

DISCIPLESHIP IN A CONSUMER CULTURE





INVESTING FOR THE GOOD LIFE





INVESTING FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS





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Jurnee LeMoine Misti LeMoine Susanne Renberg



Mike and Lynn Salsbury Laura Wallace

2 COR 8:1-4

¹ And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about:

The Macedonian Formula

the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ² In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy <u>+ and their extreme poverty</u> = welled up in rich generosity.

 ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own,
 ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people.

TEACHINGS ON 2 COR 8

Reclaiming Generosity: Grace Takes You Further! (2015, New Hope Church) The Cross as the Giving Standard (2017, New Hope Church) The Heart of a Steward (2017, Summer Christian Challenge) Motivation for Generosity (2022, Tallgrass at The Well)





*8 Don't forget to at least give the tithe, 10% of your income. Do I need to review the Old Testament with you? C'mon guys! Pull it together!



⁸ I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

"This is the problem with tithing. Despite its widespread advocacy within the contemporary church, tithing in the Bible was neither unilaterally applied nor enforced. For starters, there was more than one tithe (sometimes requiring as much as 23%, sometimes only being paid once in a lifetime like Abraham to Melchizadek), and we never see the New Testament church enforcing the tithe among the Gentile converts. When we advocate tithing today, we are introducing a new legislation that requires our people to give."

"The old paradigm of hoping for more tithers—people who are adamant about giving the first 10% of their income every paycheck, every week for the rest of their lives—will ultimately bankrupt us. Why? Because tithing is ultimately rooted in obedience for its own sake. Most people cannot tithe. Most people will not tithe. Those who can and will, do so ... sometimes. But when we tithe, at best we feel relief that we are finally in step with God's demands. If we fail to tithe, we feel like we've incurred a debt that must be repaid before we can ever truly be free of our guilt."

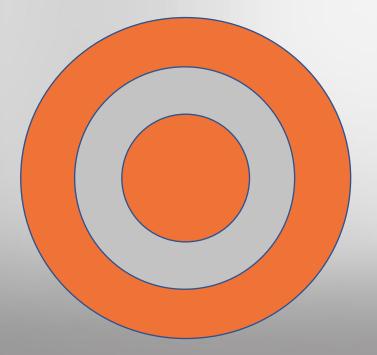
"From the standpoint of church administration, tithing is a flawed paradigm. It makes a good floor but a bad ceiling. Giving 10% is a good place to start for a serious follower of Jesus, but the real beauty lies in giving generously. In realizing that you've set aside a significant portion of your income to love and serve others. In this light, all that money becomes play money. It's your investment capital in the Kingdom of God. You can give it wherever you like, redirecting the flow of God's generosity, like a culvert in a river. You can place it wherever you wish, so long as you place it back within the hands of the Lord. It's exciting. It's liberating."



⁸ I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

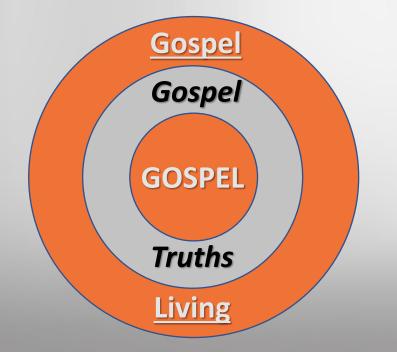


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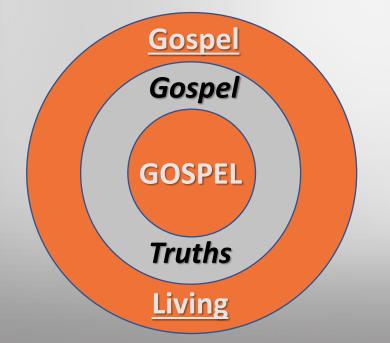




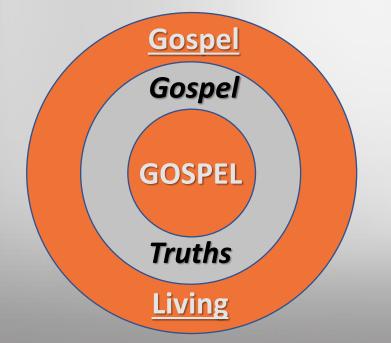
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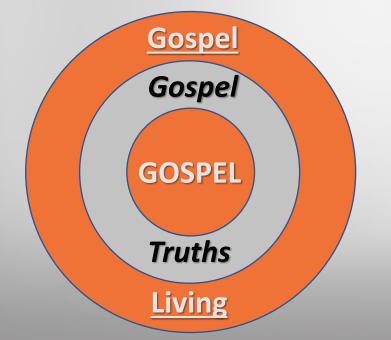




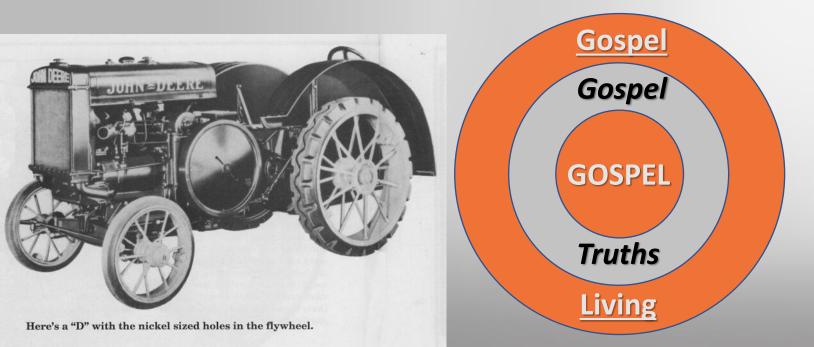




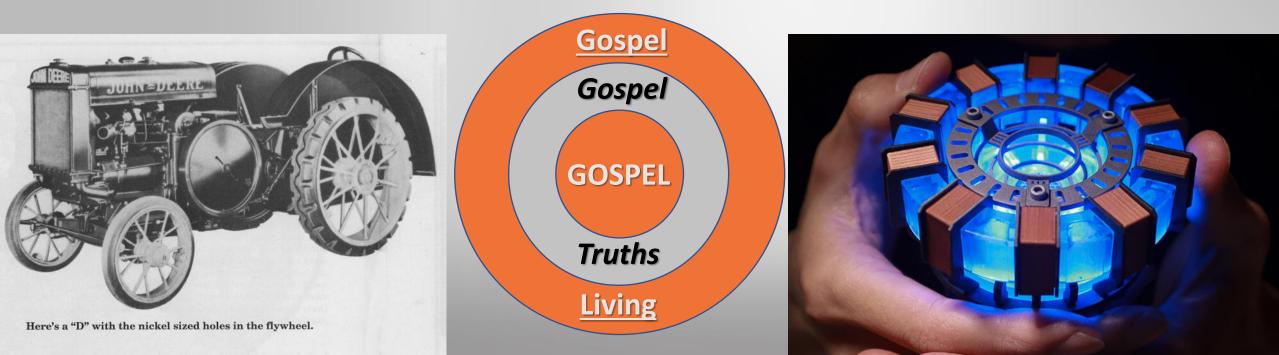












TITUS 2:11-15

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

"Thus, the Kingdom of God, when planted within us, bursts forth in abundance. It is the power that multiplied the loaves and the fishes; that transformed the water into wine; that perpetuated the widow's daily oil and flour. Consider that in the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000, there were leftovers. In the story of Mary anointing Jesus' feet with perfume, the value of that offering was a years' wages. What else is that, if not extravagant? What does that tell us about God? About his riches? About his proclivity for abundance?"

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⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ^{8a} that he lavished on us. *Ephesians 1:7-8a*



Give sacrificially

Give intentionally

Give cheerfully



Give sacrificially

 ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.
 Entirely on their own, ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. 2 Corinthians 8:3-4



Give intentionally

⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.
⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.
⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:5-7



Give intentionally

¹ Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. ² On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. ³ Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 16:1-3

"In the same way that we are meant to be generous with our finances, we are also meant to be generous with our homes, our churches, and with Christ himself. We ought to be sharing Christ with everyone; and by this I don't intend for us to perform our prepared spiels about sin and redemption, but that we would invite others to share the life of Christ, the light of Christ, and the joy of following Jesus."



Give cheerfully

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"The church of the future will be filled with Christians who understand their role as evangelists. They will recognize that the good news is too good to keep secret, and will spread the message of Christ and his church throughout their networks. In our culture, ironically, it is actually consumers who tend to make the best evangelists."

"...the church of the future will be generous, regardless of the miserliness of her beneficiaries. We will be givers, regardless of what the world gives back. When we give generously and sacrificially, we exorcise our bitterness. Selfishness is septic, but generosity is the algorithm of joy."



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