



grace in
G I V I N G

LIFEGROUP STUDIES
LEADER'S GUIDE

GRACE IN GIVING

LIFEGROUP STUDIES - MAY 2026

God has given us Himself. Through, by His grace, His Son Jesus. It is His grace to us that motivates us to give back to Him to fulfil His purposes for our investment in His ministry and mission.

During our Gift month of May, culminating in Gift Day on the last Sunday, we shall be mining the Bible together to consider what it means to GIVE in our new weekly sermon series called "Grace in Giving."

These sermons and studies are curated in the hope and prayer that we shall grow His grace in giving together at Figtree Anglican Church. The studies draw from the Scriptures and counsel from experts in money matters, as well as my own theological reflections. And, despite what I shared about the "machines taking over" on the first Sunday of this series, I have used an AI tool to assist me in producing the studies!

As we explore God's Word, we are reminded that it is God's GRACE that motivates us as we respond to His invitation to INVEST in His mission. As we read His Word and pray together, the Lord inspires us by His VISION to restore His people with Him for all ETERNITY.

As we spend this time together in both the sermon series and these studies, above all, I pray we may be motivated to give by gratitude to God for His gift of Jesus, God's Messiah and our Saviour Who is worth more than all the money on earth.

Yours in His service,

Robin Kinstead

Senior Minister
Figtree Anglican Church

STUDY ONE

GRACE GIVEN, GRACE GROWING

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1–9; 9:6–15

Aim of this Study: To help our LifeGroups see how giving is not motivated by pressure, guilt, anxiety, or as a survival instinct, but ultimately motivated by the grace of God to us in Jesus Messiah.

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God and our loving heavenly Father, Thank You for Your indescribable gift in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Please open our hearts to Your precious promises.

Help us to see Your grace clearly, to receive it deeply, and to respond to it gratefully.

Teach us to give not reluctantly or under compulsion, rather with cheerful hearts shaped by the gospel.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Opening Discussion

- Think of an example in which have you seen gratitude overflow into generosity.
- What made the example generosity feel sincere?
- What qualities did this generosity have (e.g. pressured, planned, spontaneous, sacrificial, joyful, discreet)?
- Are there any differences between giving because you: "have to," "need to," "ought to," and/or "want to"?

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1–9

- What repeated words or ideas do you notice?
- What do we learn about the Macedonian churches?
- What words describe their circumstances?
- What words describe their attitude?
- What does the apostle Paul say is the source of their generosity?

Leader's Notes:

Paul does not begin with money but with "the grace that God has given."

The Macedonians face severe trial and extreme poverty and yet overflowing joy leads to generosity.

Their giving was willing, urgent, sacrificial, and grace motivated.

Paul does not command the Corinthians in verse 8. Rather, he tests the sincerity of their love.

Verse 9 is the theological centre: Jesus' self-giving poverty makes His people rich.

The Macedonians did not give because they had more than enough. They gave because God's grace had captivated their hearts.

STUDY ONE

Discuss "God's grace as motivation"

- Why is it important that Paul begins with "grace" rather than "need"?
- How does 2 Corinthians 8:9 protect us from "guilt-goaded" giving?
- How does it also challenge "comfort-controlled" clutching?
- What does it mean that Jesus "though He was rich... became poor"?

For the Figtree Family:

- How does grace-shaped generosity help us live out our Purpose: "Jesus for Everyone. Forever."?
- How does giving become part of making and maturing faithful and fruitful disciples of Jesus?

Leader's Notes:

Keep this discussion grace-centred and gospel-centred.

The aim is not to ask, "How do we get people to give more?"

Rather ask, "How does the grace of God to us in Jesus change what we treasure?"

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–15

- What agricultural image does Paul use?
- What kind of giver does God love?
- What does God promise to supply?
- What are the results of generosity in verses 11–15?

Leader's Notes:

"Sowing and reaping" is not a mechanical prosperity algorithm.

Paul is speaking about God supplying what His people need for "every good work" that is ministry.

The result of generosity is not self-promotion rather thanksgiving to God.

Giving supplies real ministry and mission needs and leads to thanksgiving and heartfelt worship.

Grace does not end with the giver. Grace flows through the giver, meets ministry needs, and responds as thanksgiving to God.

Discuss Grace growing in us in response to God's grace given to us

Leaders: Use these questions carefully. Do not pressure people to disclose their personal finances.

Personal Reflection:

What currently most shapes my giving: grace, habit, anxiety, guilt, comfort, avoidance, or vision?

Where might God's grace be loosening my "clutch-control"?

What would cheerful, thoughtful, gospel-shaped giving look like for me at this stage of my life?

Household Reflection:

Does our giving reflect our discipleship?

Does our budget reflect our confession that Jesus is Lord?

What would it look like to review our giving prayerfully before God?

STUDY ONE

Church Reflection:

How does regular giving support the themes of "Come and See," "Follow Me," and "Go and Tell"?

How can our LifeGroup pray for FAC's current financial shortfall without becoming fearful?

Practical Application

Rod Irvine¹ notes how Christian giving should be taught Biblically and positively, not merely raised in moments of crisis. He argues that raising resources for local church ministry is not simply "fund-raising" but "raising faith," casting vision, and growing healthy ministry.

Darren Laudenbach² notes how money needs practical discipleship. Christians benefit from Biblical and tangible financial teaching that helps them make wiser decisions with spending, saving, and stewardship.

Scott Pape³ notes how intentional, value-driven saving, spending, and sharing of money serve to create what he calls "a real and lasting legacy."

Group Question:

Do we need both Biblical motivation and practical financial wisdom? Why?

Leader's Notes:

Because grace motivates the heart, but practical wisdom shapes habits. A generous heart still needs a faithful formula from God's word, whilst these resources give us tried and tested models.

Closing Prayer

Thank You Almighty God for Your grace to us through Jesus.

He entered into earthly poverty so that we might become eternally wealthy.

We pray that our lives would be marked by cheerful, willing, thoughtful generosity.

We pray for those under financial pressure, that You Lord may grant relief.

We pray for FAC's ministry, gospel focus, growth in faith, and for current financial shortfall.

We pray that all giving would result in thanksgiving to You, our providential Father in heaven.

We pray in the power of Your Spirit and in the name of Your Son Jesus. Amen.

^{1,2,3} See Resources list on final page.

STUDY TWO

INVEST, AT HIS INVITATION

1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-4; MATTHEW 6:19-24

Aim of this Study: To help LifeGroups see that God does not merely command us to give, but graciously invites us to invest what He has entrusted to us in treasure that lasts.

Opening Prayer:

*Almighty God and loving heavenly Father,
Thank You that every good gift comes from You. Please open our hearts to Your word.
Free us from anxiety, secrecy, pride, greed, and fear. Teach us to store up treasure in heaven, to serve Jesus rather than money, and to give thoughtfully, regularly, cheerfully, and wisely for the sake of Jesus for Everyone. Forever.*

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen..

Opening Discussion

"In His parables, Jesus used money or possessions as the focus 16 of 38 times - 42% of the parables mentioned in the Bible," Darren Laudenbach, God's Money Matters.

Discuss!

- What is one investment of time, talent, or treasure that proved worthwhile last year?
- Why do people often find money harder to talk about than many other areas of life?
- What is the difference between spending, saving, sharing, and investing?
- How might Christian giving be understood as kingdom investment rather than a church 'fee'?

Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

- What practical instructions does Paul give the Corinthian church?
- What do you notice about timing, regularity, planning, and accountability?
- Why might Paul encourage believers to set money aside on the first day of every week?
- How does the use of approved representatives help build trust?

Leader's Notes:

The apostle Paul is not manipulating the Corinthians. He gives practical and orderly instruction for regular, proportionate giving.

This is not reactive fundraising driven by anxiety. It is discipleship expressed through stewardship.

Giving is planned because love is practical.

Paul encourages giving that is:

- regular,
- proportionate,
- prayerful / thoughtful,
- accountable,
- and shared together as gospel partnership.

Circumstances differ, so giving differs. Yet generosity remains a shared invitation for all God's people.

The mention of approved representatives (consider our treasurer and wardens at FAC) also reminds us that money matters require trust, transparency, and accountability.

STUDY TWO

Discuss “INVEST, at His invitation”

- How does regular giving train our hearts to seek first God's kingdom?
- How should Christians think carefully about tithing?
- What might prevent a Christian from reviewing their giving prayerfully?
- How can a household under financial pressure participate without shame or pressure?
- How can children, youth, young adults, families, workers, retirees, and financially secure people each learn kingdom investment?

Leader's Notes:

Tithing is not a way to manipulate God into “owing” us.

Tithing is not a legal minimum to give.

It is a useful biblical Old Testament benchmark while the New Testament presses us toward cheerful, willing, proportionate generosity. Jesus Himself notes in Luke 11:42 that tithing is God-given and to be embraced.

Tithing to our local church is an indicator of a “healthy heart.”

Freewill offerings flow from the prompting of His Spirit with gladness and thanksgiving.

Read Matthew 6:19–24

- What contrast does Jesus make between earthly and heavenly treasure?
- What does Jesus teach about the relationship between treasure and the heart?
- What does Jesus mean when He says no one can serve two masters?
- Why is money dangerous when it competes for lordship in our lives?

Leader's Notes:

Jesus does not condemn material wealth. Everything is a gift from God. He does expose the worship of created things instead of worship of the Creator who gives us every good gift.

Earthly treasure is temporary: vulnerable to decay, theft, inflation, loss, and death.

Heavenly treasure is secure because it belongs to God's eternal kingdom.

The question is not whether Christians may save, budget, insure, or invest wisely. The deeper question is: Who is Lord? On what or Whom do we set our hearts?

Money falsely promises power, control, comfort, and independence. Ultimately, money can promise us independence from God. Money is a useful servant but a horrible master.

The Lord Jesus alone is worthy to rule our hearts.

For our Figtree Family:

- How does regular giving support Come & See: welcome, belonging, gathered worship, newcomers, and LifeGroups?
- How does regular giving support Follow Me: Bible teaching, discipleship, pastoral care, youth, children, training, and maturity?
- How does regular giving support Go & Tell: evangelism, SRE, mercy ministries, local mission, and global gospel partnerships?
- How can we pray about FAC's current financial shortfall without making anxiety our motivation?

Study continues on next page

STUDY TWO

Practical Application:

Darren Laudenbach's *God's Money Matters* reminds us that practical habits - budgeting, debt reduction, saving, and wise planning - can support generosity rather than compete with it.

One of Darren's investment exercises asks us to explore our investment goals. Would you be willing to list 10 investment goals you would like to achieve over the next 12 months? These could be personal, family, church, or business related.

If so, could you rate from 1 to 10 how important that goal is to achieve? Could you rate from 1 to 10 how urgent that goal is to achieve (10 being in the next three months and 1 being 3+ years)?

There is a helpful worksheet resource from *God's Money Matters* to help you understand how to differentiate between importance and urgency for your investment goals.

[📄 Goal Discovery Worksheet](#)

Find it here:



There is a helpful worksheet resource from *God's Money Matters* to help you understand how you are progressing with your overall financial plan.

[📄 Major Factors of a Healthy Financial Plan](#)

Find it here:



Personal Reflection:

- What most shapes my giving right now: avoidance, anxiety, guilt, habit, vision, worship, or gratitude? More than one answer?
- Have I prayerfully reviewed my giving before God this year? What did I commit to last November during our Thanksgiving / Commitment series?
- What would planned, proportionate, cheerful giving look like in this season of my life?
- What practical habit might help me invest more intentionally at the Lord's invitation?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Everything we have is from You and for You. Forgive us when we invest the treasures entrusted to us as though this world will last forever. Teach us to serve Jesus rather than money. Provide for those under financial pressure. Grow in us wise habits, cheerful hearts, and deepening faith in You.

Please provide for our church ministry needs, including the current shortfall, so that many may Come & See, Follow Me, and Go & Tell... for Jesus for Everyone. Forever.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

STUDY THREE

HIS VISION AS OUR INSPIRATION

1 CHRONICLES 29:1-20, MATTHEW 6:9-13

Aim of this Study: To see how God's vision for His kingdom come, His people, Israel, the nations, and the coming restoration of all things inspires generous, prayerfully discerned, and Spirit directed giving.

Opening Prayer:

Lord God, King of Israel, ruler of the nations, and Father of our Lord Jesus,

On this Pentecost week, we thank you for the gift of Your Spirit indwelling us.

Teach us to pray 'Your kingdom come' and inspire our giving by Your vision.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Opening Discussion

"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world."
(Anon)

Giving includes the time, talents, testimonies, and treasures entrusted to us as God's people by God Himself. This month we are thinking specifically about treasures, both firstfruits and freewill giving.

- What kind of future 'vision' has moved you to give, serve, pray, or share sacrificially?
- Why is discerning God's 'vision' more motivating to give than guilt, fear, or pressure?
- What happens when we talk about giving generally without showing ministry purpose?
- What do you think of when you pray, 'Your kingdom come'?

Read 1 Chronicles 29:1-20

- What is King David preparing for in these verses?
- What belongs to God in King David's prayer?
- How do the leaders and people respond?
- What words describe their giving and their joy?
- How does King David speak about Israel, the land, the temple, and the future?

Leader's Notes:

King David's vision is a big vision. This temple is for the Lord God, not for human glory.

The offerings made here are freewill gifts because God's people know it all belongs to Him.

Notice that King David prays as the king of God's covenant people, Israel.

He prays toward the temple, for God's promises, and for Solomon's obedience.

Sadly, as we read in the biblical account of Kings, Solomon fails to remain obedient.

Only Jesus Messiah, David's descendant and Lord, and God's Son, is fully obedient.

Jesus fulfils God's purposes, gathering the nations, and fulfilling God's faithfulness to Israel.

STUDY THREE

Read 2 Chronicles 7:14

- What kind of humility, prayer, seeking, and repentance does God want?
- How must this verse be handled carefully in its covenant setting with Israel?
- What enduring principle still calls us as God's people today to humble prayer?

Leader's Notes:

2 Chronicles 7:14 is spoken, inspired by the Spirit, in the context of Solomon's temple.

It is also written in the context of God's covenant promises to Israel in history.

We do not just 'absorb' Israel into the church as God's promises to Abraham remain.

We do not just ignore God's call to us to repent today. We can overlook this before asking.

God's people today are called to humility, prayer, seeking God's face, and turning from sin.

Pentecost (Acts 2) shows how God pours out His Spirit through Jesus to His followers.

The same Spirit Who inspired God's prophets then dwells in us as God's people today.

Read Matthew 6:9-13

- What does Jesus teach us to seek first in prayer?
- Can you think of other verses in the gospels about seeking first the kingdom?
- How does the Lord's Prayer reshape our vision for His kingdom, provision, forgiveness, temptation, and evil (falling short of God's glory)?
- Why is 'Your kingdom come' a better motivation to give over 'we have a shortfall'?
- How does asking for our daily bread keep us from greed and fear (think 'manna')?

For our Figtree Family:

- How does Figtree's Purpose 'Jesus for Everyone. Forever.' inspire giving for you?
- Where do you see 'Come & See,' 'Follow Me,' and 'Go & Tell' fit in to His vision?
- Can you think of Figtree activities or events that serve God's ministry and mission?
- How can Parish Council, Wardens, and MATs help 'vision' become accountable action?

Practical Application

Rod Irvine's 'Giving Generously' reminds us that we give toward gospel vision, not just church needs.

Our draft Ministry Masterplan gives expression to that vision through our gathered worship, discipleship, evangelism, pastoral care, children and youth ministry, leadership development, mercy ministry, and mission.

Our draft Governance Policy reminds us that healthy vision must also be supported by accountability, transparency, wise stewardship, and review.

Prayerful vision without structure or a trellis becomes detached from action. Structure without kingdom vision becomes a spiritually dry deadwood of administration.

What would you want to see in this Ministry Masterplan and this Governance Policy as each is developed? Remember you can share your ideas with the Ministry Team and Parish Council at connect@figtree.church.

Study continues on next page

STUDY THREE

Personal Reflection

- When I imagine Figtree Anglican Church in ten years, what kingdom fruit do I long to see?
- Where might God be inviting me to pray before I give?
- What would Spirit-filled generosity look like for me in this season?
- How can our LifeGroup pray for Israel, the nations, Figtree, and further, that more in these communities may know and share the hope of the gospel of Jesus Messiah?.

Closing Prayer

Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Jesus Messiah, all things come from You.

Thank You that Your Spirit has been poured out on Your people so that we are empowered to share the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit.

Humble us, teach us to pray, inspire us by Your kingdom vision.

Grow our church family faithful and fruitful for Jesus for Everyone. Forever. Amen.

STUDY FOUR

WE GIVE FOR ETERNITY

AWAITING HIS RESTORATION

LUKE 12:13-21; 1 TIMOTHY 6:6-19; PSALM 66:8-15

Aim of this Study: To help LifeGroups see that Gift Sunday is not about a place for discretionary giving to keep church engaged but about living for eternity: being rich toward God, generous in doing good, and in the fullness of time looking to the coming restoration by the risen, ruling, and returning Lord Jesus.

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your indescribable gift of Jesus. On this Gift Sunday week, guard us from guilt, greed, fear, pride, and presumption. Rather, teach us contentment, thanksgiving, godliness, generosity, and lives calibrated by our eternal hope. Restore our hearts to You through Jesus our Saviour and Messiah. Amen.

Opening Discussion

"In 30 years, if you are still walking with the Lord, still married to your wife, and your children are still talking to you, I'll say that your life has been a success." Dudley Foord, KMC, 2001.

- What does our contemporary culture describe as a successful life?
- What does Jesus describe as a successful life? Think of Bible verses to support you.
- How does money make us feel secure even when life is fragile?
- What makes a Gift Day appeal feel pressured or guilty? What makes it pastorally faithful?

Read Luke 12:13-21

- What request prompts Jesus' warning?
- What does Jesus say life does not consist in?
- What is wrong with the rich man's thinking?
- What does it mean to be rich toward God?

Leader's Notes:

Jesus does not condemn the rich man for planning, farming, or having barns.

He condemns his selfishness: my crops, my barns, my grain, my goods, my soul.

The rich man plans for many years in the earthly, temporary world but not for eternity.

Jesus warns against all kinds of greed because 'gifts and goodies' can make people forget God.

Read 1 Timothy 6:6-19

- What does the apostle Paul say about contentment?
- What dangers can accompany our desire to 'get rich'?
- What exhortations are given to those who are rich in this present age?
- How can generosity help us take hold of life that is truly life?

STUDY FOUR

Leader's Notes:

Paul is careful and pastoral. He warns those who want to get rich and those who are rich.

Monetary wealth itself is neither saviour nor a sin. But it can easily be a temptation.

Paul notes the connection between godliness and contentment.

Paul warns us not to set our hope on earthly riches but eternal riches... in other words, on God.

His exhortation is to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and be generous and willing to share.

Read Psalm 66:8-15

- What does the Psalmist suggest God has done for His people?
- How do trials, testing, preservation, praise, vows, and offerings relate to one another?
- How might our Figtree Gift Sunday be an act of thanksgiving rather than pressure?

For our Figtree Family:

- How can we name our \$20,000 monthly shortfall honestly without making worry our motivation to give (think back to the first Grace in Giving study)?
- What should financially struggling people take from this sermon and study?
- What should financially secure people take from this sermon and study?
- How can children, youth, young adults, families, workers, and retirees respond faithfully in their age and stage of life?

Personal Reflection and Application

- Where in my life am I tempted to say 'my' more than 'Yours'?
- What would it look like for me to be rich toward God? What would God say of my answer?
- Is there a regular (firstfruits), special (freewill), or legacy (final) gift I may prayerfully consider giving?
- What do thanksgiving, contentment, and commitment look like for me this week?

Closing Prayer:

Lord God and our loving heavenly Father, You have brought Your Figtree church family through many faithful and fruitful seasons.

Forgive us where we have stored up treasure for ourselves on earth rather than investing in Your restoration for eternity.

Teach us thanksgiving, contentment, godliness, and commitment. Make us rich in doing good. Provide for those in need.

Use our firstfruit regular giving, our freewill offerings this Gift Sunday, and our final legacy gifts for the ministry of the gospel, so many in Figtree and further afield will joyfully give thanks to You.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

RESOURCES

1. Irvine, Rod. Giving Generously: Resourcing local church ministry. Barton 978 1 921 577 284 (2015)
2. Laudenbach, Darren. God's Money Matters: Biblical Keys to Financial Freedom and the Art of Mind over Money. eLectio 978 1 632 134 165 (2017)
3. Pape, Scott. The Barefoot Investor: The Only Money Guide You'll Ever Need. Wiley 978 0 730 324 218 (2017)



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