

CoreGroup Guide | Much Given. Much Expected. – Part 5

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Welcome

We have reached the end of our Much Given. Much Expected. sermon series, but in a lot of ways it is just the beginning. This week we will consider everything we have talked about over the course of the series as we take the step of making a financial commitment to the church. What can feel like a risky choice is really the path to following Jesus more closely.

Opening Prayer

Gracious God - thank you for calling us into a life of faith where we have the opportunity to positively impact others. You inspire us to think of others first, share our blessings, and take risks for the good of your kingdom. Help us to support one another as we pursue lives marked by generosity. We invite your spirit into our hearts and minds during our time together. Amen.

Ice Breaker

This week starts a new season of thanksgiving. What is a Thanksgiving tradition that you particularly appreciate?

The Head

This week we are going to look at one of Jesus' most famous miracles, walking on water. In this story Jesus invites his disciple Peter to join him in doing the impossible. As disciples of Jesus ourselves, we can learn a lot from how Peter handles this experience, for better and for worse.

Matthew 14:23-33

23 When he sent them away, he went up onto a mountain by himself to pray. Evening came and he was alone. 24 Meanwhile, the boat, fighting a strong headwind, was being battered by the waves and was already far away from land. 25 Very early in the morning he came to his disciples, walking on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified and said, "It's a ghost!" They were so frightened they screamed.

27 Just then Jesus spoke to them, "Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid."

28 Peter replied, "Lord, if it's you, order me to come to you on the water."

29 And Jesus said, "Come."

Then Peter got out of the boat and was walking on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when Peter saw the strong wind, he became frightened. As he began to sink, he shouted, "Lord, rescue me!"

31 Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him, saying, “You man of weak faith! Why did you begin to have doubts?” 32 When they got into the boat, the wind settled down.

33 Then those in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, “You must be God’s Son!”

- Why do you think the disciples struggled to recognize Jesus when he approached their boat?
- What does Peter’s request “*Lord, if it’s you, order me to come to you on the water*” reveal about Peter’s faith?
- What about this experience led the disciples in the boat to worship Jesus at the end of this passage?

The Heart

We hope that the last few weeks of learning and discussion have helped us open our hearts to greater generosity, but that doesn’t magically make it easy to start giving. There is a chance, maybe even a guarantee, that things won’t go absolutely perfectly once you have committed to taking the next step with Jesus. This is a great opportunity to acknowledge what holds us back, remind ourselves of God’s faithfulness, and share our motivations for stepping out of the boat.

- How would you describe your relationship to risk?
- When have you taken a step of faith and felt God meet you on the other side of that choice?
- What fears or hesitations do you have to accept in order to take a step in generosity?
- What is motivating you to “step out of the boat” when it comes to generosity?

The Hands

If you have already, or are planning to turn in a commitment card, bravo! Now is a good time to share what practical changes you are making in order to give generously. Share all of your tips, tricks, tools, and things you are trying as you practice greater generosity.

- How can you build generosity into your lifestyle — not just your finances — through time, hospitality, or service?
- How are you reorganizing your financial life to make giving a priority that you can commit to?
- Beyond financial giving, how do you plan to commit to the vision of the church going forward?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus - Thank you for inviting us to step out of the boat and follow you. As we make commitments of generosity, we ask that You strengthen our faith and fill us with joy in giving. When doubts rise like waves, remind us that You are near. Use what we offer—not just our finances, but our time, our gifts, and our hearts—to bring hope, healing, and your love to others. Amen.

From Pastor Charity

At The Gathering, we commit to six spiritual practices to help us pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus. Here is a brief [overview of the six practices](#).

For a closer look at how to engage with the six practices, including Generosity, check out the [Our Shared Practices](#) page on The Gathering's website.