

For group discussion or personal reflection:

QUESTION 1

As any parent can attest, children are born knowing how to be selfish. Selfishness comes naturally, but generosity must be learned and cultivated. Describe one of your earliest memories of wrestling with your own selfish nature.

QUESTION 2

We tend to find it easier to be generous in some areas of our lives than in others (e.g., time, money, possessions, credit for accomplishments, etc.). In what areas of life have you found it most difficult to be generous?

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

QUESTION 3

This scripture declares that God's very nature is to be a "rewarder." Yet many believers instinctively view Him as essentially a withholder/punisher. Which has been your view in the past and why?

QUESTION 4

Describe an *extravagant* gift you have given to another person or received from someone. What made it extravagant? What was the impact?

QUESTION 5

When the Holy Spirit prompts you to give an extravagant gift to the Lord or to His work, what kinds of emotions and thoughts tend to rush in to discourage you from obeying?

PRAY

Take some time as a group to lift one another up in the light of the truths discussed in this session.

Explore

Want to go deeper? Here is some food for thought, prayer, and journaling in the coming week.

KEY QUOTE

"Hebrews says God is a rewarder. He'll not only give you what's normal for tithing, He'll give you over and above. If you'll give with the right heart, God is going to reward you, and I'm sorry but I can't stop it. I can't do anything about it, because it's His nature. He's a rewarder." —Robert Morris

Read the following scriptures and write in your own words what is being said about God's desire and ability to be your . . .

Promoter (Psalm 5:12; Psalm 75:6, 7; James 4:10)

Protector (Psalm 4:8; Psalm 121:3; Proverbs 18:10; Luke 10:19)

Provider (Psalm 111:5; Matthew 6:33; 2 Corinthians 9:10; Philippians 4:19)

KEY VERSES

John 12:1-8, Proverbs 11:25, 2 Corinthians 8:3-5

What stands out to you as you read these verses?

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through these scriptures?

KEY QUESTION

Have you given God an extravagant gift?

The most extravagant gift you can give God is *you*. Indeed, giving yourself wholly and fully to God from a heart overflowing with gratitude is the only gift you can hope to give that will "impress" God.

The lyrics of the chorus of Phillips, Craig & Dean's song, *I Pour My Love On You*, recalls Mary's extravagant gift:

*Like oil upon your feet
Like wine for you to drink
Like water from my heart
I pour my love on you
If praise is like perfume
I lavish mine on you
Till every drop is gone
I'll pour my love on you*

