

A generous person experiences real hope.

Hope: the feeling that what is wanted can be had

Our problem with generosity is misplaced hope.

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their **hope** in wealth, which is so uncertain...

Switch your hope.

...but to put their **hope** in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be **generous** and willing to share. In this way they will lay up **treasure** for themselves as a firm foundation for the **coming age**... *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

“Don’t store up **treasures** here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your **treasures in heaven**, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.” *Matthew 6:19-20*

What are treasures in heaven? How do you store them up?

We all come to the end of our lives as naked and empty-handed as on the day we were born. We cannot take our riches with us. *Ecclesiastes 5:15*

1. God is eternal.

Don’t you know? Haven’t you heard? The **eternal God**, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, doesn’t grow tired or become weary. *Isaiah 40:28*

2. You are eternal.

“*You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God’s great universe.*” — Dallas Willard

3. Other people are eternal.

“*There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.*” — C.S. Lewis

“And if you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded.” *Matthew 10:42*

Where have you placed your hope?

SG | Small Groups

Group Prep

In preparation for your small group meeting, please read 1 Timothy 6:17-19 and Matthew 6:19-34, then answer the following discussion questions prior to attending.

Introduction

Hope is the feeling that what is wanted can be had. Hope keeps us going. It is the reason we stay in the marriage during the rough patch, put in long hours at work, study late at night for the big test, or pray before bed every night. Hope is essential. The reason many of us have a hard time with generosity is because of misplaced hope. So... What should we be hoping for?

Discussion Questions

1. “Hope for the future fuels our efforts in the present.” In your own words, take a moment to define ‘hope.’ How can you tell where you place hope, and how does it affect your day to day lifestyle?

2. It’s easy for us to misplace hope. Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. Practically speaking, what does it look like to put our “hope in wealth?” Why would people place hope in something that’s so uncertain? Practically speaking, what does it look like to put our “hope in God?”

In Matthew 6:19-20, Jesus asks us to “store up treasures in heaven.” What are treasures in heaven, and how do we store them up? Inversely, Jesus asks us not to “store up treasure on earth.” Why do you think Jesus warns us not to store up treasures on earth? What earthly treasures are you tempted to store up for yourself?

3. Read Matthew 6:21. How do you know what has captured your heart? If someone were to look at the way you use your time, talents, money, and resources, what would they say has your heart? How does your perspective of hope need to change for you to live a generous life?

Read both quotes found in your notes by Dallas Willard and C.S. Lewis. How does recognizing our relationships with God and others as “heavenly treasures” which last forever change our priorities and behavior? What are some specific things we can we do to make eternal investments in God, ourselves, and others?

4. Read Matthew 6:33. Where do you experience a tension between seeking your kingdom first, instead of God’s kingdom? Going forward, how can you be more proactive in using the temporal resources God has blessed you with to make an eternal difference?

Outreach: Groups in Action

Mark your calendars for Emmanuel’s **Pack the House** service project being held November 19 from 4:00-5:30pm (or until they are all packed). Come help pack the boxes that will go to Shepherd Community to distribute to families in need over the holiday break. Any questions, email Kerry Carmichael at kcarmichael@eclife.org.

We are collecting hygiene items that will be used for the upcoming tote-packing service project held November 19 called **Pack the House**. Please pick up some \$1 items from Dollar Tree (i.e. toothpaste, toothbrushes, small bottles of shampoo, and bars of soap), then drop them off at the Information Desk between now and November 16. The boxes we pack will include non-perishable food and hygiene items that will then be delivered to inner city families over the holiday break.

Action Step

Fill in the blanks below for this upcoming week.

My action steps are _____

I’m accountable for _____, and their action steps are _____

My memory verse is _____

This coming week, I’m praying for: _____