

# FIRST

## SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 3 November 7, 2021  
“The Commitment”



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### OPENING PRAYER

Lord, I thank you for the generosity and kindness of the early church Christians and the example they gave to us as to how to change the world. I pray that we would continue to be generous with our resources so that our gifts and offerings would be used to change lives and transform communities. Bless the resources we give for your work and multiply them to feed, clothe, and bring hope to those in need. It's in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

#### II Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

#### I Corinthians 16:2 (NIV)

*On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the past two weeks we looked at how to put God first in our living and our giving. We looked at how to identify the idols in our life that compete for our heart with God. We looked at John Wesley’s famous ideas about giving. The one question that we have not addressed in the first two weeks is “so, why do we give as Jesus followers?” Is it really necessary?

Jesus came into a world where the religion of the Roman Empire did not value human beings. Jesus began a radical teaching that his followers should do good to all people and to be merciful because God has been merciful to us. The early Christians lived out his teaching of generosity and it changed the world. Generosity is an important aspect of discipleship. God doesn’t want anything from you, he wants something for you. He wants you to grow in your relationship with him and giving to his work in changing lives and transforming communities accomplishes that.

## QUESTIONS

1. Jesus said “be merciful as your father is merciful.” What are some practical ways to do that?
2. Why would God want us to give from free, grateful hearts without coercion or pressure? When have you felt the joy of giving freely from a grateful heart of love?
3. Jesus warned us to “be on your guard against all kinds of greed.” What different kinds of greed have you experienced? How can you assess whether you are getting your sense of meaning and value from material things? How do you define “success”? How easy or hard do you find it to accept Jesus’ teaching that “life does not consist in an abundance of possessions”?
4. Read I Corinthians 16:2 on page 1. Do you have a plan when it comes to giving to the church or are you more of a spontaneous giver?
5. Pastor Eric said in his sermon that “in order to put God first in our giving we should reprioritize our finances so that we give first, save second and live on the rest.” Is that very practical or not?

## FINAL APPLICATION

This week, determine how much you will give to the work of God through Asbury Church and fill out your pledge card.