

Practice

Exercise: Make a plan for regular giving.

If you want this Practice to be the springboard to becoming a generous person, then you will need more than good intentions; you will need a plan.

Here's a short exercise designed to help you prayerfully make a plan for generosity coming out of this Practice:

- Find a quiet, distraction free place and put away your phone and devices.
- Center yourself in God: take a few deep, slow breaths, ground yourself in the moment, and become aware of God's presence all around you.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to come and guide your mind into his will for your finances and future.

Then journal through the prompts on the following page.

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What steps do you need to take or obstacles do you need to overcome to begin practicing generosity (i.e., secure employment, make a budget, get out of debt, pay down credit cards, sell your car and buy a cheaper model in cash, talk with a therapist about your financial fears, etc.)?

The three primary objects of generosity in the New Testament writings are the church, the gospel, and the poor.

How do you feel led to give to your local church?

How do you feel led to give to advance the gospel of the kingdom of God?

What steps do you need to take to begin giving (i.e., set up automatic donations monthly, change your budget, research nonprofits, etc.)?

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Of the five best practices named in this session, which one(s) do you feel your heart drawn to?

(Circle all that apply)

First fruits A generosity fund Tithing A graduated tithe Radical class distinction

How do you want to adopt this practice (i.e., set aside \$50 a month for a generosity fund, begin tithing, stop eating out for lunch, etc.)?

Many followers of Jesus reach a point in their life where they set a “lifestyle cap,” a standard of living they do not go above. This enables them to give the extra away to what the Spirit is stirring in your heart. As Randy Alcorn says, “God blesses us to raise our standard of giving, not our standard of living.” **If you have your basic needs met, do you want to set a “cap” on your lifestyle? If so, what do you feel is a joyful, peaceful, and appropriate way of life for you and your family in this season?**

Are there any other ideas or invitations you sense the Spirit bringing to your mind and heart as you process?

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Reach Exercise: Do this in community.

- Do this Session's exercise on your own, then share it with a trusted friend, mentor, or a few members of your community.
- Share your budget with them as well as your giving plan.
- Let them look it over and speak into your life.
- If they offer, do the same for them.
- Be encouraging and gentle with one another. This is a huge step for most people. Avoid judgment, rigid thinking, comparison, or envy. Do everything in love.

This will feel scary at first! And you should only do it with someone you really trust. But this is a powerful act of defiance against the god of mammon, and a key step toward greater freedom and joy.