



One Mission: Give

- Purpose:**
- 1) To help group members understand the importance of financial investment in missions.
 - 2) To challenge group members to develop the spiritual gift of giving.
 - 3) To inform group members of opportunities to give and how the funds are used.

Accountability from Last Week: Say "Last week we got a sample prayer guide and discussed developing the spiritual discipline of prayer." Ask these questions and wait for discussion: "a) Did anyone make progress this week towards that goal? b) Did you enjoy an intentional approach to prayer? c) Will it help you be more consistent in praying? d) Did you pray for your country this week? e) Did you learn anything about your country this week?"

Starting Point: **A)** For fun, mention that today's lesson is on giving, so we're passing around an offering container so that <name a class member> can have money for Christmas. **B)** Ask the "Beginning Questions" on page 1 of the Learner Notes.

Scripture: Review the **SCRIPTURE** on the Learner Notes. Share from your insights, research, and these possible comments.

2 Cor. 9...

- Take away:**
- (6) We reap what we sow? (Q: Is this true in most all of life? How do you want to reap?)
 - (7) Our giving "what we decide" means free from man's influence, not free of God's influence
 - (8) God gives to us with the expectation that we use it for "good work." (Wow: God is able!)
 - (10) Reemphasis of vs. 8... God is the provider (11) so that we can be generous.
 - (11) People will give thanks to God based on our gift (God will be glorified.)

Questions: To help us see the importance of giving, what are the negative implications of this verse or what happens if we aren't generous?

Why would God care if we give cheerfully? Will it matter to you at Christmas?

Phil. 1:3-5

Take away: Our support of missionaries creates a bond. Partnership is the New Testament model.

Questions: Why is working together almost always better than working alone?

Option:

Malachi 3:8-12

Take away: Everything is God's, so to withhold is to rob Him. He invites us to test His blessing! Obedience leads to blessing, rebellion leads to heartache! (like the words of a parent)

Questions: Are we more comfortable with the thought of stealing from God than man? (Ouch!)

Focus: Share anything you'd like from the **FOCUS** section. Please cover both the "10 people" and "giving of ourselves first."

Truths to Remember: Review the statements from the **TRUTHS** section, adding these or your comments or questions:

1. Blessing – Read the verses if time allows (Gen 12:2-3, 2 Cor. 5:18) A visual illustration of a funnel would be good.
2. Obedient – Q: Often people face embarrassment at not being able to give big. (Remember the widow's mite.)
3. Steps – Like Abraham starting a journey, sometimes we have to get moving before God shows His will.
4. Partnerships – Do any of you partner with a ministry? How do you feel to know exactly what is being accomplished?
Share from the extra material "What it costs to support a missionary through the IMB."
5. Tithe – Read Matthew 23:23. Are we sometimes legalistic about other things yet not about our own obedience?

Questions for Discussion: As time allows, choose some of the questions in this section to review. Circle your "must use" Q's.

1. Faith commitment & provision: <allow for personal stories and share yours if you have one>
2. Ways to give more. Obviously we'd all love for God to provide supernaturally, but sometimes we need to be creative. When Westwood started, the people gave bass boats and wedding rings and some had yard sales to raise money. If our heart is in something, we'll find a way to do it.
3. Teaching financial stewardship: <group answers> Should we not teach all the subject matter that Jesus addressed?
4. Praying, Giving, Going: Balance: <group answers> (There should be a "ready willingness" to do whatever God leads.)
5. Self-spending: <group answers> If Christmas is primarily about the gospel, then we can give to spread the gospel.

Just for Thought: Discuss the difficulties of finding God's will in our lives.

Life Challenges: 1) If possible, share your story of when you began to tithe. Some people feel like it is all or nothing.

Sometimes we've gotten ourselves into situations by our own poor decisions that we can't tithe. Even though God forgives, the consequences may take some time to rectify. In the mean time, we should be as obedient as possible.

2) Challenge the group to use the Lottie Moon offering as an opportunity to seek God's will in order to bless others.

Close – Emphasize the point that God loves us and wants to bless us. Are we living in a "blessable" way before Him?

Week 1 Additional Content

Additional Optional Passage: Malachi 3:8-12

⁸ "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?'
"In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. ¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. ¹¹ I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. ¹² "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

Cost to Support a Missionary (& Other Missions Fast Facts)

How much does it cost to support a missionary?

- \$40,931.64 a year
- \$3,410.97 a month
- \$787.15 a week
- \$112.14 a day
- \$4.67 an hour
- \$.08 a minute

Reported June 2009. Support includes housing, food, children's education, medical expenses, retirement and more.

International Mission Board vital stats

- 5,618 missionaries (as of 4/20/09)
- 26,970 new churches*
- 565,967 baptisms*
- 562,091 new believers in discipleship*

**As reported in the 2008 Annual Statistical Report*

Status of World Evangelization

- 11,599 people groups worldwide; 6.6 billion people
- 6,454 unreached* people groups; 3.8 billion people
- 5,850 Last Frontier** people groups; 1.6 billion people

**Less than 2 percent evangelical*

***Less than 2 percent evangelical, no active church planting*

IMB budgeted income:

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering - about 54 percent

Cooperative Program - 35 percent

World Hunger and General Relief - 3 percent

Field-generated funds, investment returns and other income - 8 percent

Weekly Leader Notes

1. No special resources required this week, other than possible props mentioned in the Leader Guide.
2. Provide a copy of the Learner Notes for every member of the group. Provide pens if needed.

Series Notes

COMMON TO EVERY WEEK, BUT IMPORTANT!

1. **Overview** - See the Learner Notes for an introduction to Westwood's One Mission Celebration coming in February. These lessons are part of that focus.
2. **Key Components** - The Westwood Curriculum Team believes that the series will be most effective with the following elements fully utilized:
 - a. Discussion - A group time that is heavily dependent on discussion and interaction. Our belief is that the lesson is as much (or more) about motivating people to obey God's word as it is about teaching God's Word. Believers already know more than we do.
 - b. Homework - For this series, the homework will vary from week to week.
 - c. Challenge - We want group members to leave the lesson with challenges of things to DO with the lesson each week. It isn't enough just to learn, we want members to do something with each lesson.
 - d. Your Personal Stories - Nothing brings teaching alive like real life stories experienced by the leader. Please ask God for wisdom in sharing from your own life experiences to enhance the lesson.
 - e. Be Creative - For some of you who are creative in your teaching methods, feel free to do your own thing so long as you meet the purposes outlined at the top of the teaching procedures.
 - f. Additional Bible Study - The content is not a deep Bible study. Feel free to add from your own study, being careful to allow time for discussion and meeting the purposes of the lesson.
3. **Leader Notes & Resources**. This Leader Guide and the Learner Notes will be available online at WestwoodGroups.com at least one week in advance.

ABS Teachers

- a. This lesson series is for ABS December 6, 13 & 20.
- b. A copy of the Leader Guide and Learner Notes will be in your class box and online one week in advance.
- c. Copies of the Learner Notes will be in your box for your class the day the lesson is to be taught.

Home Group Leaders

- a. Home Groups are encouraged to do the lessons by February 17 or immediately following the OMC.
- b. Copies of the Learner Notes may be picked up at the Home Groups Desk on Sunday mornings.