



grow groups



## Week 6: Your MONEY Is On Loan

### 1 Chronicles 29:10-19

**GOAL:** To see our financial resources as belonging to God and to steward them in a way that pleases him and builds his kingdom.

#### CHECKLIST

- Invest in your own spiritual life by participating in the daily Growth Guide readings. (This will also prepare you to lead the question about it in your group again this week.)
- Reach out individually to anyone who did not attend last week. Let them know that you missed them and would love to see them this week.
- Prepare for your group meeting by praying for yourself and your group (feel free to use the prayer below) and reading through this Leader's Guide.
- If you haven't already, plan your Grow Group Pair-Up by connecting with the leaders of your paired group.
- Take attendance in Planning Center, including guests/new members (please include their names and contact info in the meeting notes section). Help new members register for your group using the QR code in your room or at [vrbc.net/grow](http://vrbc.net/grow).

#### PREPARING THROUGH PRAYER:

*Father, thank you for every provision for my life, including financial resources. Forgive me when I have an attitude of entitlement that deceives me into thinking my resources are of my own making and I can do with them what I want. I confess that too often this causes me to be selfish, not generous. Transform my heart. I am yours. Everything I have is yours. Help me steward what I have been given with a generous and willing spirit for the sake of your kingdom and your glory above all else. Amen.*

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*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25*

## CONNECT & COORDINATE

We will maintain the same rhythm each week this semester:

1. Welcome your group. Repeat introductions if there are any new people.
2. Coordinate any logistics (group socials, snacks, Grow Group Pair-Up, etc).
3. Check in with your group and gather prayer requests. Consider using the following questions:
  - Where did you see God at work this week?
  - Where do you need God in the week ahead?
4. Pray for the requests shared and for God to lead your time together today.

## DISCUSS

- Two weeks ago, our Growth Guide readings were from 2 Corinthians 8-9. What resonated with you concerning Paul's encouragement and instruction on giving?

**Leader's Note:** *We want to consistently give our group members the opportunity to talk about what they have experienced in their engagement with scripture between Sundays. The sermon topics were switched for Feb. 23 and March 2, which is why we are asking about the readings in 2 Corinthians 8-9. These readings from Feb. 17-21 correlate to the topic of our money being on loan from God. As a reminder and to get the conversation started, you could have someone read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5.*

### Setting the Context:

**Leader's Note:** *Since we are "parachuting" into a story that is in progress, it's always good to get a sense of the context. As you prepare to lead the discussion, read chapters 28 and 29. Then be ready to give a brief introduction that explains more fully what is going on. Pastor John does this briefly in his sermon. But you might benefit from your own "homework."*

*This story takes place at the very end of King David's reign over Israel (around 970 BC). David, by God's provision, had increased the power and the wealth of Israel. David had already built a palace for his family and as a symbol of the seat of power for the nation. But he was convicted that he had not built a temple for his God, one that should house the ark of the covenant in palatial splendor rather than a tent. But God revealed through the prophet Nathan that David would not be the one to build the temple. His son, Solomon, would have that privilege. (See I Chronicles 17:7-14) So David began to prepare for the building by gathering resources for construction as well as drawing up the architectural plans. Then he hands the actual implementation over to Solomon: "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished." (See I Chronicles 28:20)*

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At the beginning of chapter 29, David then challenges his leaders to consecrate themselves to the Lord and to contribute to the project. He had given from his own wealth, and they followed his lead. Verse 9 then records, “The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly.” Now the scene is set for what follows.

**Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-13.**

- David opens his prayer with praise and thanksgiving. How does David describe God? How does this hymn provide perspective for what David and the people of Israel are doing together?

**Leader’s Note:** Have your group look through verses 11-12 and list the phrases that describe some aspect of God. You might especially notice such phrases as:

- “Yours is the greatness, power, glory, majesty and splendor”
- “everything in heaven and earth is yours”
- “yours is the kingdom”
- “you are exalted as head over all”
- “you are the ruler of all things”

David begins with God. “Praise be to you, Lord . . . from everlasting to everlasting.” He doesn’t begin with the people’s generosity or the magnificence of the project. David begins with God in the most cosmic sense. Who is the center of the story? God. God deserves the glory. God deserves the gratitude. God is the source of all life and goodness. God is the king. (And this is an earthly king singing this!) Everything is gathered around the person and purpose of God.

- How can the spiritual practice of praise and gratitude to God help us be less selfish and more generous?

**Leader’s Note:** The short answer is that it gives us perspective! Praise and gratitude remind us of who God is and who we are in relationship to him. Worship reminds us that God is the most generous of all and everything we have comes from him. Worship challenges our sinful tendencies toward arrogance, entitlement and selfishness. Worship reminds and inspires us to love God and serve him with all that we have. Through worship, we gather around the person and purpose of God.

Worship calls us to rearrange our lives around him, and that includes our money, whether we have much or little. Do you remember the story of the widow in the temple (Luke 21:1-4)? She only had pennies to give, but she worshipped God sacrificially with what she had. 2 Corinthians 8:12 says, “For the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.” ALL of God’s people can participate together in this grace of giving. When we worship, we are reminded that we are a part of something much bigger than ourselves.

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**Read 1 Chronicles 29:14-16.**

- In verses 14-16, how does David describe himself and his people in contrast to God?

**Leader's Note:** While David speaks of who God is in verses 10-13, he now contrasts God's greatness with his own smallness and that of his people. He acknowledges that he and his people are not the source of anything. God alone is the source of their abundance and all of it still belongs to him. While it would have been easy to become arrogant and braggadocious about all that David and his people had accomplished for God, David teaches us an important lesson and completely shifts the perspective. Everything that David, his leaders, and the people had done was only possible because of God's goodness and his provision. This was no occasion to be taking bows! Gathering their resources for God's purposes was possible only because God made it so. David understands this. He turns all glory to God and God alone. He rejoices that he and his people have the privilege of being a part of what God is doing.

- What does David's humility teach us about ourselves and anything we might possess?

**Leader's Note:** It can be so tempting to become proud of ourselves for giving our financial resources to accomplish great things together as God's people. We forget that none of it was ours to start with! We are simply being faithful stewards of the part God has given us. God gets the glory! David's humility teaches us that we should rejoice that God invites us to be a part of his purposes at VRBC. And such joy should prompt joyful participation according to what he has given each of us. When giving becomes about us, we have missed the point. A friend of mine used to say, "God is God and we are wee." Humility is a transforming virtue.

**Read 1 Chronicles 29:17-20.**

- In verses 17-19, how does David describe the intention of his heart? How does he pray for the hearts of Israel and Solomon?

**Leader's Note:** First David says that God tests our hearts and is pleased with "integrity." What is integrity? Webster's says it is a state of being "whole and undivided." In other words, something has integrity when it is the same substance through and through. There is no division, no deceit. David describes the intention of his heart in his giving – "willingly and with honest intent." Then David acknowledges that the people have given with the same willingness. David says he has seen this WITH JOY. David is so pleased by the attitude of the people. They didn't want to miss out on the opportunity to worship God.

So David prays, "... keep these desires and thoughts in the hearts of your people forever, and keep their hearts loyal to you." In his old age, as he leaves the throne, David is proud of his people, because he knows that the heart's intent in any action is key. From the beginning of his reign, David is described in scripture as "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). He rejoiced when his people

*gave out of their love and devotion to God. Unfortunately, in future years, God will be very disappointed with the Israelites, saying, “They honor me with their lips . . . , but their hearts are far from me” (Isaiah 29:13). They lost their integrity and their loyalty, and it was disastrous.*

- Why is the intention of our hearts important when it comes to stewarding the resources God has given us?

**Leader’s Note:** *Motives can be tricky things. An action in and of itself is not the sole point when it comes to relationships. Motives are not only important to the person receiving a gift. Motives also form the character of the giver. A gift is best given when it is given joyfully, willingly for the sake of someone or something other than self. The irony is that when we give with willing and honest intention, we do receive a blessing!*

*Have you ever wondered why God designed it that way? Keep in mind that everything God intends for us is for our GOOD. Character is a very important part of the human person. God cares about our character, not just because it’s a rule somewhere. God cares about us becoming generous, joyful people who want to love God and others with all that we are, including our financial resources. Remember Paul’s words: “. . . God loves a cheerful giver.” Why? Because God loves us. Because it matters to him who we are becoming. And because . . . he’s the most cheerful giver of all!*

- How did Pastor John’s sermon challenge you today? Did you write something in the challenge box?

**Leader’s Note:** *Leave some time for this question even if you have to skip some others. You may get “crickets” at first but be patient and endure some silence. Encourage your group to grow in their willingness to share what God is doing in them.*

## PRAY

- Ask your group: If you were to compose a prayer for yourself and our VRBC family in regard to our hearts and our stewardship of God’s financial resources given to us, what would you ask for?
- Encourage them to jot down a few ideas.
- Invite your group to pray in a popcorn fashion concerning what they desire God to do in them and in us as a church family.
- In 1 Chronicles 29:20 David invited the people to praise their God. End your prayer time with praise to our Lord and King.

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