

8. GENEROSITY REMINDS GOD: OF HIS PROMISE TO BLESS

- **Neh 5:19**
- Remember me with favour
- Seek first the kingdom...and all these things
- **Psalms 35:27** *He delights in the prosperity of His servant*
- **Malachi 3:10** *Try me now and see if I will not open the windows of Heaven and pour out such blessing that you cannot contain it*
- **Numbers 23:20** *He has given a command to bless; He has blessed and I cannot overturn it!*

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION STARTERS:

1. Discuss how an attitude of generosity constantly challenges the prevailing culture around you
2. What is a YOU+ONE next step for you right now?
3. What does Ps Artie mean by “understanding it is God who gives power to get wealth is both humbling and exciting”?
4. Share about a time when you were blessed by someone else being generous. How did it affect you?
5. Think about one way you can increase in generosity this week – eg in your relationships, family, business, money, church etc
6. If people are Priority #1, do you have up to 5 people who you are believing to say Yes to Jesus? Are you praying for them, connecting with them, inviting them? What can you do together as a Life Group to CONNECT with them or CARE for them?
7. Pray for needs within your group, continued growth and favour on our church, and for Artie and Alana and the leadership team

EASTSIDE CHURCH

INFLUENCE **FAITH** HOPE **LOVE**

Sunday AM 20th & 27th June 2010 – Ps Artie Shepherd

NEHEMIAH: CUP-BEARER TO CITY-BUILDER

PART 9: GENEROSITY

TEXT: Nehemiah 5

Neh 5:1-4 Struggling to survive – this is not God’s intention for you

- If there’s anything that people are going to protest about, complain about, fight about – it’s money!
- Generosity is not just about money
- Generosity is not an amount, it’s an attitude
- Generosity is not a chore, it’s a choice
- Generosity is a mindset, a worldview, a conviction
- Generosity is shown in the nature of God
 - First interaction with the man and woman He created was to bless them
 - So loved that He gave His only Son...
 - Does not treat us as our sins deserve...
- Generosity overflows into every part of your life
- YOU+ONE is a reminder to live generously
- Generosity is like a reminder alert in your calendar
 - Be alert, not alarmed!
 - This is a generous church
 - But God’s kingdom is an ever-increasing kingdom
 - YOU+ONE is a challenge to keep increasing

1. GENEROSITY REMINDS ME: WHERE WEALTH COMES FROM

- **Neh 5:5** *it is not in our power to redeem them*
- **Deuteronomy 8:18** *Remember it is God who gives you the power to get wealth...*
- Money represents power and ability
- Generosity reminds me that my ability is not the source
- This is both humbling and exciting!

2. GENEROSITY REMINDS ME: HOW SERIOUS STINGINESS IS

- **Neh 5:6-7**
- Attitude of greed and selfishness is such a serious, destructive issue that Nehemiah called all the people away from building and defending the city so he could deal with it
- **Proverbs 11:24-26**

3. GENEROSITY REMINDS ME: PEOPLE ARE PRIORITY #1

- **Neh 5:8**
- Greed and stinginess cause humans to behave inhumanely
- Sold other people's children into slavery until next Year of Jubilee
- Possibly thinking that would make it OK
- This still happens today...in our own city
- Nehemiah personally paid to redeem people
- *According to our ability*
- We have a dream of significant influence
- In every primary school, high school and university
- Life Groups covering the city
- So significant that our city cannot ignore it
- New churches locally and globally
- WHY? It's all about people!
- Love God and love people

4. GENEROSITY REMINDS OTHERS: OF A BETTER WAY

- **Neh 5:10**
- We should be the greatest examples of generosity
- **Matthew 5:14-16** (Message) *Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. ¹⁵If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. ¹⁶Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.*
- YOU+ONE is also about helping another one to discover and live the YOU+ONE life, and another one, and another one

5. GENEROSITY REMINDS ME: OF MY PROMISES & PLEDGES

- **Neh 5:11-13**
- Interest = "Usury" (Hebrew: nashah) means to take a mortgage against security, different to a personal loan
- 100th, ie 1%/month or 12%pa It is used only in Nehemiah
- Charging interest at all was forbidden in the Law
- They had to be reminded of the promises they had made previously to live by God's law
- Why do we highlight the offering each week and not just put a box at the back of church? It's a reminder alert!
- Generosity doesn't keep records
- In our world this principle goes beyond money
- People charge interest in relationships
- Hold debts of wrongs and grudges over people
- Marriage – for better or worse, 1 Corinthians 13 *love keeps no record of wrongs...BUT!*
- Salvation – I want to follow Jesus who said as you forgive others so shall you be forgiven...BUT!

6. GENEROSITY REMINDS ME: OF MY HIGHER CALLING

- **Neh 5:14-16**
- Continued to work on the wall and didn't focus on personal gain
- Money, power, influence and position can corrupt
- Nehemiah chose to align his money, power, influence and position with his convictions, commitments and call
- Building *the* kingdom not *his* own kingdom
- Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (His way)

7. GENEROSITY REMINDS ME: BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

- **Neh 5:17-18**
- **Proverbs 11:24 (MSG)** *The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller.*
- Dilemma of Matthew 5:16 with Matthew 6:1
- Question of motive
- **Acts 20:35** *It is more blessed to give than to receive*
- **Hebrews 7:7** Giving a blessing is greater than being blessed