for a Christian to be 'sent out'? Out of **where**?" He then noted that the first answer is: "Out of **ourselves!**"
Tell about a time when—at great personal cost—you took your eyes off yourself and focused on others. What did you think or feel right before deciding to serve? During your service? After serving?

Read Paul's example, recorded in Acts 20:34–35. Who has done that sort of service on your behalf? Do you think they would say that it's more blessed to give than to receive? Why or why not?

Tell about a time when **you** truly realized that it is more blessed to give, to serve, than to receive.

Sermon Summary

Today we're finishing up our series on what it means to be truly generous—generous with more than just money. For example, Luke 9:49–10:2 teaches that we need to be generous with our time and our talents. Generosity of service is displayed when we freely give ourselves away to others in deeds of love and service. Generosity of service is based upon the generosity of discipleship, which in turn is based on the generosity of costly grace.

I. The Generosity of Service (10:1-2) In this passage, Jesus sends seventy disciples out to minister. Back in Luke 9:1–2, he'd sent out the twelve. Both groups were given authority over demons and sickness as a precursor to sending them out to proclaim the kingdom of God. Many Bible scholars believe that Jesus chose twelve disciples to correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel. God wants every tribe to respond to the Messiah. So, why the seventy? Likewise, many Bible scholars take us back to Genesis which enumerates all seventy nations of the earth at that time. If that is the case, the seventy missionaries would symbolize God's desire to take the gospel to the entire world! The gospel is not just good news for Israel, it is for the world! "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." We are saved (Ephesians 2:8-9) in order to serve (Ephesians 2:10). God has given each one of us gifts and talents and experiences that He wants us to employ in the service of others (2 Corinthians 1:3–4). If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, God has sent you out on mission! You have been sent out by God himself. "Sent out *where?*" you might ask. Out of yourself! You don't have to leave the country; mission begins with being sent out of yourself—out of bondage to your own selfishness.

II. The Generosity of Discipleship (9:57-62) You will never be equipped to give yourself away to others until you have first learned how to give yourself away fully to Jesus. One man says, "I want to follow you," and Jesus says, "Slow down. Following me is going to involve hardship and suffering and loss. Following me will require a radical change of lifestyle and priorities. Are you sure that you are ready for that?" The next two men are different—they're moving too slowly! "You say that you want to follow me, but I perceive that I'm not really a priority in your life." You have some preconditions to service rooted in higher priorities. As soon as you say, "I'll follow you as long as," and then add your condition, Jesus is saying, "You're not really ready to follow me. You have a higher allegiance." It doesn't work that way. Jesus cannot be the means to an end. He has to have first place in your life. "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God." Following Jesus must take precedence over even important family obligations. When the Creator of the universe calls you to do something, he's not the kind of person you put on hold! The Lord demands to have first place in our lives. This is radical.

III. The Generosity of Costly Grace (9:49-56) There are actually two incidents here. In the first, the disciples encountered someone who was doing good, and doing it in Jesus' name—but he wasn't "with us" (v. 49-50). Jesus said "Don't stop him—we're all on the same team! For whoever is not against you is for you." The disciples lacked generosity of spirit! They're turf-conscious; they're jealous. But Jesus says, "Be generous!" Then, look what happens next (v. 51-56)! Some Samaritans refused hospitality to Jesus and the twelve because they were Jews. James and John offer to call down fire from heaven on them (à la Elijah, in 2 Kings 1)! They probably thought, "If the rejecting Elijah warranted the fire of God, wouldn't rejecting Jesus warrant even greater judgment?" That seems logical—but Jesus sternly rebuked them. Jesus was ready to extend grace to the Samaritans because, unlike Elijah, who was sent to bring judgment, Jesus was sent not to bring judgment but to bear it! He came not to bring fire down on other people, but to have the fire of God come down on Him! Jesus took the fire of God's divine judgment for our sin so that we who trust him don't have to.

Now we can link the three points of today's message: to hear God's call to give ourselves completely, with no conditions, no looking back, we cannot do this until we've fully given ourselves to Christ. And we never can fully give ourselves to Christ until we understand the amazing grace he has shown us at the cross. Giving ourselves away is the only reasonable response.

Born without arms—yet "fearfully and wonderfully made" by his good and loving Heavenly Father!

**Come hear Daniel Ritchie
next Sunday at TCC.**

Learn about TCC's partnership with **LoveLife**, a ministry which is advocating for the sanctity of every human life.

Then, mark your calendar for a very special event on Saturday morning, August 6!



Undoubtedly there will be a squabble this week about "who got to go first" or "who is always having to do chores". In Mark 10:43-45 Jesus said: **"Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."**

- Write the text of Mark 10:43-45 on a 3x5 card as a memory verse.
- Take note of a time when you felt inclined to grumble while serving.
- Share your story at the dinner table—but don't moralize.
- See if anyone else volunteers his own "grumbling story".
- Suggest memorizing Mark 10:43-45 together as a family.
- Each night, review the passage and close in prayer.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*The Greek word diakonia is translated as "ministry" or as "service".
"Five Question Bible Study" is a great way to learn more about it...*

Monday—Study 1 Corinthians 12:4–7

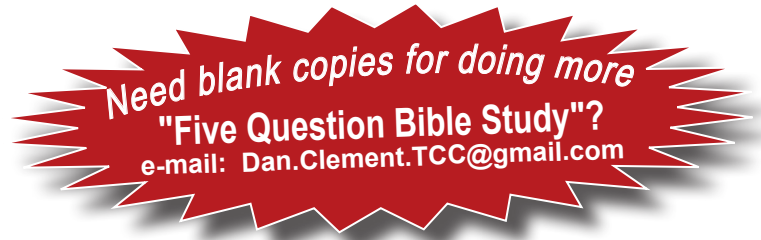
Tuesday—Study Romans 12:4–8

Wednesday—2 Corinthians 5:16–21

Thursday—Study Ephesians 4:11–16

Friday—Study 1 Timothy 1:12–17

Saturday—Study 2 Timothy 4:1–5



Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]