

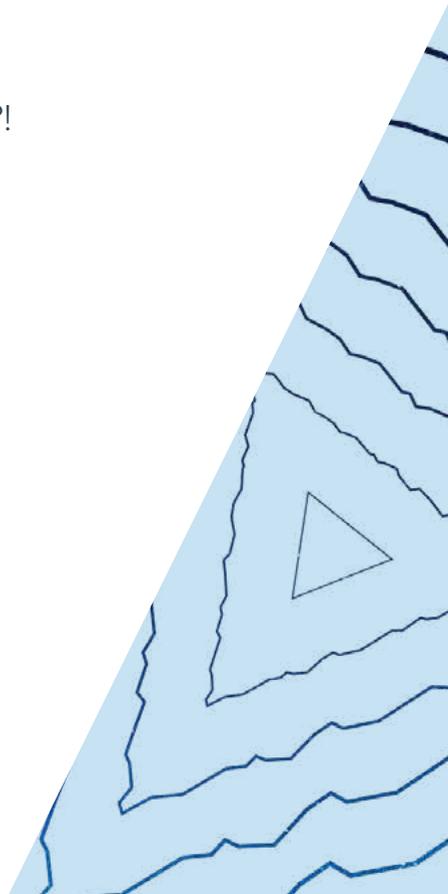
#blessed

6 WEEK SERIES



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Our culture is saturated with false teaching on what it means to be blessed, but what does the Bible say about it? How can we truly live blessed lives? Over six weeks we will unlock the rewards of living generously

Week 1: Heart Matter

Dealing with a selfish and grieving heart and how to develop a generous and grateful heart

Week 2: Test! What test?

Tithing is a test. Tithing is biblical.

Week 3: First place

First fruits must be offered. The tithe must be first.

Week 4: Root of evil

What is mammon? Is money evil?
What should I do with money?

Week 5: Am I generous?

Enemy, extravagance and reward of generosity

Week 6: Q&A

Answering your questions...

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WEEK # 1

HEART MATTER

by **Carl Johnston**
@RevCPJohnston

Key Scriptures:

Luke 6:30-38; Deuteronomy 15:7-10, 14-15

Giving is such a huge subject but when you boil it down, ultimately it becomes about one thing – the heart! Joy-filled giving is what God desires from each of us and Jesus said “Give and it will be given back to you” (Luke 6:38). The principle of giving applies to all areas of our lives, not just treasure, but time and talent as well. Genuine gratitude is powerful, and a heart of gratitude is vital for creating a lifestyle of generosity.



1. Deal with a selfish heart

The Lord is concerned with our hearts. God does not bless giving alone but rather he blesses giving from a right heart attitude. It is true that when we give, we receive; however, that should not be our motivation for giving. We must deal with any selfishness in our hearts.

2. Deal with a grieving heart

We shouldn't give and then grieve over that decision. Selfishness attacks us before we give, and grief attacks us after we give. If we realise that we are simply stewards, and everything belongs to the Lord anyway, we will have a correct perspective.

3. Develop a generous heart

God said He wants to not just give but to be generous. The first time we are born in the natural, we are born selfish. When we are born again, we are born generous. God wants us to be generous like He is generous.

4. Develop a grateful heart

If we allow God to remind us every now and then that we were once slaves (Deuteronomy 15:15) and that everything we have is by His grace, it will help us to be grateful. All we have is the Lord's, and we can be more generous when we are grateful.

Discussion

1. What stood out to you from this teaching?
2. What does having a heart of gratitude mean to you?
3. What have you been taught in the past about giving? Did these teachings have a positive or negative impact on you? Explain.
4. Why do you think we sometimes struggle with selfishness before we give and grieve after we have given?
5. We can give of our treasure, time and talents. How does the way we spend our time, give of our treasure and use our talents show where our heart is? In which of these areas are you most generous?

Application

This week, take some time to think and reflect honestly about having a heart of gratitude in these three areas of your life: treasure, time and talents. As you think seriously about them, why not journal your responses and spend some time praying about them.

WEEK # 2

TEST! WHAT TEST?!?

by **Carl Johnston**
@RevCPJohnston

Key Scriptures:

Malachi 3:6-12; Genesis 14:18-20;
Deuteronomy 26:1-2, 13-15

We are not supposed to test God; however, when it comes to tithing, God says, “Try me now in this” (Malachi 3:10). God desires for His children to bring their tithe into the storehouse of the church. When we do this He will pour out His blessing upon us, and He will rebuke the devourer for our sakes. Tithing is a test, a test of our heart.



1. Tithing is a test

The word "tithe" means a "tenth part." Throughout Scripture the number ten represents testing. God tests our hearts through the tithe, and tithing is the only area where God says we can test Him too.

2. Tithing is biblical

Leviticus 27:30 says, "All the tithe of the land, whether the seed of the land or the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's. It is holy to the Lord." Moses said: I have removed the holy tithe from my house and taken it to the place where you have chosen to make Your name abide. Jesus takes it further by scolding the Pharisees and saying they should do more than just tithe; they should show mercy, justice and faith.

3. Tithing is a blessing

God gave the command that all His people are to tithe; however, with our obedience comes a blessing. The believer's tithe helps support the work of the church, the priest, and the ministry to people. The place where we receive our "spiritual food" is the place where we are to pay our tithes. Obeying God's word through tithing invites God's blessings and provision for our lives and finances.

Discussion

1. What stood out to you from this teaching?
2. When you think of tithing, do you cringe or do you feel excited? Explain.
3. Do you believe tithing is for believers today? Why or why not?
4. Read Deuteronomy 26:1-2 and 26:13-15. According to these verses, what is the tithe and who or what are we to give it to?
5. Many believers struggle when it comes to tithing. Why do you think that is? What are some of the barriers or misunderstandings that hinder us from tithing?

Application

This week, take some time to think and reflect honestly about these three areas of your life and how they relate to tithing: treasure, time and talents. Why not journal your responses and spend some time praying about them.



WEEK # 3

FIRST PLACE

by **Carl Johnston**
@RevCPJohnston

Key Scripture:
Exodus 13:1-13

The principle of first is about making sure God is first place in our lives. In Exodus, God told Moses to consecrate the firstborn among the children. Throughout scripture, the firstborn always belonged to the Lord. Our obedience to God's principles reveals the conditions of our heart.

1. The firstborn must be sacrificed or redeemed

In Exodus, the firstborn among those that were clean had to be sacrificed, while the firstborn of the unclean had to be redeemed. These two classifications are examples of what was to come. God's firstborn Son, Jesus, was clean and had to be sacrificed. We are unclean, and therefore Jesus was sacrificed for our redemption. God gave Jesus first, in faith, even when we were sinners. Jesus is God's tithe.

2. The firstfruits must be offered

Proverbs 3:9-10 says that we are to honour the Lord with our possessions and with the firstfruits of all our increase. When we do this, we invite God's blessing into our lives, and "your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow." In Genesis 4, God honoured Abel's offering but not Cain's. The reason is because Abel's offering was from the firstborn of his flock; however, Cain's offering was not from his firstfruits.

3. The tithe must be first

There are many blessings that go along with tithing, but it is the principle of faith and putting God first that initiates these blessings. The first portion, the tithe, is the portion that

redeems the rest. God does not desire a legalistic, begrudging response; He desires our hearts to be submitted to Him in joy and faith that His principles are true.

Discussion

1. What stood out to you from this teaching?
2. What does the principle of first mean to you, and do you agree or disagree that it is important? Explain.
3. What are some of the things in our lives that might conflict with the principle of first?
4. What types of fears or concerns, if any, do you wrestle with most when thinking about the principle of first?
5. Read Proverbs 3:9. How can we give our time and talents to God using the principle of first?

Application

This week, take some time to think and reflect honestly about these three areas of your life and how they relate to the principle of first: treasure, time and talents. Why not journal your responses and spend some time praying about them.

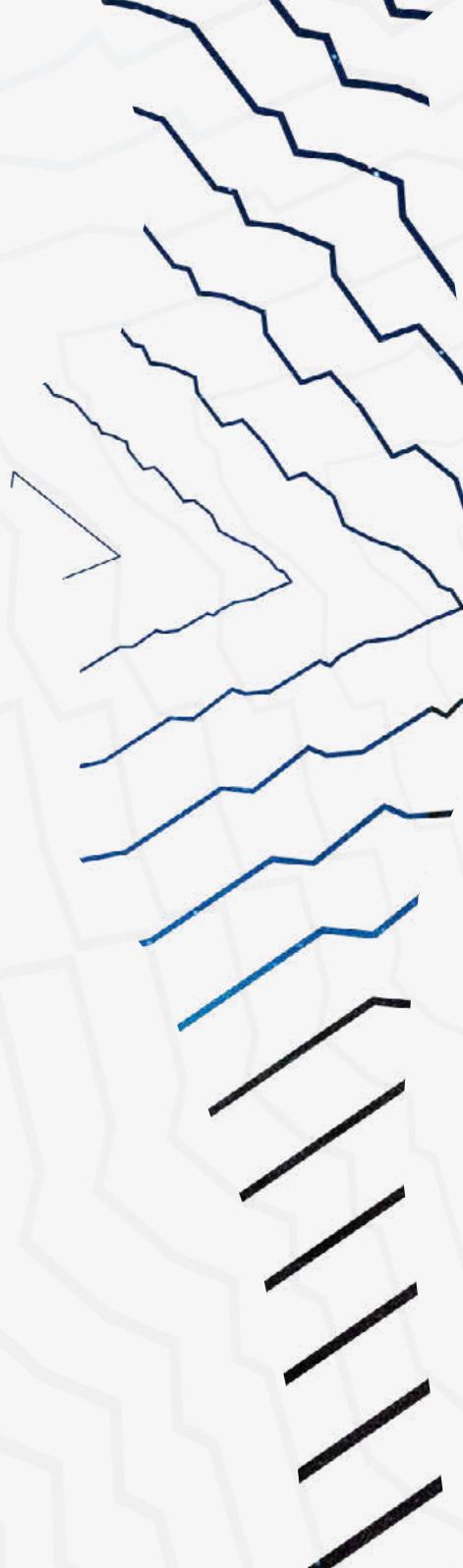
WEEK # 4

ROOT OF EVIL

by **Carl Johnston**
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Key Scriptures:
Luke 16:9-13; 1 Timothy 6:10

The word Mammon is an Aramaic word, which means riches, and mammon represents the spirit of this world. Money either has God's spirit on it or a mammon spirit. Jesus said, "You can't serve God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24). If we think that money could solve our problems instead of God, then the spirit of mammon has influenced us. Tithing and giving breaks the stronghold of the spirit of mammon.



1. What is mammon?

Mammon has its roots in Babylonian history and essentially means “sown in confusion.” Mammon is the spirit of the world and that the spirit rests on money not submitted to God. God blesses money that has been submitted and doesn’t try to replace God. Mammon tries to take God’s place by promising us everything that only God can give. Mammon wants to rule. We must submit ourselves and our money to God only.

2. Is money evil?

In 1 Timothy 6:10, Paul writes that the love of money is the root of all evil. Money, in itself, is not evil, the **love** of money is the root of evil. Money can be used for unrighteous temporary purposes or for righteous eternal purposes. The choice is ours. As followers of Jesus we are to use money for what is eternal, such as winning souls for God’s kingdom.

3. What should I do with money?

Be a good steward with whatever you have. Luke 16:10 and 12 says, “he who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least, is unjust also in much... and if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own?” We all have something with which we are supposed to be faithful. Tithing is stewarding what belongs to another. Our money belongs to God, not us.

Discussion

1. What stood out to you from this teaching?
2. Imagine a world where the love of money did not exist. What would this place look and feel like, and how would people behave?
3. In your own words how would you describe the spirit of mammon? Is it important to resist the spirit of mammon? If so, why?
4. The bible talks about how the love of money is the root of all evil. Why do you think that is?
5. Read Luke 6:10. What are some of the “small things” we can be faithful stewards of? Name one or two important attributes of someone who is a good steward. How can we better reflect these qualities in our lives?

Application

Think creatively of ways you could faithfully steward your treasure, time and talents. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9 and why not journal about how you can trust God to use you further in your weak areas.

WEEK # 5

AM I GENEROUS?

by **Carl Johnston**
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Key Scriptures:
John 12:1-8; Mark 14:8-9

A very important question we all need to ask ourselves is “am I generous?” Selfishness is the enemy of generosity and tries to take the place of God. A generous heart stems from a grateful heart. The most extravagant gift you can give God is yourself. We can be generous towards God once we realise that He is more than generous in His love toward us. God is extravagant, and He rewards those who give generously.

1. The enemy of generosity

There is an age-old battle of God being generous and Satan being selfish. Selfishness promotes, protects and provides for self. As followers of Christ we are called to abandon everything and give all we have to the advancement of God's kingdom. Regarding the issue of money, God is not only testing our hearts to see if we can handle money, He is testing our hearts to see if we can handle true riches.

2. The extravagance of generosity

In John 12:1-8, Mary gives a generous gift to the Lord by anointing Jesus and pouring one year's wages on His feet. Mary passed the test of the heart; however, Judas did not. The most extravagant gift we can give God is ourselves. There are two levels of giving: tithes and offerings. If you get to the first level, you will be able to go to the second, discovering the windows of heaven are opened over your life. A generous heart stems from a grateful heart.

3. The reward of generosity

Generosity gives not to be rewarded, but God always rewards generosity when we give with the right heart. God rewards extravagantly, and He wants to reward us when we fight through selfishness. One of the

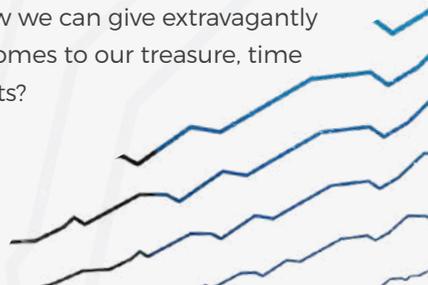
extravagant ways God has rewarded us already is the gift of life through His Son, Jesus Christ. We become more Christ-like when we are a people of generosity and extravagant giving.

Discussion

1. What stood out to you from this teaching?
2. This week's subject is 'am I generous?' Is this an important question to be asking? Why or why not?
3. What does having a generous heart look like? What are some of the characteristics of a generous heart?
4. What are some of the challenges we face when it comes to being generous?
5. The most extravagant gift we can give God is ourselves. Do you agree or disagree? What does this look like for you on a personal level?

Application

This week, take some time to think about how we can give extravagantly when it comes to our treasure, time and talents?



NOTES



NOTES



WEEK # 6

Q LIVE & A

The final week of our series will be an opportunity for you to ask your best questions about #Blessed.

We want your questions to be **real**, helping us unpack this series even more and our panel will be on hand to help answer your questions.

HOW TO ASK

ASK ONLINE

Simply head to:
mylgcc.com/blessed

OR

TEAR OFF & POST

Write down your questions and post it in the letterbox at the Info Hub.

Your Question:

Name (optional):

Your Question:

Name (optional):

Your Question:

Name (optional):



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