

# STUDY NOTES

## SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES IN ADVENT A SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH

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The following content is based on the message “The Joy of Giving” spoken on 12/4/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

### PRAYER

*Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.*

### THE SCRIPTURE: JOHN 2:1-12

### DO WHATEVER JESUS TELLS YOU TO DO

To fail in wedding supplies was a major embarrassment for the married parties and families. The anxiety of Jesus’ mother is quite understandable, and so because of that, she tells the servants to do *whatever Jesus tells them to do*.

Jesus never asks you to give something you don’t have. We are called to give from what we have, knowing that it is all God’s anyway. Everything is his. It is on loan to you. We are stewards of it!

- *What experience do you have with God telling you to do something crazy and then you doing it?*

### DON’T NEGLECT GIVING A TITHE

If we believe that we are to do everything Jesus asked, in Luke 11:42 Jesus said that people should not neglect giving a tithe—which is actually an Old Testament principle that he is continuing in the New Testament.

- *What are some of the reasons that you’ve used to say that you can’t tithe?*

Maybe we don’t present what we have to Him because we don’t trust him. Maybe we can’t or don’t because we don’t really LOVE Jesus like we say we do. Or maybe, to go deeper, it is because we don’t find our pleasure or our joy in him. This isn’t really about “generosity” per se, it is about where we find our joy.

- *What do you honestly think when someone says that you should present what you have to Jesus?*

### WHAT DO YOU LOVE?

In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus told us to store up treasures in heaven, not on earth. The “Treasure Principle” says: “where we choose to store our treasures depends largely on where we find our pleasure”. When people really find the kingdom, they sell out for it. As we joyfully receive the kingdom, we experience his love, taking pleasure in him and giving back.

- *Using your own resources as a gauge, where do you honestly think your treasure is?*

### KINGDOM JOY

When the people in this wedding story did what Jesus said, they saw God at work. People believed in him. It is the Father’s good pleasure to give us the kingdom (Luke 12:32). But the bad news is that the Fall means our inclinations are often skewed. Our pleasures can be pointed in the wrong direction. This isn’t really about “generosity” per se, it is about where we find our joy. We don’t give to receive earthly happiness. We give to receive Kingdom Joy.

**If we give without a kingdom currency then we will always be disappointed.**

- *How do you think a kingdom currency is different than an earthy currency?*
- *In what ways do we give expecting earthly currency in return?*
- *How has an earthly currency been disappointing to you?*
- *In what ways can we practice the joy of giving?*
- *Pray together that we would all be more kingdom minded.*