

SECRET WORLD OF HAPPINESS

Discussion Notes

WHEN YOU GIVE - TALK NOTES

Icebreakers are great to get us chatting. So, go round the group and ask "What brings you happiness?" If it's something really niche like 'I love watching Swedish figure skating' then great, but the standard 'smell of freshly cut grass' is good too!

In this series we are looking at the keys that Jesus taught us will be real happiness from Matthew 6; giving, praying and fasting. Philip said that in this moment we are realising that the things that we thought made us happy actually don't - celebrity culture is not attractive to us at the moment! Instead, we are looking to these secret keys more and more. We're all giving to Captain Tom's efforts, 45% of people are praying, we are all fasting from things in one way or another.

- Do you agree with Philip that we are starting to see that the things that used to make us happy were a bit of an illusion? Are there examples in you or your friends' lives where you can say you've realised something wasn't making you as happy as you thought?
- Do you agree with Philip that we are turning more to these secret keys, even if we don't realise it? Have you seen friends turning to prayer or giving in this time?

Read through Matthew 6:1-4 and 19-24.

Verse 19 shows us how fragile money can be if we look to it for our sense of security.

- What do you think this current time can teach us about our attitude towards money, either individually or as a society?

What is your reaction to Matt 6:24?

- When has money been a master for you?
- On a day-by-day basis, what do we trust more God or our money?

Philip explained that giving helps us overcome having money as a master. He said we need to 'renegotiate our relationship with money'.

- How can the act of giving help us do this?
- What stops us from giving more generously? Is it that we feel like we can't afford it? that we can't trust the people we give our money to?

Finally, we can go back to the start of chapter 6 and address one of the big issues that can arise from giving. Philip said that 'the danger of righteousness, when not handled well, is religion.' Giving can often be about external appearances - we can make it about ourselves.

- Does anyone have tips for how we can avoid this?
- How can we make sure our giving is not motivated by religion, but instead out of relationship with Jesus?

GIVING TO METRO

It's worth spending a couple of minutes just explaining what giving looks like at Metro. During the talk Philip spoke about giving to the Metro Coronavirus Relief Fund, which you can do at woodlandsmetro.church/offering.

However, we also think regular giving to the church community is an important practise for Christians to follow. At Metro, we talk about giving as being **predetermined**, **personal** and **proportional** based on 1 Corinthians 16:2. Paul says, "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made."

- Predetermined ('on the first day of the week'). Rather than giving with what's left over, if anything, our giving is our first financial commitment.
- Personal ('each of you'). Giving shouldn't be forced, it shouldn't be pressured. It should be part of our relationship with God.
- Proportional ('in keeping with your income'). Proportional giving is definitely encouraged. So giving a tithe, or 10%, of your income to the church is a good starting point to aim for.

The easiest way to make sure our giving is predetermined, personal and proportional is to set up a regular donation - even if it is just a fiver. You can do that at woodlandsmetro.church/giving.