



This week we are wrapping up the *Mad Money* series by discussing **Generosity**. If you missed Sunday's service, you missed out on one of the most exciting things we've done at Journey Church. We're challenging and enabling you to be generous Christ followers in our community. **Don't forget to tell us your stories on the web site!** With that in mind, let's get started:

- **What do you think it means to be a “generous” person?**
- Throughout this series, we've talked a lot about being good stewards of the resources God has given us. **Do you think generosity is a part of good stewardship? Why/why not?**
- **READ: Proverbs 14:31 & 19:17. How do these verses describe the connection between our generosity and our relationship with God?**
- **READ: Proverbs 11:24. Discuss the principle of “sowing and reaping.”**
- **READ: Proverbs 25:21-22. What does this passage teach us about the potential spiritual impact of living a generous life?**
- **Since the service Sunday, what ideas have you come up with to raise the bar of generosity in your life?**
- **As we close out the *Mad Money* series, what has encouraged you the most? Challenged? Touched? Why?**



Growth Groups Leaders' Travel Guide Week of May 4-10, 2008

Growth Group Leaders/Discussion Leaders:

The above salutation indicates that some of you are leading your Growth Group discussion because you were asked to do so by your Growth Group Leader. A lot of exciting things are happening at Journey Church. We are preparing ourselves for the future by equipping potential new leaders for new groups. I am extremely pumped by your willingness to lead the discussion in your group. As you take the opportunity to lead the discussion a couple of times, please give me feedback on how I can help prepare you better.

Growth Group Leaders:

Please be sure to communicate with me who your fill-in Discussion Leaders are so that I can follow up with them and get feedback from their fresh eyes. Also, please be prepared with the material for the discussion so that you can help your Discussion Leader should they get stuck. We need to do everything we can to ensure that their first time in "the hot seat" is a positive one. I appreciate you challenging your folks to rise to the challenge and to invest in the lives of others. Before your Discussion Leader takes over, I would definitely take some time to reiterate our core value of multiplication. Having someone else lead the discussion is a step in that process.

Discussion Leaders:

The following Leaders' Guide is very similar to what I supply to our Growth Group Leaders each week. I generally upload the Travel Guides to my blog shortly after midnight on Saturday night: apk4jc.wordpress.com/travel-guides. The first page is generally set up as a hand-out for folks to take notes. I leave it up to you as to whether or not you want to use the hand out, or ask the questions verbally. I personally find the handouts helpful in keeping others involved, as I can ask them to look up and read the passages on the page in front of them.

As a quick reminder, we *generally* follow a message-based curriculum in our Growth Groups. We have chosen this approach to maximize impact in our lives. When each church-related meeting focuses on a different message, it is harder to remember and apply what we have learned. When each church-related meeting stays focused on a single message, we can think more about it, work through it, and experience genuine life change. There will be times where topics and scheduling will lead us in a different direction, but this will generally be our approach.

Following your Growth Group meeting, I ask that you email me feedback on how the discussion went (within 2 days of group meeting): andrew@journeytogether.net. The information I am looking for in such an email: Who was there, who was missing, general input on the flow of the discussion, who really seemed to connect with the discussion and/or experience some life-impact decisions, any prayer requests you deem appropriate for the church leadership, any other feedback you consider appropriate. **To ensure maximum impact, I encourage both the Growth Group Leader and Discussion Leader to provide me feedback whenever possible.**

Normally at this point, I simply provide you with a few announcements and lead you into the discussion.

Again, I greatly appreciate your willingness to step up to the plate and impact Group Life at Journey Church!

Let's Grow Together!

Andrew

By the time most of you read this, you will probably know what we did during the worship service. Additionally, you will also know what stories we are looking for on the web site. I encourage you to take a few minutes and discuss the impact of the service. You can do this as an ice-breaker, or as part of the questions at the end of the Travel Guide. Either way, I encourage you to raise the bar with your Growth Group through our challenge from Sunday.



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- What do you think it means to be a "generous" person?

This question is intentionally simplistic. I generally try to start each Travel Guide with a fairly generic question or two to serve as an ice-breaker and to help people focus their attention on the topic to be discussed. Don't spend too much time on the ice-breaker questions, however, listen carefully to the answers you receive. They are often helpful for you to know how to shape the discussion later on. Also, if you feel the discussion getting off-topic or headed in a wrong direction, try to reign it in quickly, without insult someone, and move on.

- Throughout this series, we've talked a lot about being good stewards of the resources God has given us. **Do you think generosity is a part of good stewardship? Why/why not?**

This question is a transition question. With a focused series like *Mad Money*, we want to be sure and connect each message to what we have already learned. However, transition questions are often still diagnostic questions. The answers you receive here will help you understand the group members' heart condition related to the topic at hand. Again, listen carefully for clues to come back to later in your discussion.

FYI – The following discussion is a “tour of Proverbs” that will demonstrate that generosity IS an essential part of good stewardship. As your discussion moves forward, transition into the Bible passages and following questions:

- **READ: *Proverbs 14:31 & 19:17*. How do these verses describe the connection between our generosity and our relationship with God?**

Both of these verses make it clear that there is a connection between being generous to those in need and our relationship with God. *14:31* is quite strong in teaching us that refusing to give to those in need is an insult to God, but giving honors God. Similarly, *19:17* teaches us that giving to the poor is like investing in God, and God will then repay us for our generosity. You may want to suggest to your group that if anyone is experiencing staleness in their relationship to God, that maybe they should try giving something to someone in need.

- **READ: *Proverbs 11:24*. Discuss the principle of “sowing and reaping.”**

As you discuss this principle, you may want to revisit *2 Corinthians 9:6* from Eric's message on Sunday. The goal of this discussion is that we can only expect to reap a reward in accordance with the generosity we are sowing. If we are investing in people half-heartedly, we shouldn't expect any more than a half-hearted response. If we are giving with selfish motives, we shouldn't be surprised with a self-serving response. In contrast, if we are investing deeply into peoples' lives, we can expect them to build trust in us and open up to deeper issues and discussions. If we are giving with no selfish pretense, we can expect a much more genuine response.

- **READ: *Proverbs 25:21-22*. What does this passage teach us about the potential spiritual impact of living a generous life?**

Giving generously to needy people who are far from God demonstrates that we genuinely care about them. Simply speaking truth to them might turn them off, but generosity will tend to quench their anger. You may want to take a moment to challenge your folks to think of creative ways to meet a need in the life of a friend, neighbor, or family member that is far from God. Encourage them to pray for opportunities to “sow seeds” of life into peoples' lives with generosity and actions. THEN, they can pray that the generosity and actions melt down the barriers and open up doors for speaking truth. If this discussion goes well, you may even want to brainstorm ideas together.

- **Since the service Sunday, what ideas have you come up with to raise the bar of generosity in your life?**

Because I am writing this before the service, I can't be too specific. HOWEVER, this question is intended to follow-up with the BIG THING we did during the service. Some of your folks may have already acted. Other may be struggling to come up with ideas. This is an opportunity to help each other out, to celebrate victories, and to remind your folks to tell their stories on the web site.

- As we close out the *Mad Money* series, **what has encouraged you the most? Challenged? Touched? Why?**

Don't expect everyone to answer all three parts of this question. However, take note if somebody doesn't give an answer to any part of it. The hope is that this question will allow everyone to see that God is speaking to them. It also allows other people in the group to see that God speaks to others! GOD SPEAKS to PEOPLE! WOW! Our goal is always to see each person take the NEXT STEP in walking along the JOURNEY of faith.