

REACH



deep roots. lasting fruit.

WORKBOOK

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

WHAT'S IN THIS WORKBOOK?

A Letter From Your Pastors	6
Spiritually Significant Moments	8
Our Next Significant Moment	14
Giving Discipleship Journey	20
Commitment Card and Gift Chart	22
Sermon Notes and Discussion Questions	25
Frequently Asked Questions	58



*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you...
because of your partnership in the gospel
from the first day until now.*

PHILIPPIANS 1:3,5



Friends, our gospel partnership in Northwest Philadelphia and beyond has been one of the greatest privileges of our lives. We thank God for you!

Over the last ten years, the Lord has graciously used Citylight Church to advance the gospel throughout the Philadelphia region. What started as a small Bible study in Pastor Matt and Andrea's apartment has grown into one church that gathers in three congregations with over 40 Citygroups. Together, we have baptized over 150 people, served countless neighbors in the name of Jesus, and experienced firsthand the love of God through Jesus Christ. All glory to God for our first ten years.

As we look to our next ten years, we find ourselves in an exciting and critical moment in the life of our church. Our lease at Mishkan Shalom Synagogue is concluding, and we need to find a new place to gather for God's glory so that we can be sent to live for God's glory all week long (Colossians 3:15-17). We need a new place where we can set our roots down deep in the gospel and grow up as an oak of righteousness - lasting, grand, and far-reaching for God's glory (Isaiah 61:1-3).

We want deep roots and lasting fruit.

For His glory,

Handwritten signatures of the Citylight Pastors, arranged in two rows. The top row contains four signatures, and the bottom row contains three signatures.

The Citylight Pastors



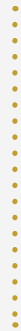
SPIRITUALLY SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS

Creating spiritually significant moments is the Holy Spirit's work. We can cooperate with him by being ready, willing, and open. He often works *in us* before he works *through us*.

We can trace this pattern from the earliest days of the church in Acts right down to the spiritually significant moments of Citylight Church.



THE CHURCH OF JESUS
CHRIST WAS BIRTHED BY
THE HOLY SPIRIT SOME
2,000 YEARS AGO.



They were all together praying (Acts 1:14).
They were ready, willing, and open.

The Holy Spirit filled them (Acts 2:1-4).
*God did a fresh work **in** them.*

They began testifying to the resurrection of Jesus and
3,000 souls were added to their community (Acts 2:5-41),
*God worked **through** them.*

After this, they devoted themselves to the apostles'
teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and prayer. They
remained ready, willing and open. The Lord continued to
add to their number (Acts 2:42-47).
*The **in** and **through** pattern continued.*

* Content in this section was adapted, by permission, from a sister Acts 29 church, Fellowship Denver.



2011 - 2012 | GOD PREPARES THE SOIL

In the summer of 2011, Matt and Andrea Cohen and Pete and Jackie Horning, along with a small group of friends, moved to Philadelphia with the dream of planting Citylight Church. The small team began meeting weekly at the Cohens' apartment to worship God, learn from God's word, and pray for their church planting future. That first summer, the Lord grew our roots deep in the gospel as a partnership with the Whosoever Gospel Mission was formed, the team fell in love with their city, and the very first new Christian was baptized.



In the fall of 2011, the core team gatherings outgrew the Cohens' apartment, and they moved their weekly meetings to (what is now) the coffee room at Mishkan Shalom Synagogue. Gathering on Sunday evenings at the time, Citylight reached new people nearly every week. That same fall, the first Citygroups were started.

The Lord was planting our new church!

"Outreach efforts in urban areas such as NW Philadelphia are crucial to sharing the gospel in our changing society. May the Lord set an open door before this work, just as He did for the church in ancient Philadelphia!"

MARK A. SEIFRID

Ernest and Mildred Hogan Professor of New Testament
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary



2012 - 2014 | A CHURCH IS PLANTED

On March 4, 2012, Citylight Church held our public launch service and our church was planted! Over 150 people attended the first service! However, the months that immediately followed were challenging. Our building was only available on Sunday nights, which proved to be a difficult gathering time. By the summer of 2012, all our initial momentum was slowing and our church shrunk by two thirds.

In the fall of 2012, Citylight experienced a fresh start. God opened doors for us to transition to morning gatherings. In a profound movement of the Lord, the church nearly doubled in size that fall.

By 2014, Citylight Church was holding two Sunday morning services to accommodate our growth. Citygroups branched out into new neighborhoods and new Christians were baptized.



"I was in a difficult place, dealing with a lot of anxiety, and by the time we found our way to Citylight about six months later, I felt like my faith was slipping away. But it was here that I finally started to learn about the parts of the gospel that I had been missing. I finally started to internalize the truth about who God is and who He calls me to be as presented in the gospel... the more I learned about who God was, the more I was seeing my incredibly sinful self and I recognized my deep need for Jesus."

AMANDA BUCKLEY





2015 - 2019 | THE CHURCH BEARS FRUIT

Citylight’s Sunday gatherings steadily expanded, and the church experienced a measure of stability for the first time. It was at this moment of stability that the Lord challenged us to reach further. We realized that, for us to truly be a city on a hill and reach our region with the gospel, we had to branch out from Manayunk. The Lord was leading us to become a church planting church. He was teaching us that new church plants best reach new people with the good news of Jesus. In a season of steady growth and stability, we decided to take a huge risk and reach more through church planting.

In late 2015, we planted Citylight Center City with our first church planting resident, Mike Anderson. Since then, over 30 people have been baptized in Center City, many of whom we would have been very unlikely to reach from Manayunk.



In the years that followed, the Lord continued to grow our church, now in both Manayunk and Center City. By 2019, we were ready to plant again. Late that year, Andy Resh led a team of people from Citylight Manayunk and Center City to plant our third congregation: Citylight Delco. Citylight Delco has weathered the pandemic and now has nearly 60 people gathering for worship each Sunday. In that short and tumultuous time, they have already baptized three new believers.

As the pattern of risk, multiplication, and growth continued, Citylight Manayunk increasingly sensed a need for a long-term facility to put deep roots in Manayunk in order to reach even farther into the Philadelphia region.

“I started to cry while sharing how empty and sinful my life had been. And then it hit me. It was in that moment I realized, no matter how much I tried to “improve” my life, it would all be for nothing if I didn’t have Jesus.”

BARRY SCHWARTZ



2020-TODAY | DEEPER ROOTS AND LASTING FRUIT

The COVID-19 pandemic brought tremendous hardships to our neighbors. The people of Citylight responded, giving over \$100,000 to the Compassion Fund in just four weeks. Over the next 14 months, all of these funds were used to meet direct material needs brought about in our community by the pandemic.

During this season, a significant need of our own surfaced: Mishkan Shalom Synagogue notified our church that our lease would not be renewed beyond the summer of 2022.

Citylight’s story has just begun. We have only just begun to make disciples and plant churches in our region. We’ve only just begun to glorify God in worship, love one another in community, and reach out in mission. We believe the Holy Spirit is writing the next significant moment and preparing us for years of faithfulness and fruitfulness.



“My husband died two years ago, and since coming to Citylight, my relationship with Jesus has been renewed. I now realize that God was waiting patiently for me through many years of pain and suffering to return to Him. He is a faithful God full of kindness, forgiveness, grace, and second chances. I am thankful that I see God’s hand on everything I do.”

LINDA PROCACCINO





OUR NEXT SIGNIFICANT MOMENT

When the door closed for us to continue gathering where we had gathered for a decade, it was a scary moment. However, now we can already see how it was God's gracious way of more deeply anchoring our confidence in Him alone. As the pastors prayed in earnest, they asked the Lord the following question.

**WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE FOR
CITYLIGHT TO CONTINUE TO BE
FAITHFUL TO THE GOOD WORK
HE BEGAN IN OUR CHURCH TEN
YEARS AGO?**

We believe the Lord provided a vision for Citylight's future through Isaiah 61.



The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called
OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.

ISAIAH 61:1-3

Think about the image of an oak tree: deeply rooted, long-lasting, beautifully grand. An oak tree gives life as its far-reaching branches scatter seed and cause new trees to sprout up.

This is the Lord's plan for his people's future - all of his people, not just Citylight. Isaiah 61 shows us that the gospel transforms God's people into oaks of righteousness. Every true church shows off this promise of God, and Citylight is no exception. We are oaks of righteousness because of Jesus — the anointed preacher in this passage. This passage reminds us of who we already are.

As oaks of righteousness, we believe we are called to grow into that promise with roots that reach deeper and an impact that reaches wider: to be firmly secure where God has planted us, proclaiming the good news of Jesus.

How are we going to get from our present moment to our future as oaks of righteousness? What's our next step? We believe God is calling us to purchase, renovate, and move into a long-term facility where we can reach deep through gathering, reach more through growing, reach out through serving, and reach far through sending. That is what Reach is all about!

Reach is a two-year generosity initiative that we are embarking on together. The potential for Citylight's new home has presented us with an amazing opportunity. An initiative like Reach is never just about a building. In fact, if we make it just about a building, we may get one -- but we'll lose our sense of identity and mission in the process. Reach is about what God is doing *in* each one of us as well as what he wants to do *through* us as we seek a long-term facility where we can grow up as oaks of righteousness.

AS WE EMBARK ON REACH, WE HAVE TWO GOALS...



GOAL 1

100% ENGAGEMENT

We are a people who are all about Jesus and are committed to following his way in generosity. We are inviting everyone who calls Citylight Church their home to give themselves first to the Lord, to embrace Reach, and to make a faith-filled generosity commitment.



GOAL 2

RAISE \$4.3M

We believe God is calling us to raise the funds necessary for Citylight to secure a new, long-term facility for our congregation, while continuing our mission of making disciples of Jesus.

\$2.5M will go toward a new, more permanent home for Citylight Manayunk.

\$1.8M will go toward continuing to make disciples of Jesus to the glory of God
(our ministry operations budget over the next two years).

GIVING OURSELVES FIRST TO THE LORD

100% ENGAGEMENT

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-5

In Paul's second letter to the early church at Corinth, he tells them of the story of the early churches in Macedonia. These churches were going through a severe trial and were in extreme poverty, yet they were able to give beyond their ability, on their own accord, and with rich generosity. How were they able to do this? Verse 5 - They gave themselves first to the Lord. We desire to be like those Macedonians and desire to give ourselves first to the Lord and then to the things that follow after that. Not first to our spreadsheets, not first to our fears, not first to our security... but first to the Lord.

A NEW, PERMANENT HOME

\$ 2 . 5 M

We believe that God is calling Citylight to lay deep roots and spread broad branches so that he might continue to do the good work he began ten years ago. A long-term, 24/7 facility that we can call “home” will allow us to reach deep through gathering, reach out through serving, reach more through growing, and reach far through sending.

This includes:

- A dedicated space where we can gather for worship on Sunday morning, where we can be disciplined through God’s Word and sent to live attractively different lives in our homes, jobs, and neighborhoods,
- A fun, clean, and safe environment to effectively teach our children the gospel and reach kids in our community through special events like Vacation Bible School,
- Sufficient educational space to support expanding theological training through the Citylight Institute,
- The opportunity to gather together for “Citylight family meals” throughout the year,
- A venue where we can host community events throughout the week and meet the needs of those in Northwest Philadelphia and the surrounding areas, and
- Becoming an established and known presence amongst our neighbors (plus, we can finally have a permanent sign outside!).

CONTINUE MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS

\$ 1 . 8 M

Citylight Church exists to make disciples of Jesus to the glory of God. Everything we do is motivated by a deepening love for God, one another, and our neighbors. This \$1.8M is our projected operational budget over the next two years to continue doing what God's people have been doing for over 2,000 years.

This includes:

- Gathering each Sunday to worship and hear from God's Word,
- Teaching our children the good news of Jesus,
- Discipling one another through Citygroups, discipleship groups, and Christian education,
- Meeting needs in our community through our mercy and justice outreach and partnering with like minded ministries like Whosoever Gospel Mission,
- Supporting church planting efforts around the United States,
- Equipping and sending international workers to share the gospel and their lives with unreached people around the world, and
- Training and sending future church planters around the Philadelphia region and beyond.

GIVING DISCIPLESHIP JOURNEY

As you seek the Lord's leading for your participation with Reach, use this discipleship journey to see how Scripture talks about stewarding our resources and how you might experience new joy in giving.

INITIAL GIVER

Someone who decides to give for the first time, out of a response to God's Word about giving. This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the Church with this gift. They experience the initial joy of putting Jesus' words into action (Matthew 7:24).

CONSISTENT GIVER

Someone who decides to give a certain amount on a consistent basis to exercise the discipline of giving as a disciple of Jesus. Often, someone who decides to make their gift an online recurring gift is learning the joy of consistency. Non-online givers can be consistent givers as well of course; it just requires more discipline. They experience the consistent joy of putting Jesus' words into action (Matthew 7:24).

PRIORITY GIVER

Someone who sees the preeminence of Christ and that He is before all things – that all things were created by Him, for Him, through Him, and to Him. This giver places such a significant priority on their giving that it drives their spending and their saving, as opposed to their spending and saving driving their giving. They experience the freedom of serving “one master” (Matthew 6:19-24; Colossians 1:15-20).

SURRENDERED GIVER

Someone who recognizes that Christ surrendered His whole self for us, and therefore, we can safely surrender our whole selves to Him in love (Ephesians 5:1-2). They would say, “My giving is not just changing my spending and saving. It's also changing me!” They also look at what they're not giving away and ask, “Is it surrendered too?” This informs how they use everything they've been blessed and entrusted with – whether that be through direct monetary giving or a God-honoring use of an existing resource.

ETERNAL GIVER

Someone who sees the eternal impact of their giving – on them and others – and not just the immediate programs and ministries it helps accomplish. They have been captivated by the knowledge that the more they are led to “do good, to be generous, and ready to share,” the more they “take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:19). This encourages them to keep growing! They make all decisions (big purchases, savings, giving, relationships, areas of service) in light of how it will affect their eternal impact.

** Content in this section was adapted, by permission, from a sister Acts 29 church, Fellowship Denver.*

deep roots. lasting fruit.

\$	<input type="text"/>	My/Our Normal Annual Giving <i>(regular giving, special projects, etc.)</i>
+\$	<input type="text"/>	My/Our Expanded Annual Generosity as part of REACH
= \$	<input type="text"/>	x 2 years = \$ <input type="text"/>
	Gifts from my/our stored resources*	+ \$ <input type="text"/>

** God may call us to give resources he has already provided. If he brings to mind any such resources (current savings, land, stocks, dividends, cryptocurrencies, etc.) you can include them here.*

MY/OUR TOTAL 2-YEAR REACH COMMITMENT

\$

March 2022 - March 2024

Name

Email

Phone

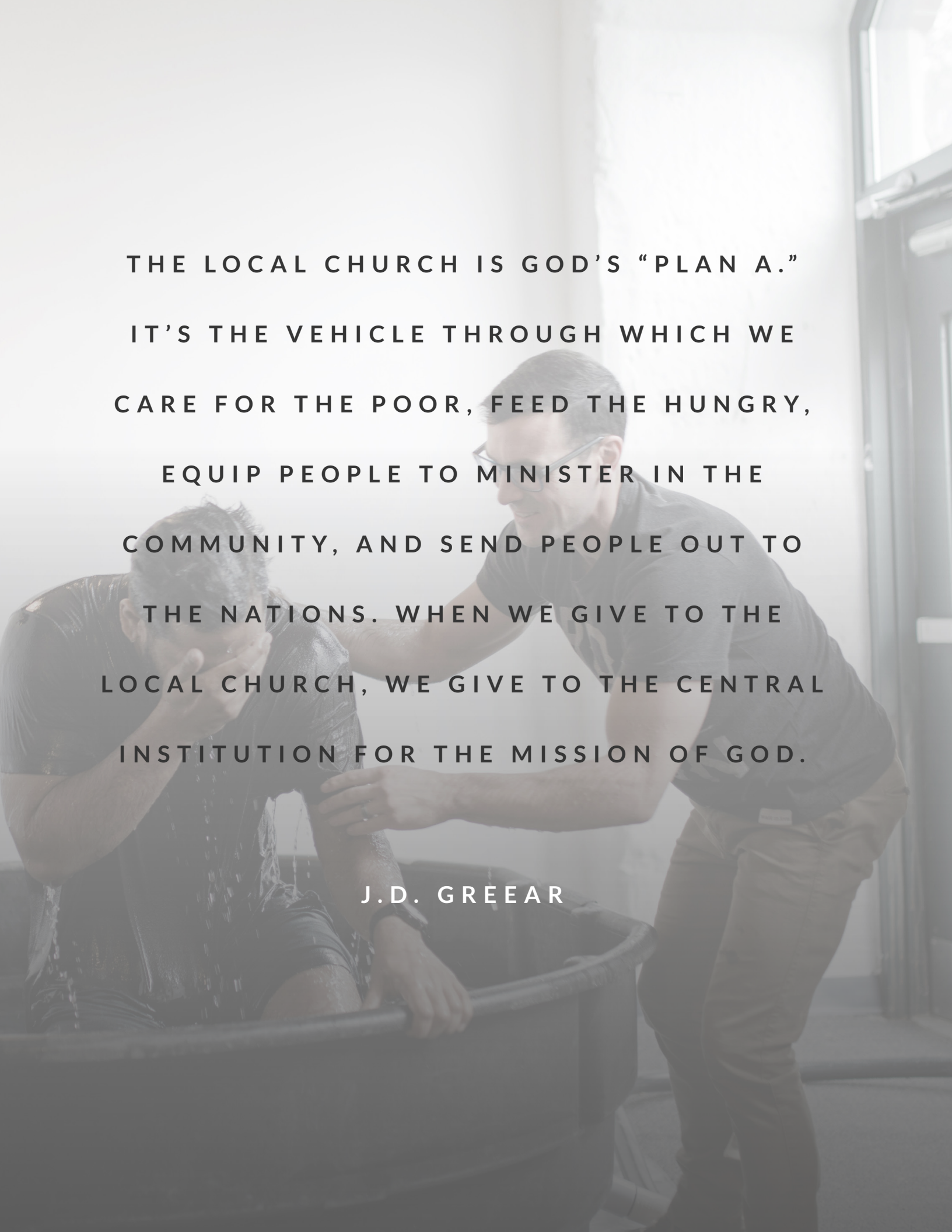
“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.”

ISAIAH 61:1-3

TWO-YEAR GIFT CHART

As you pray and seek the Lord in this season, we hope this gift chart is a helpful tool to both inspire and challenge you as you consider how God is calling you to engage.

Gifts Needed	Two Year Gift Level	Annual Gift	Monthly Gift	Gift Level Total
1	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$500,000
1	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$10,417	\$250,000
2	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$6,250	\$300,000
3	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$300,000
5	\$75,000	\$37,500	\$3,125	\$375,000
7	\$65,000	\$32,500	\$2,708	\$455,000
8	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$400,000
10	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$1,458	\$350,000
12	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$1,042	\$300,000
15	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$625	\$225,000
20	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$417	\$200,000
30	\$7,500	\$3,750	\$313	\$225,000
40	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$208	\$200,000
MANY	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$104	\$220,000
TOTAL GENEROSITY GOAL				\$4,300,000

A photograph of a man being baptized in a tub. The man being baptized is on the left, leaning forward with his hands covering his face. The man performing the baptism is on the right, leaning over the tub and pouring water over the other man's head. The scene is set indoors, possibly in a church, with a door visible in the background. The image has a soft, slightly faded appearance.

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS GOD'S "PLAN A."
IT'S THE VEHICLE THROUGH WHICH WE
CARE FOR THE POOR, FEED THE HUNGRY,
EQUIP PEOPLE TO MINISTER IN THE
COMMUNITY, AND SEND PEOPLE OUT TO
THE NATIONS. WHEN WE GIVE TO THE
LOCAL CHURCH, WE GIVE TO THE CENTRAL
INSTITUTION FOR THE MISSION OF GOD.

J.D. GREAR

A dark, moody photograph of a person in a suit sitting at a desk, writing in a notebook with a pen. A smartphone is placed on the desk next to the notebook. The background is blurred, showing other people in a meeting or office setting.

**SERMON
NOTES AND
DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

ISAIAH 61:1-11

¹ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are
bound;

² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁵ Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks;
foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;

⁶ but you shall be called the priests of the LORD;
they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God;
you shall eat the wealth of the nations,
and in their glory you shall boast.

⁷ Instead of your shame there shall be a double
portion;
instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot;
therefore in their land they shall possess a double
portion;
they shall have everlasting joy.

⁸ For I the LORD love justice;
I hate robbery and wrong;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹ Their offspring shall be known among the nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge them,
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of
salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a
beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout
up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to sprout up before all the nations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Isaiah 61:1-11 together.

2. Read Isaiah 61:1-2. Who are these liberated people?

.....

.....

.....

3. What is one meaningful way that you've experienced the good news of Jesus during your time at Citylight Church?

.....

.....

.....

4. Read Isaiah 61:3-7. What are people like who have been set free by the Messiah? What is their cause? ¹

.....

.....

.....

5. How does Citylight specifically show that we have joined the Messiah's cause? How does a long-term facility fit in with that? How do the goals of Reach fit in? How specifically can you join in?

.....

.....

.....

6. Financial generosity is a key component of Reach. How does generosity relate to joining Jesus in his cause? What frightens you about this idea?

.....

.....

.....

¹ ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The Local Church is God's "Plan A," J.D. Greear (<https://jdgrear.com/plumb-line-7-the-local-church-is-gods-plan-a/>)
- Why the Local Church Really Matters, Tim Challies (<https://www.challies.com/articles/why-the-local-church-really-matters/>)
- Should I Give to My Local Church First or to Other Ministries?, J.D. Greear (<https://jdgrear.com/should-i-give-to-my-local-church-first-or-to-other-things/>)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

7. What are some barriers to generosity that people may encounter? What are some barriers to generosity specifically for you?

.....

.....

.....

8. Read Isaiah 61:8-11. How do the promises in these verses help you overcome your specific barriers to generosity?

.....

.....

.....

Praise God for his...

- Greatness. He owns everything. He is sovereign. He is in control. He isn't nervous or taken by surprise. He doesn't suffer setbacks or ever put his hands on his knees to catch his breath.
- Goodness. He will supply every need of ours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Confess to God...

- Any fears you may have about Citylight's future.
- Any barriers you experience when it comes to financial generosity toward the Messiah's cause.

Thank God for his...

- Abundant provision for Citylight in every way over the last ten years.
- Gospel-work in your life and the lives of others through Citylight Church.

Ask God to...

- Help every member and attendee to give themselves first to the Lord throughout the Reach Initiative.
- Help Citylight have 100% engagement in Reach.
- Deepen our dependence, stretch our faith, and expand our generosity throughout the Reach Initiative.
- Supply every *need* of ours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

MATTHEW 25:14-30

- ¹⁴ “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property.
- ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.
- ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more.
- ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money.
- ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them.
- ²⁰ And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’
- ²¹ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’
- ²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’
- ²³ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’
- ²⁴ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed,
- ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’
- ²⁶ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed?
- ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.
- ²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents.
- ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.
- ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

SERMON NOTES

**MAKE AN ETERNAL
IMPACT WITH THE
MASTER'S RESOURCES**

Why?

1. It's all His (V. 14)
2. We are His stewards (V. 14-19)
3. The stakes are high (V. 20-30)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read the parable and summarize its message in your own words. From the sermon, what is the big idea?

.....

.....

.....

2. Why do you think that Jesus took so much time and effort to teach his disciples this message?

.....

.....

.....

We are going to discuss and apply three reasons why we should make an eternal impact with the Master's resources.

It's All His

3. Describe what a "talent" is in this passage? (It's not what it sounds like in English!)

.....

.....

.....

4. What are some "talents" the Lord has entrusted specifically to you?

.....

.....

.....

5. Why is it sometimes challenging for us to think of all of our resources as belonging to God? How can we renew our thinking on this? How can we help one another?

.....

.....

.....

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

6. How might understanding this concept help you grow in making an eternal impact with those resources?

.....

.....

.....

We Are His Stewards

7. What does the master do with his property? What is a steward?

.....

.....

.....

8. Have you ever thought of yourself as a steward of God's resources?

.....

.....

.....

9. What frightens you about the idea of being a steward of God's resources? What excites you?

.....

.....

.....

10. How does the concept of stewardship radically change the way we (as Christians) think of stored resources like savings, investments, equity, inheritances, or windfalls?

.....

.....

.....

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Stakes are High

11. What did the wicked servant believe about the master that led him to play it safe?

.....

.....

.....

12. How do you see yourself in the “bad steward”? What fears or false-beliefs about our Master lead you toward behavior that is similar to the bad steward?

.....

.....

.....

13. What are the wonderful rewards of taking big risks to make an impact with the Master’s money?

.....

.....

.....

14. Have you ever known a Christian who took really big risks for God’s Kingdom (especially financial)?

.....

.....

.....

15. How can their example inspire you to make an eternal impact with the Master’s resources?

.....

.....

.....

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Praise God for...

- Creating you in his image with talents to invest for his eternal glory.

Confess to God...

- Any fears you may have about embracing your identity as a steward.
- Any barriers to living as a steward that you're currently experiencing.

Thank God for...

- The invitation and meaningful privilege to live as his steward.
- The specific opportunities that He has given you to steward your talents in this world for his glory.

Ask God to...

- Help every member and attendee of Citylight to embrace their Christ-given identity as stewards entrusted with talents for God's glory.
- Provide you with the courage to live as God's steward specifically with the financial resources that God has entrusted to you.
- Use all of our financial resources to help Citylight continue to grow into a church that makes a difference for Christ in our generation.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-5

¹ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,

² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.

³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord,

⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—

⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Paul brings up the Macedonians' generosity to the Corinthians?

.....

.....

.....

2. Whose generosity inspires you? What are some ways we can inspire one another in generosity?

.....

.....

.....

3. Read 2 Corinthians 8:2-5. What are some characteristics of the Macedonians' overflowing generosity?

.....

.....

.....

4. What specifically inspires you about the Macedonians' example of "joyful generosity"? How might you want to apply their example to your own generosity?

.....

.....

.....

5. Read 2 Corinthians 8:5. What happened before the Macedonians overflowed with a wealth of generosity?

.....

.....

.....

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

6. What do you think Paul means by the statement, “they gave themselves first to the Lord”?

.....
.....
.....

7. What are you tempted to give yourself first to when thinking about your generosity?

.....
.....
.....

8. How can you give yourself first to the Lord? What might that look like specifically during Reach?

.....
.....
.....

Praise God for his...

- Grace that can be seen in the lives of generous Christians who have inspired you.

Confess to God...

- Any ways that you’ve held yourself back from giving yourself first to the Lord and then to His people in generosity.

Thank God for...

- People, by name, who have inspired you toward God-centered generosity.

Ask God to...

- Help you give yourself first to the Lord and then to Reach in an overflow of generosity.
- Help every member and attender of Citylight to give themselves first to the Lord and then to Reach so our church is built-up and more people are reached with the gospel.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:6-15

⁶ Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace.

⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine.

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

¹⁰ And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it.

¹¹ So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have.

¹² For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.

¹³ For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness

¹⁴ your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.

¹⁵ As it is written, “Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack.”

SERMON NOTES

EXCEL IN THE GRACE OF GENEROUS GIVING

Why?

1. It proves your love (vv. 8)
2. He became poor for you (vv. 9)
3. Desire isn't enough (vv. 10-15)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you seek to excel in?

.....

.....

.....

2. Have you ever thought about the idea of seeking to excel in generous giving? Why might Reach be an ideal time to try it? What frightens you about the idea of excelling in generosity?

.....

.....

.....

3. According to verse 8, what is the first reason why we should excel in generous giving? How might this reason help you overcome your fears around excelling in generosity?

.....

.....

.....

4. Imagine if we met and exceeded our goal just two weeks after we all have made our Reach commitments. What are some ways that our collective and individual generosity toward Reach communicates our genuine love?

.....

.....

.....

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

5. Assuming that you don't consider yourself materially rich, let's suppose all of a sudden you became rich. How might this change your outlook and the way that you live?

.....

.....

.....

6. According to verse 9, what is another reason to excel in the grace of generous giving? In what sense are you truly rich?

.....

.....

.....

7. What are some ways that true wealth in Christ calms our fears about excelling in generosity and actually motivates generosity?

.....

.....

.....

8. Read verses 10-15. What is Paul afraid that the Corinthians might be tempted to do when it comes to their commitment to give to the poor Christians in Jerusalem? Have you ever felt tempted this way? How do Paul's words inspire you to match your desires with generous action?

.....

.....

.....

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Praise God for...

- Jesus who became poor, so that we by his poverty might become rich.

Confess to God...

- Any ways that your generous intentions haven't been matched by generous actions.

Thank God for his...

- Abundant provision in Christ for all your true needs.
- Generosity to you in the gospel.

Ask God to...

- Supply you with earnest love for the church and her mission of making disciples of Jesus to the glory of God.
- Prepare your heart and make you ready for Commitment Sunday.
- Help you joyfully follow through on the commitments that he puts on your heart.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:1-10

¹ Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints,

² for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them.

³ But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be.

⁴ Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident.

⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

⁹ As it is written,
“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

SERMON NOTES

GIVE BOUNTIFULLY!

Why?

1. You will receive bountiful rewards
2. You will have bountiful hearts
3. You have a bountiful God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read 2 Corinthians 9:1-5. Why does Paul think that it's unnecessary to write to the Corinthians about generous giving? Why does he write anyway? How does Paul's delicate, encouraging approach inspire you to give bountifully?

2. From the sermon, what is the big idea of the passage? What excites or frightens you about the big idea of the passage?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8. What is the bountiful reward that God promises to those who give bountifully? How is this different from the false prosperity gospel that encourages Christians to give so that they can get? What excites you about this reward for bountiful givers?

4. Why is it wrong to give under compulsion? Why is cheerfulness a better motivation?

5. Why do you think it says that God loves a cheerful giver? Does that mean we should only give bountifully when we feel cheerful about it? What might help you be more cheerful in bountiful giving?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

6. When have you experienced God's generous provision in your life? Have you ever been surprised by God's generosity? How can God's generosity to you motivate bountiful giving?

.....

.....

.....

Praise God for his...

- Cheerfulness and his love for cheerful givers.

Confess to God...

- Any reluctance or compulsion you might feel to give.
- Any barriers to bountiful giving that you're experiencing.

Thank God for his...

- Abundant provision so that we can afford to be generous again and again and again.

Ask God to...

- Help you give bountifully and joyfully.
- Make every grace abound to you so that you can abound in every good work.
- Supply you abundantly as you give so that you can joyfully give even more.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11-15

¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.

¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others,

¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does God promise to enrich generous Christians? How is that different from “giving in order to get”?

.....

.....

.....

2. This passage teaches that one purpose of God’s provision is that we might be more generous. In light of that, how has God been preparing you for increasing generosity? How have you been responding?

.....

.....

.....

3. What two things do our generous giving accomplish? In what way is that exciting and motivating to you as you consider your own generous giving?

.....

.....

.....

4. What are some ways that our generosity can lead others to give thanks to God? How has the generosity of others led you to thank God in the past?

.....

.....

.....

5. What is God’s inexpressible gift? And how does that inspire you to be generous?

.....

.....

.....

Reserve the rest of the night for praise and thanksgiving to God on the basis of 2 Corinthians 9:11-15.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1

WHAT ARE YOU ASKING ME TO DO?

First and foremost, we are asking that you pray and seek God's leading on what He is asking of you. Prepare your heart to hear Him, and then listen to what He says. Engage in a Citygroup during this season, if you haven't already engaged in one. Engage in personal reflection with God in the Reach workbook. Talk with your Citygroup, your spouse, your family, friends, or others about what this commitment will mean for this next exciting season of your life.

We are asking that you make a commitment to gospel-driven, surrendered generosity – whatever it is that God leads you to do. Follow His leading.

Finally, prepare to be amazed. It is an awesome God that we serve, and we anticipate He will move in huge ways as we seek an unprecedented impact from our collective Reach commitments – something only God can do. Please mark your calendar for Commitment Sunday, March 6, and prepare to experience a life-changing worship service that will forever be remembered as a defining moment for our church and for our own faith.

2

IF I AM COMMITTING TO REACH, HOW DOES THIS CHANGE MY GIVING THE GENERAL FUND OR OTHER SPECIAL OFFERINGS?

During this two-year period, every contribution to God through Citylight is a contribution to our Reach initiative. Every aspect of the ministry vision God is calling us towards for the next two years will be funded through Reach. There will not be separate funds. Every gift that is given to Citylight will go to the key components of this initiative – to make disciples of Jesus to the glory of God as well as our expanded vision of a new, more permanent home for Citylight Manayunk.

3

HOW LONG IS MY COMMITMENT?

We are asking that everyone make a two-year commitment. The fulfillment period for your commitment will begin with our First Big Give on Sunday, March 20, 2022, and it will culminate in March of 2024.

4

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL WAYS BESIDES CASH THAT I CAN GIVE MORE TOWARDS REACH?

Be creative as you explore ways you and your family can give towards Reach. You might have some stocks, property, or other items of that nature. Or you may have some stored resources that God has blessed you with that He might be calling you to give during this time. Please let us know if you need assistance with facilitating gifts of property or stock, and we would be happy to help you with that. Contact Tim Shutes at tim@citylightphilly.com to make a gift of this type.

5

WHAT IF I AM NEW AROUND HERE?

Reach is about the vision for our church and our personal discipleship in giving as followers of Jesus. We believe that the local church is the most compelling mission to give towards, and we would really love for you to make Citylight your home and join us in Reach. If you are ready for it, this is a perfect time for you to put a stake in the ground and make this your church. We would love you to join the Citylight family!

6

WHAT IF I HAVE NEVER EVEN GIVEN TO CITYLIGHT BEFORE?

Reach was crafted specifically with you in mind. Reach is a “one fund” generosity initiative, meaning that it is different from a traditional capital campaign where you are called to give an extra gift above and beyond your normal giving - thus creating two steps for people who aren’t yet giving. Reach is a call to surrendered, gospel-driven generosity for absolutely everyone at Citylight. If you have never given before, this is your chance to join in with what God is doing through committed giving. We really hope you will.

7

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A JOB RIGHT NOW? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR MY REACH COMMITMENT?

Reach is about your total, prioritized, gospel-driven generosity to God’s mission at Citylight. We believe that God calls us to action in times of hardship just as much as He does in times of abundance, and that looks different for every person. Reach is about a heart surrender - one that is only accomplished by seeking the Lord and responding to His call and His Word. We would love for 100% of us to be a part of Reach so that we can all be supporting, loving, encouraging, and praying for one another through this spiritually-stretching season at Citylight. If you have questions or would like help thinking through your unique situation, reach out to one of the elders or email reach@citylightphilly.com.

8

WHAT IF I'M MOVING WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS OR IF I AM UNCERTAIN ABOUT HOW LONG I'LL BE A PART OF CITYLIGHT?

The truth is that none of us know exactly what our future will hold. That's the beauty and challenge of taking steps of faith! We want to encourage you that, even if you're not sure if you'll be a part of Citylight for the full span of the next two years, we invite you to still commit to generosity and be a part of this life-changing endeavor God has for our church in this season. If needed, you may modify your commitment at any time. But often, people have continued to support Citylight even after they've left the area – as a ministry they continue to be a part of into the future. If you happen to move out of the area, we would love for that to be your story!

9

WHAT IF I AM SIGNIFICANTLY IN DEBT RIGHT NOW? SHOULD I STILL GIVE?

If you are someone currently seeking to make payments to pay off debt right now, we commend you for making progress on that - and you should continue to do so. We would be happy to help you in this journey and/or to recommend a budgeting class that might minister to you. Being in debt does not, however, make someone "excused" from giving. Giving isn't about what God wants from you; rather, it's about what God wants for you. It should be our joy and privilege to give at all times, regardless of the amount or percentage. Please contact us at reach@citylighphilly.com if you need assistance with paying off of debt while still giving or if you would like to speak with a budgeting counselor, and we would be honored to help.

10

WHAT IF I HAVEN'T BEEN BAPTIZED YET?

Great question. People take different spiritual steps at different times. Some people begin praying before they begin attending church. Others begin going to a Citygroup before they begin talking to God in prayer. Giving is another spiritual step, and it comes at different times for different people. One thing is for sure, however. Just like other spiritual disciplines, giving draws us closer to God, and God is calling ALL of us to give. Jesus says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19). Whether you have taken the spiritual step of baptism or whether you haven't yet, we would encourage you to still join us in this Reach initiative. We firmly believe that it will draw you closer to God and hopefully to a place where you are ready to make the decision to become baptized and to surrender your life to the Lordship of Christ.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

For more information, visit citylightphilly.com/reach. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to speak personally to any of our elders or submit a question via email to reach@citylightphilly.com.

citylight | church
CITYLIGHTPHILLY.COM