

Introduction:

1. If you had to give away \$1 million how would you distribute the money? Explain why.
2. Give an example of when someone surprised you with their generosity to you. How did it affect you?

Understanding:

3. There's a funny music video called "Treasures on Earth", which sings about a "never-ending shopping list." Which material goods tempt you the most? Read Matthew 6:19-21. How do you react to Jesus' warning here?
4. A friend says "I worked hard for my money and I am entitled to decide exactly how to spend it" Read Deuteronomy 8:18. How would you explain what your friend's statement is missing?
5. Jesus knew that greed sneaks up on us, so he tells us to Watch Out. We are more than just our stuff. Read Luke 12:16-21. Was the man in the parable doing anything illegal or dishonest? Why was Jesus so adamant in His warning?
6. A stock analyst said this about the head of a certain well known (and profitable) retail chain: "He has been too benevolent," she said. "He's right that a happy employee is a productive long-term employee, but he could force employees to pick up a little more of the burden." Evaluate her quote in terms of today's message. Why do you think a company known for paying all its employees well can still be so profitable?
7. A couple you know say "Money is our big issue. If we only had a little more our arguments would stop." Read Philippians 4:11-13. In the light of this how could you give godly advice to the couple? How do they get the ability to follow the advice?
8. Today's message is providing a spirit empowered motive to giving. Read 2 Corinthians 9: 6-7. What is the wonderful contrast between this approach and a "give...or else" mentality?
9. Someone feels great guilt because they know they are not doing what God wants. They feel the guilt go down when they bump up their giving. Read 1 Samuel 15:22. What impresses God even more than the raw amount that we give?

Application:

10. Read **I Timothy 6:17-19**. This time of year is perfect for putting our "faith into action" in this way. Many of us make year-end gifts to the church, and some of our ministry partners offer special opportunities to give to people in need. You can still pick up an Angel Tree gift tag in the café between services, and you can also provide gifts for family served by our "Loaves and Fishes" food pantry. Our middle school students are collecting gifts for homeless teens served by Covenant House in Newark, so your son or daughter may be interested in doing that.
11. Ask God this week to make you sensitive to "how much is enough", and ask Him specifically to open your eyes to ways you can use the money you have – the money He's given you – to help others and reach more people for Him.
12. Which material possessions of yours are the hardest for you to give up helping someone else?