

BIG IDEA

We are created to defy the gravitational pull of our culture by living generously.

SCRIPTURE

Acts 2:44-47, Acts 4:32-35

ICEBREAKER AND OPENING THOUGHT

Use the icebreaker and opening thoughts to begin a conversation about giving, receiving, and generosity.

BIBLE STUDY

Read the scriptures to discuss and gain a better understanding of the early Church's actions and attitude surrounding generosity.

Acts 2:44-27: Scottish theologian, author, and communicator William Barclay wrote in his commentary on Acts: *"It was a Church of fellowship. It had what someone has called a great quality of togetherness. Lord Horatio Nelson explained one of his great victories by saying, 'I had the happiness to command a band of brothers.' The Church is only a real Church when it is a band of brothers". "It was a sharing Church. These early Christians had an intense feeling of responsibility for each other."*

Acts 4:32-25: Again from Barclay: *"Two things are to be noted about [the early Church]. (1) They had an intense sense of responsibility for each other. It seemed to them unthinkable that any one of them could have too much while another had too little. (2) This awoke in them a real desire to share all they had. We must note one thing above all- this sharing was not the result of legislation; it was utterly spontaneous. It is not when the law compels us to share, but when the heart moves us to share, that society becomes Christian. The charity of legislation can never be a substitute for the charity of the heart."*

LIFE APPLICATION

Depending on family history, church experience, or woundedness, everyone will have a different response to these questions. Help the group explore both their personal historical experience to the generosity and how that has influenced how generous they are now. Additionally, help the group see pathways to increasing generosity through both the generosity ladder and example/habits of the early Church.

CHALLENGE

Encourage the group to share their "radical" generosity call. You may want to provide some time for the group to pray and hear from God. Spend some time yourself before the group, so you can start the discussion by sharing your radical call. (we may want to include a graphic of the generosity ladder?)