

## GROWTH GROUP GUIDES

# WEEK 5 | A CANNONBALL OF SURRENDER & COMMITMENT, *THE TAX COLLECTOR*

### MAIN IDEA FOR THOUGHT

Making a commitment to something causes that decision to become a priority amongst all other distractions and areas of focus, good or bad. There are seasons where we have to make a commitment to one specific area of growth or healing. In order to make a commitment to generosity, we have to place it in higher priority than our other commitments. This Cannonball Initiative is all about leaving behind fear and setting our earthly priorities at the side of the pool to jump in fully with faith. Putting faith over fear and jumping in to make waves of impact for the Kingdom of God. What will this mean for you?

### Watch Week 5 Video

### OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Who is the most "committed" person you know? To what are they committed?
- 2) What does commitment mean to you? To what are you committed?
- 3) When has commitment cost you or caused you to rearrange things?

### FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read each Scripture passage below and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the lines provided below before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

### The Tax Collector surrendered without holding back

#### LUKE 18:9-14

*Jesus told this story to some people who thought they were very good and looked down on everyone else: "A Pharisee and a tax collector both went to the Temple to pray. The Pharisee stood alone and prayed, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people who steal, cheat, or take part in adultery, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I give one-tenth of everything I get!' "The tax collector, standing at a distance, would not even look up to heaven. But he beat on his chest because he was so sad. He said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' I tell you, when this man went home, he was right with God, but the Pharisee was not. All who make themselves great will be made humble, but all who make themselves humble will be made great."*

Be as honest as you can. Who do you most resonate with in this passage - the Pharisee or the tax collector?

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Do you feel that you have surrendered everything over to God and are going before Him in this Cannonball Initiative with open hands, or are you holding something back?

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What makes you nervous as you think about making a two-year commitment to generosity for the Cannonball Initiative. How can your Growth Group be praying for you to help you overcome this?

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**Committing to a life of generosity is not the American dream. It's the Heavenly call**

**LUKE 12:13-21**

Someone out of the crowd said, "Teacher, order my brother to give me a fair share of the family inheritance." He replied, "Mister, what makes you think it's any of my business to be a judge or mediator for you?" Speaking to the people, he went on, "Take care! Protect yourself against the least bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot." Then he told them this story: "The farm of a certain rich man produced a terrific crop. He talked to himself: 'What can I do? My barn isn't big enough for this harvest.' Then he said, 'Here's what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll gather in all my grain and goods, and I'll say to myself, Self, you've done well! You've got it made and can now retire. Take it easy and have the time of your life!'

"Just then God showed up and said, 'Fool! Tonight you die. And your barnful of goods—who gets it?' "That's what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

Some people struggle with spending too much, and other people struggle with saving too much. Both are indicators of our desire to want to live the American dream and control our situations rather than to turn them over to God in surrender. Do you resonate with this passage and struggle with excessive saving or excessive control over the future?

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## What you are committed to reveals the nature of who you are

### **MATTHEW 6:19-24**

*"Don't store treasures for yourselves here on earth where moths and rust will destroy them and thieves can break in and steal them. But store your treasures in heaven where they cannot be destroyed by moths or rust and where thieves cannot break in and steal them. Your heart will be where your treasure is.*

*The eye is a light for the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. And if the only light you have is really darkness, then you have the worst darkness.*

*No one can serve two masters. The person will hate one master and love the other, or will follow one master and refuse to follow the other. You cannot serve both God and worldly riches."*

**Have you ever totaled up the total investment you have made in the Church—not just in your local church as part of the EastLake Network but any Kingdom of God organization? Have you ever thought about your cumulative giving like that? God sees it like that. As you make your commitment to the Cannonball initiative, see this as an extravagant investment into a lifetime of giving that you are making into the Kingdom of God. How does this change how you think about your giving?**

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