



# WELCOME TO THE PARTY

Dear Leaders,

Thank you so much for your willingness to lead a “Welcome To The Party” Small Group! We are excited to see how this series can help us all to see generosity as a joy and as a way to extend God’s party invitation to those around us. Along the way God will use this to transform those practicing generosity!

As you know, “Welcome to the Party” is Lancaster Vineyard’s Fall 2020 campaign. It actually is comprised of a sermon series broken into two major parts. The first three weeks, “Welcome to the Party,” celebrates how God created the world for us to enjoy. Unfortunately, we’ve spoiled the party with sin, but even so He still invites us to enjoy the party He created. At the end of September, we begin a series of sermons and small group discussions around the idea of how God uses our generosity and stewardship (our time, talents and treasures) to actually extend His party to those around us! You, as a leader, have the opportunity to help those in your Small Group apply these practices to their lives – as you guide them and, most importantly, as you set the example by doing the exercises and the homework yourself. That will make all the difference!

*Here are a few helpful thoughts for you to consider as you lead your Small Group.*

## **IN GENERAL:**

- Be sure to catch the Sunday sermon each week – Each week’s Small Group material is meant to work in conjunction with the previous Sunday’s sermon. If you (or anyone in your Group) missed it, the podcast is typically available by Sunday afternoon and the video available by Tuesday.
- Review the week before – Take some time to talk about the exercises and homework from the previous week. How did it go? Where did people win? Where did they struggle? Remember – lead from example. Share how you’re doing with all of these things as well!
- Help everyone think “big picture” – These ideas shouldn’t be processed in a vacuum. Help everyone to see how they all relate, work together and build off of each other.
- Try to get most people to participate - There is usually someone that wants to “over talk.” Ask questions like: “Is there anyone else that would like to add something?” “What do you think about what they said?” And don’t be afraid to ask those who haven’t talked a simple question like: “What stood out to you in this discussion?”
- Strongly leverage your time/space together as a Group – Be sure to incorporate the other elements of a typical Small Group (worship, ministry time, social time, etc.) because those are the real reasons people are really coming to your Group. They can get the content; leverage the social/community time together.

## **WATCHING THE VIDEO IN GROUP:**

How to watch the video in the group:

- Play on a laptop or tablet.
- Play on a Flat Screen TV by:
  - Using HDMI cable and connecting laptop/tablet to the TV.
  - Using a Smart TV, use the browser to go to [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](http://jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) and pick the appropriate week. Once the video is opened, use the square on the lower right of the video to make it full screen.
  - Using a Smart TV, use the YouTube app and go to Lancaster Vineyard’s page in YouTube and pick the appropriate week.
  - Using a Smart TV and your phone or tablet, go to [joinparty.lancastervineyard.org](http://joinparty.lancastervineyard.org) or download the Lancaster Vineyard App. Once you pick the appropriate week’s video, screencast from YouTube on your phone/tablet to the Smart TV.



# WELCOME TO THE PARTY

How to watch the video in the group (continued):

- If having a Zoom small group, then pull the video up on your screen, click on Share Screen in Zoom, pick the window with the video on it, make sure “Share audio” is picked, hit share and then play the video.
- It would be best to have your host test these options before group night.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

- There are seven components included in each week’s notes:
  - **Key Concept** – theme of the week
  - **Watch** – link to that week’s video [joinparty.lancastervineyard.org](http://joinparty.lancastervineyard.org)
  - **Read** – key verse(s) for that week
  - **Notes from the video** – exactly what it sounds like...with blanks to fill in
  - **Consider** – a few paragraphs that complement the theme
  - **Apply** – great questions for them to process on their own and for you to use for your discussion time together
  - **This Week** – one key thing (related to that week’s topic) for them to do over the course of the upcoming week
- Don’t feel like you have to cover every aspect of the curriculum at every meeting. But, do be sure to watch the video, process it a bit and encourage everyone to do the “This Week” homework.
- We suggest taking time each week to discuss how everyone did with the previous week’s “This Week” homework. In general, the homework will either be a reflection (holding aspects of their life in front of God for Him to inspect) or a practical (tracking expenses, doing a budget, etc.). Don’t forget, you’re not only leading, but also setting an example for how to process and practice each week’s assignment.
- We encourage you to have your group watch the videos on their own and process the information before coming to your meeting. Then, together, watch the video again and give everyone a chance to respond to what they have been processing.

## GREAT QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING YOUR MEETING

- In addition to the application questions included in each week’s material, here are some great general questions you can use to stimulate conversation and discussion.
- How was this for you?
- What did you learn about yourself this week?
- In the application questions, you were asked \_\_\_\_\_. Let’s each share our answers out loud together.
- In what ways are we sharing similar thoughts/responses? In what ways are we sharing different thoughts/responses?
- Did you find last week’s assigned homework difficult or easy? Why/why not?
- What is one take-away for you from this week’s discussion?
- As you consider the things we’ve discussed today, how can we be praying for you? How can we pray for you now?

***We are excited to see and hear all that God does in your life through this Fall Campaign. Thank you for being willing to do this. We are very grateful, and we are praying for your Group.***



# WEEK 1:

## SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Creator: God owns everything.

**Watch:** [Week 1](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) Video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

### Read:

Genesis 1:1, 26-27

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.... 26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

Psalms 24:1

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;*

Deuteronomy 8:18

*18 But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

### Notes from Video:

1. God created it all and maintains ownership. (Genesis 1:1)
2. You were created to have dominion, authority or even a better word management over all that God created.
3. My ability to earn money comes from the Lord. (Deuteronomy 8:18)
4. We were created for management not ownership.
  - Three main places this effects us in the realm of money:
    - Giving
    - Saving
    - Spending
5. God maintains ownership of our possessions, so our possessions don't possess us.

### Consider this:

Scripture tells us that God delegated to us authority over all his creation (Genesis 1:28).

"You made humanity ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds and the beasts of the field" (Psalms 8:6-7). God expects us to use all the resources he gives us to best carry out our responsibilities. A steward's primary goal is to be found faithful by his master as the steward uses the master's resources to accomplish the tasks delegated to him (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Stewardship isn't a subcategory of the Christian life. Stewardship is the Christian life. After all, what is stewardship except that God has entrusted to us life, time, talents, money, possessions, family and his grace? In each case, He evaluates how we regard what He has entrusted to us - and what we do with it.

Randy Alcorn. Money Possessions and Eternity. Page 140.



# WEEK 1:

SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

## Application:

- How does seeing God as owner change how you think about giving, saving and spending?
- In what ways would seeing God as owner of everything positively affect your life?
- In what ways does God have ownership of your life? In what ways have you tried to maintain ownership? How could you turn ownership over to Him?
- How does God maintaining ownership empower us to be generous?

## This Week:

1. Watch tracking expenses video: <https://youtu.be/EMadxo-p6L8>.
2. Start the 30 day expense tracking form: [https://cf1.gatewaypeople.com/documents/stewardship-resources/budget\\_tracking\\_by\\_category.xls](https://cf1.gatewaypeople.com/documents/stewardship-resources/budget_tracking_by_category.xls).
3. Watch how to make a budget video: <https://youtu.be/4eIRANG8418>.



# WEEK 2:

## OCTOBER 4<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Creator: God's order is key.

**Watch:** [Week 2](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) Video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

**Read:**

Exodus 13:2

*2 "Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal."*

Genesis 4:3-5

*3 In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. 4 And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.*

Malachi 3:8-10

*8 Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the flood-gates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."*

Deuteronomy 14:22-23

*22 Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. 23 Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and olive oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always.*

**Notes from Video:**

1. If we understand God's Biblical pattern of management it allows us to go much further with what He has entrusted to us.
  - Exodus 13:2 - the first belongs to the Lord.
  - Genesis 4:3-5 - Cain brought an offering, but Abel brought the offering; Cain brought some offering, but Abel brought the choice offering.
  - Elijah and the Widow story.
  - Jericho - the first city in the promise land belonged to God.
  - Malachi 3:8-10 - the first portion to the Lord.
  - Our possessions will either be cursed or consecrated.
2. Who do you honor first in your finances?
3. God's order is the key to determining if our finances are cursed or consecrated.



## WEEK 2:

OCTOBER 4<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>

### Consider this:

“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops” (Proverbs 3:9). Three times a year the children of Israel were to bring an offering of firstfruits before the Lord. God said, “No one is to appear before me empty handed.” (Exodus 23:15). The firstfruits offering included the first production of a vineyard (Leviticus 19:23-25) and the first annual production of grain, wine, olive oil and sheared wool (Exodus 23:16; 34:22; Deuteronomy 18:4)...a significant portion of the firstfruits went to the religious leaders and their ministry (Numbers 18:12).

The giving of firstfruits made an important statement: “We give of our first and our best to you Lord because we recognize all good things come from you. In doing so, we recognize our responsibility to sustain the spiritual leadership provided for us.”

Tithe denoted the amount of the offering, firstfruits the nature of the offering. In Israel, tangible goods were the natural things to tithe. The same principle applied to money. The first ten percent of God’s provision was returned to the Lord. God was regarded as the provider of the harvest. The firstfruits offering reminded people of God’s ownership. They saw God as the source of all life and blessing. Parents hoped that their children, by witnessing this regular, systematic giving of wealth to the Lord, would grow up understanding their infinite debt to God, and their need to continuously honor Him by their worshipful giving.

The firstfruits offering also said, “We trust you, God, to help us harvest the rest”

Randy Alcorn. Money Possessions and Eternity. Page 170

### Application:

1. How does the practice of giving firstfruits develop our relationship with God? What does the practice of firstfruits communicate about our relationship with God?
2. Tithes (like the one described in Deuteronomy 14:22-23) were used not only to fund ministry, but also to throw a party (sometimes seven day long parties!). How does knowing God used people’s generosity to throw a party affect your view of generosity? How should this affect how churches use tithes?
3. What is the biggest hurdle for you to give firstfruits, to tithe or to give beyond the tithe?

### This Week:

1. Start your day by committing to put God first with your time, talent and treasure each day.
2. End your day with a time of examen before God. Ask Him to reveal to you anytime throughout the day you did not make Him first.
3. In terms of treasure, put God first by making your giving a Priority (firstfruits), a Percentage (tithing 10% or donating a percentage) and Progressive (working towards a tithe or giving beyond a tithe).
4. Look for an opportunity to use your generosity to “throw a party” for someone this week. Ideas to spur your creativity: Invite someone over for dinner and make it special; Take snacks or a gift to a coworker or classmate; Surprise a neighbor with a party in a box (cookies, gift card, favorite beverage, etc.).



## WEEK 3:

OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Creator: You are a Steward.

**Watch:** [Week 3](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) Video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

### Read:

1 Corinthians 4:2

*Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.*

Matthew 25:14-30

*14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.' 21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 22 "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.' 23 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 24 "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' 26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. 28 "So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Luke 19:11-27

*11 While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. 12 He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas.[a] 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.' 14 "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.' 15 "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it. 16 "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' 17 "Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'*



## WEEK 3: OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

Luke 19:11-27 (continued)

18 “The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’ 19 “His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’ 20 “Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. 21 I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’ 22 “His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’ 24 “Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’ 25 “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’ 26 “He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

Luke 16:10

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.”

### Notes from Video:

1. You are a Steward.

- A Steward is someone who manages another’s possessions.
- Dave Ramsey’s Definition of Stewardship: You are called to manage...
  - God’s Blessing
  - God’s Way
  - For God’s Glory

2. God doesn’t require us to be perfect, but to be faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2)

3. The Parables of:

- The Talents (Matthew 25:14–30)
  - The Master entrusted talents to the servants based on their ability.
  - The Master rewarded based on the profit each servant made.
- The Minas (Luke 19:11-27)
  - If you can exponentially grow the resources God has given you, then He can entrust you with people and influence.
  - Faithful with little, faithful with more.

**You are a steward of what God has given and you will be rewarded based on how you manage His resources.**





## WEEK 3: OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

### Consider this:

One of Jesus' most significant parables regarding work is set in the context of investments (Matt. 25:14-30). A rich man delegates the management of his wealth to his servants, much as investors in today's markets do. He gives five talents (a large unit of money)[1] to the first servant, two talents to the second, and one talent to the third. Two of the servants earn 100 percent returns by trading with the funds, but the third servant hides the money in the ground and earns nothing. The rich man returns, rewards the two who made money, but severely punishes the servant who did nothing.

The meaning of the parable extends far beyond financial investments. God has given each person a wide variety of gifts and he expects us to employ those gifts in his service. It is not acceptable merely to put those gifts on a closet shelf and ignore them. Like the three servants, we do not have gifts of the same degree. The return God expects of us is commensurate with the gifts we have been given. The servant who received one talent was not condemned for failing to reach the five-talent goal; he was condemned because he did nothing with what he was given. The gifts we receive from God include skills, abilities, family connections, social positions, education, experiences and more. The point of the parable is that we are to use whatever we have been given for God's purposes. The severe consequences to the unproductive servant, far beyond anything triggered by mere business mediocrity, tell us that we are to invest our lives, not waste them.

Yet the particular talent invested in the parable is money, on the order of a million U.S. dollars in today's world. In modern English, this fact is obscured because the word talent has come to refer mainly to skills or abilities. But this parable concerns money. It depicts investing, not hoarding, as a godly thing to do if it accomplishes godly purposes in a godly manner. In the end, the master praises the two trustworthy servants with the words, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave!" (Matthew 25:23). In these words, we see that the master cares about the results ("well done"), the methods ("good"), and the motivation ("trustworthy").

More pointedly for the workplace, it commends putting capital at risk in pursuit of earning a return. Sometimes Christians speak as if growth, productivity and return on investments were unholy to God. But, this parable overturns that notion. We should invest our skills and abilities, but also our wealth and the resources made available to us at work, all for the affairs of God's kingdom. This includes the production of needed goods and services. The volunteer who teaches Sunday school is fulfilling this parable. So are the entrepreneur who starts a new business and gives jobs to others, the health service administrator who initiates an AIDS-awareness campaign and the machine operator who develops a process innovation.

God does not endow people with identical or necessarily equal gifts. If you do as well as you can with the gifts given to you by God, you will hear his "Well done." Not only the gifts, but also the people have equal worth. At the same time, the parable ends with the talent taken from the third servant being given to the one with ten talents. Equal worth does not necessarily mean equal compensation. Some positions require more skill or ability and thus are compensated accordingly. The two servants who did well are rewarded in different amounts. But they are both praised identically. The implication of the parable is that we are to use whatever talents we've been given to the best of our ability for God's glory, and when we have done that, we are on an equal playing field with other faithful, trustworthy servants of God. (from [theologyofwork.org](http://theologyofwork.org))



## WEEK 3:

OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

### Application:

1. Considering Dave Ramsey's definition of stewardship, what blessing has God given you to manage? How are you managing that blessing God's way? How are you managing it for God's glory?
2. None of us are perfect, but we are called to be faithful. What do you think 1 Corinthians 4:2 means? How can we know that we are faithful stewards?
3. Why do you think God can entrust someone to steward people (cities in Luke 19) simply because they faithfully steward God's resources?
4. How do the parables of the talents and minas change your view of your vocation (your calling whether your career, parental status, area you influence, ministry you volunteer in, etc.)?
5. How does it make you feel knowing that God has called you to steward His good and generous party on earth?

### This Week:

1. Continue your 30 day expense tracker.
2. Take the SHAPE assessment and self-assess how you're managing God's blessings (time, talent, treasure, influence), God's way, for God's glory.  
<https://www.freeshapetest.com/>.



# WEEK 4:

## OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Redeemer: Our identity is in Christ.

**Watch:** [Week 4](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) Video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

**Read:**

Genesis 1:31

*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.*

Genesis 3:7, 21

*7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves...21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*

Romans 6:3-4

*3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

**Notes from Video:**

1. We have filters and lenses that causes us to see the world differently than God does.
  - Adam and Eve's eyes saw life through the filters of fear and shame.
  - God covered Adam and Eve with animal skins. He covers us with Jesus!
  - God wants to remove our old filters.
2. How do you determine the value of an object?
  - The value of an object is determined by what someone else is willing to pay for the object.
  - Your value doesn't come from possessions, money or achievements. Your value comes from Jesus.
3. We are in charge of the natural, but God is in charge of the supernatural.

**Consider this:**

In his book "The Ragamuffin Gospel," Brennan Manning writes, "My deepest awareness of myself is that I am deeply loved by Jesus Christ and I have done nothing to earn it or deserve it." As we apprehend this truth for ourselves, our daily lives will be transformed in a radical way.



## WEEK 4:

OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup>

### Consider this (continued):

It is vital that we grasp this truth first before we can conform to Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:10 declaring, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Paul isn't saying to pursue good works apart from your identity, but to be who you are by walking around in this true identity and demonstrating it to the world around you.

God has prepared opportunities for us to live out of this new identity. Here are a few small actions with big impact that we shouldn't overlook:

Say "Thank you." Those two words can have a lot of impact if they're expressed from a place of deep gratitude. Keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to say thank you, especially to those who may feel under-appreciated. Since we already know we're made significant in Jesus, we can make much of others without it threatening our own value.

Give generously. Choosing generosity towards others will remind you that your value doesn't rest in what you have, but in who you are in Christ. Remembering God's kindness towards you in Christ can equip you to extend the same kind of joyful generosity towards others, the local church and other organizations.

(adapted from <https://www.missionhills.org/take-hold-identity-christ/>)

### Application:

1. Share a time when God moved supernaturally in your life.
2. Did anyone pray the salvation prayer during the video? Remember Romans 10:9 says we're saved when we confess Jesus with our mouths.
3. Brennan Manning said "that I am deeply loved by Jesus Christ and I have done nothing to earn it or deserve it." How would believing that change the way you live?
4. From the scriptures in Genesis, how did Adam and Eve's identity change? What were the repercussions?
5. Why is it necessary to have our identity in Christ secure in order to be generous and treat others well? Why is it necessary in order to welcome others into God's party?

### This Week:

1. Take "The Meaning Of Money" Inventory (<https://tinyurl.com/meaning-of-money>).
2. Read the "Identity in Christ" Sheet (<https://tinyurl.com/identitysheet>). Identify which "I am" statements you believe and live out. Pause and thank God for those. Identify the three "I am" statements that are the hardest for you to believe. Read the scriptures and ask God to root your identity in Christ.



# WEEK 5:

OCTOBER 25<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Redeemer: Mammon is a spirit that lies about our Host's party.

**Watch:** [Week 5](#) Video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](http://jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

## Read:

Luke 16:9-15

9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. 10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? 12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? 13 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." 14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."

## Notes from Video:

1. The goal is to align our heart with God's heart.
  - The way we do that is with scripture and removing broken lenses.
2. Mammon means riches.
  - It's roots are from the Syrian and Babylonian god of riches - Mammon.
  - Babylon goes back to Babel which is synonymous with confusions because they said "we can build our life on our own."
3. Key symptoms of a life that follows Mammon:
  - Discontentment
  - Ungratefulness
  - Disunity
  - Fear
  - Greed and Anxiety
  - Idolatry and Materialism
  - Trusting in money rather than trusting in God
4. Mammon promises what only God can provide.

## Consider this:

I've noticed that the people most under the influence of the spirit of Mammon tend to have the most fear about their money. As Jesus clearly suggests in today's verse, Mammon tries to take the very place of God. Pastor Jimmy Evans, founder of MarriageToday and a Gateway apostolic elder, once said, "Mammon promises us those things that only God can give—security, significance, identity, independence, power, and freedom. Mammon tells us it can insulate us from life's problems and that money is the answer to every situation."



## WEEK 5:

OCTOBER 25<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup>

### Consider this (continued):

Clearly, this stands in direct opposition to the Spirit of God. For example, Mammon says to buy and sell; God says to sow and reap. Mammon says to cheat and steal; God says to give and receive. Mammon tells you that if you had more money, people would listen to you, your relationship problems would go away and life would be sweet. The differences between these two spirits seem very cut and dry; however, it's possible for believers to become influenced by the spirit of Mammon without realizing it.

Mammon wants you to think, if I just had more money, I could really start helping people and giving more to the kingdom. Keep in mind, Jesus never told anyone the answer was more money. Money is not the answer to problems—God is. Now, don't get the wrong idea—money and Mammon are not synonymous. Money is not inherently evil.

Robert Morris. The Blessed Life Devotional. Day 11.

### Application:

1. How have you heard the spirit of Mammon lying in our culture? (You'll be secure if you had more money. You'd be free if you had more money. Significance comes from money. You'd be more popular if you had more money. You could be generous if you had more money.)
2. How does Mammon compete for our identity in Christ?
3. How have you put Mammon above serving God?
4. Why does listening to the lying spirit of Mammon draw us away from being generous? How does it draw us away from welcoming others into God's party?

### This Week:

1. Pray - Lord is there an area of my life where I've allowed the spirit of Mammon to take over?
2. Transfer 30 days of spending to categories and work on annual budget (<https://gatewaypeople.com/resources/stewardship>). What areas do you need to increase? What do you need to decrease?



# WEEK 6:

## NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> TO NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Redeemer: You can hear the Party Host's Voice!!!

**Watch:** [Week 6](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

**Read:**

Hebrews 4:12

*For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17

*16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

John 10:27

*27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*

Romans 8:16

*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

John 16:13

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

Proverbs 11:14

*Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.*

Proverbs 12:15

*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.*

Proverbs 15:22

*Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.*

Colossians 3:15

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

**Notes from Video:**

Intro: We assume God doesn't hear us when actually we're not hearing His response.



# WEEK 6:

NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> TO NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

## Notes from Video (continued):

### 4 Ways to Hear God's Voice

1. His Word
  - God reveals deeper levels of who He is and deeper levels of understanding as we spend time in His Word.
2. His Voice
  - God still speaks!
  - What voices do we hear?
  - Our thoughts
  - The Enemy's voice
  - God's voice
  - We know voices by the history and time we've spent with the person.
  - Biblical examples of hearing God's voice: Abraham, Moses and Paul.
  - You can hear from the Lord!
3. His Counsel
4. His Peace
  - Let the peace of God rule your decision making process.
  - Will you go with the peace God gives you OR go your own direction?

## Consider this:

The fact that we do not hear does not mean that God is not speaking to us. We know that messages from radio and television programs are passing through our bodies and brains at all hours of the day: messages that an appropriately tuned receiver could pluck from the very air we breathe. We are not attuned to God's voice. We have not been taught how to hear it sounding out in nature — for as we read in Psalm 19, “The heavens announce the glory of God” — Or, in a special communication directed by God to the individual, some use their ears to sift out only what they want to hear... [Jesus] urged his hearers to make great effort to hear, assuring them that what they received would be proportional to their desire and effort (Mark 4:23-24).

Hearing God — as a reliable, day-to-day reality for people with good sense — is for those who are devoted to the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom. It is for the disciple of Jesus Christ who has no higher preference than to be like him.

Recognizing God's voice is something that [we] must learn to do through [our] own personal experience and experimentation.

Dallas Willard. Hearing God. Pages 68, 69, 70 and 109.





# WEEK 6:

NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> TO NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

## Application:

1. Spend four minutes of silence asking God: What are you saying to me right now? Pay attention to thoughts, feelings, pictures, nudges or scriptures that come to mind.
2. Share what you sensed God saying during the time of silence.
3. Which of the four ways to hear God's voice come naturally to you? Which ones do you need to work on?
4. How does hearing God's (the Party Host's) voice help us welcome others to His party? How does hearing God's voice affect your generosity?
5. Have everyone put their name on a piece of paper, fold it and place it in a basket. Then have all group members pull a name from the basket and instruct them not to look at the name on their piece of paper. Then sit down and pray and ask God to speak to them for this person whose card they are holding (but they don't know who it is yet). On another piece of paper, write down whatever encouraging words, prayers, Bible verses or prophecies come to you for this person. When you are done, look at the name and go deliver it. Then when it's all done, take some time and share testimonies of what happened! FOR ONLINE GROUPS: The group leader should write the names down, put them in a basket and pull a piece for each member. i.e. "Okay Julie I'm pulling a name for you." The leader should write that name on the back of the piece of paper they just pulled so individuals can find out who they were unknowingly praying for after the exercise.

## This Week:

1. Spend four minutes of silence in the morning asking God to speak. Ask yourself how is God speaking through His Word, His Voice, His Counsel or His Peace this morning? Write down what you sense God saying to you.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit, "What are You saying in regards to my budget and to stewardship?"
3. Listen to Mike Pilavachi's sermon "Do Whatever He Says" <https://vineyarddigital.org/item/do-whatever-he-tells-you-mike-pilavachi/#>.
  - To access this video, first create a free account with Vineyard Digital Meeting using this link: [https://vineyarddigital.org/invite/?group\\_code=lancastervineyard](https://vineyarddigital.org/invite/?group_code=lancastervineyard). Once you've created the account, you can access Mike Pilavachi's sermon.



# WEEK 7:

NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> TO NOVEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Rewarder: Contentment - keeping a party mindset no matter what.

**Watch:** [Week 7](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

## Read:

Hebrews 13:5

*Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*

Matthew 6:25-34

*25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[e]? 28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

## Notes from Video:

1. You don't find your contentment in your possessions or your situation.
2. You find your contentment in knowing that the God of the universe is with you.
3. Jesus' order is seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.
4. Our struggle is we think about what we want and when we want it instead of asking God, "What have you called me to? And, how can I be content with what you've given me?"
5. Gratitude is the key to contentment.
  - Find things to be grateful for and shift your perspective.
  - The heart of gratitude breaks discontentment and frustration in your life.



# WEEK 7:

NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> TO NOVEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>

## Consider this:

It seems like the more we have, the less we would want. Ahhh, but that's not the way of appetites. Several years ago Sandra and I were doing a financial study with the small group that meets in our home. Part of our homework one week was to sit down as a couple and identify the season in our marriage when we were most content. Then we would report our findings the next time we met.

Everyone in our group came to the same conclusion. We all agreed that we experienced the most contentment in the early years of marriage when we had significantly less. Which doesn't make a bit of sense, does it? How could we have more contentment and less stuff? Doesn't the acquisition of stuff scratch the discontentment itch? Apparently not. Actually the opposite is true.

But why is that? How can less stuff result in greater contentment? The answer is found in one final observation regarding the nature of appetites: If you feed an appetite, it grows. Satisfying an appetite does not diminish it. It expands it. To diminish an appetite, you have to starve it. So, in the early days of marriage, when none of us in our group had a lot of extra money to do extra things, we didn't do extra things. And we were content. We were forced to starve that appetite. But once our incomes and our purchasing power began to increase, we started feeding that ugly beast. It doing so, we gave up a slice of contentment. And so it goes.

Paul understood this. In fact he took the principle to a logical, but uncomfortable extreme. He writes: 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. (1 Timothy 6:7-8)

Andy Stanley. How to Be Rich. Pages 95-96

## Application:

1. Spend two minute of silence asking God to remind you of all He has given you. Write those down as they come to mind. Now spend two minutes thanking Him for those things.
2. Why is contentment important if we're going to host God's party for those around us?
3. How can we shift our hearts from discontentment to contentment in alignment with Hebrews 13:5?
4. Re-read Matthew 6:25-34 asking the Spirit to highlight a word, phrase or verse for you. Share with the group what He highlighted. What are you going to do about it?
5. Why do you think seeking the Kingdom first is the conclusion of a passage about worry and finances?
6. What does seeking God's Kingdom first mean for your life RIGHT NOW?

## This Week:

1. Begin and end each day with five minutes of gratitude. In the morning tell God what you're grateful for. Review your day in the evening and tell God what you're thankful for.
2. Go to <https://gatewaypeople.com/resources/stewardship>. Watch the [Debt Snowball Intro video](#) by choosing Debt Snowball Intro on the left hand column, second down. Complete the four steps outlined on that page.



# WEEK 8:

## NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> TO NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Rewarder: Lifestyle - enjoying God's party so others want to join.

**Watch:** [Week 8](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org) video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](https://www.jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

### Read:

Philippians 3:20

*But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,*

1 Timothy 5:8

*Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

John 3:16 NLT

*16 "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

1 Peter 2:11-12 NLT

*11 Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. 12 Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.*

### Notes from Video:

1. A Godly Lifestyle does three things:
  - It Glorifies God.
  - It provides for the family through labor and good stewardship.
  - It is generous.
2. A Godly Lifestyle glorifies God while we're on the earth.
  - Our goal should be to never build our own kingdom and seek for ourselves.
  - Parable of the Sower (Mark 4): the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for other things will choke out God's Word causing us to be unfruitful.
3. A Godly Lifestyle will manage well through labor and stewardship.
  - A God honoring life always provides for your family, but leaves plenty to serve others.
  - If I can, I will and God will provide the rest.
  - Do something in the natural and rely on God for the supernatural.
4. A Godly Lifestyle births generosity in you and blesses everyone around you.
  - God has so much love His action was to give.
  - We receive God's love and pass it on.
  - God has created us to be blessed in order to be a blessing. Our blessing of others should be so attractive that it draws people towards God.



## WEEK 8:

NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> TO NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>

### Consider this:

Generosity was nothing short of the hallmark of the first century church. It was all they had. And it proved to be more influential than any amount of money or political sway. As time went on, several plagues ripped through the cities of that region. Each time, the people would flee to the country to escape death. Whenever they did, the sick were left with no one to care for them. However, historians tell us, the Christians didn't flee. Instead, they risked their own health to stay and meet the needs of the ones who couldn't help themselves. Many of these Christians died in the process. But, they weren't afraid of death. As they nursed the sick back to health, word of their generosity spread like wildfire.

The entire perspective of the Christians stood in stark contrast to the pagans around them. The pagan priests were the first to leave town in those situations. They were some of the wealthiest people around and they had a lot to lose. Not to mention the fact that they were afraid of death. So they thought nothing of leaving their sick loved ones behind in order to save themselves. Meanwhile, the Christians would even take care of the pagans. And, as the pagans' health returned, they often abandoned their idolatrous ways and turned to Christianity. Not because of theology. Not because of a miracle. But because of the generosity and compassion of the Christians in their communities.

Andy Stanley. [How to Be Rich](#). Pages 128-129.

### Application:

1. Take two minutes of silence and have each member ask God: What are You saying to me about living a more Godly lifestyle?
2. How would seeing yourself as primarily a citizen of Heaven change how you live on earth? How would it change how you steward your time, talent and treasure? How would it change how you treat others?
3. Why do you think 1 Timothy 5:8 says that if we abandon taking care of our families, we have abandoned the faith?
4. How does generosity attract unbelievers to Jesus? How does generosity welcome unbelievers to God's party?

### This Week:

1. How does my lifestyle line up with the three components of a Godly lifestyle? What is one change I can make this week to align my life with a Godly lifestyle?
2. Begin your debt reduction plan from last week.



# WEEK 9:

NOVEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> THROUGH NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Rewarder: God rewards those who party well.

**Watch:** [Week 9](#) video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](http://jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

## Read:

Matthew 16:27

*For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.*

Ephesians 2:8-10

*8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

*10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. 14 If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. 15 If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.*

## Notes from Video:

1. Once we are saved by grace through faith NOT works. But, our works does affect eternity.
2. God built us to chase after rewards.
  - It's okay to chase after rewards, but not in a "I'll give to get."
  - That only roots selfishness and greed back into our hearts.
3. Our works judged on judgment day.
  - Some of our works will be wood, hay, stubble and straw. Those will be burned up.
  - Some of our works will be gold and silver. Those works will stand for eternity.
  - If you're building on the foundation of Christ, you will have eternal salvation.
  - But if your works are blown away, you'll be getting into heaven like a man escaping the flames.
4. Being a good steward is not about budgets, savings and investing well. It's about honoring the Lord in all you do.



## WEEK 9:

NOVEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> THROUGH NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>

### Consider this:

If we have failed by then [Christ's return] to use our money, possessions, time and energy for eternity, then we have failed - period. "But we'll be in heaven and that's all that matters." On the contrary, Paul spoke of the loss of reward as a great and terrible loss. The fact that we're still saved is a clarification, not a consolation - "if it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames." Receiving reward from Christ is unspeakable gain with eternal implications. Forfeiting reward is a terrible loss with equally eternal implications. How dare we say that being in heaven is all that matters to us, when so much else matters to God?

What we do in this life is of eternal importance. You and I will never have another chance to move the hand of God through prayer to heal a hurting soul, share Christ with one who can be saved from hell, care for the sick, give a cup of water to the thirsty, comfort the dying, invest money to help the helpless, rescue the unborn, further God's Kingdom, open our homes and share our clothes and food with the poor and needy.

What you do with your resources in this life is your autobiography...Martin Luther said that on his calendar there were only two days: "today" and "that day." May we invest our money and possessions today in light of that day.

Randy Alcorn. Money, Possessions and Eternity. Pages 119-120, 122.

### Application:

1. How do rewards motivate us in our lives? (rewards at work, home, school, personal disciplines, etc.)
2. Have you ever thought about the rewards Christ gives on earth and in eternity for stewarding God's party well? What types of rewards might a faithful steward receive on earth? What types of rewards have you received after being a faithful steward?
3. How does knowing there is a reward motivate you to generously welcome others into God's party? What rewards do you anticipate experiencing on earth and in Heaven when you invest in other people?

### This Week:

1. Make two columns on a piece of paper and label one column "Gold" and the other "Straw." Each evening this week review your day. List how you invested your time, talents and treasure under the label of "Gold" or "Straw." Ask God what He thinks of your investments and if there is anything He wants you to change.



# WEEK 10:

NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> TO DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>

**Key Concept:** Knowing God as Rewarder: God rewards those who party well.

**Watch:** Week 10 video at [jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org](http://jointheparty.lancastervineyard.org)

**Read:**

Psalm 106:1-5

*I Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord or fully declare his praise? Blessed are those who act justly, who always do what is right. Remember me, Lord, when you show favor to your people, come to my aid when you save them, that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may share in the joy of your nation and join your inheritance in giving praise.*

Psalm 107:1-3

*I Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story—those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.*

**Notes from Video:**

(Use the space below to jot down notes and a few things that stuck out to you from the video)





## WEEK 10: NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> TO DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>

### **Consider this:**

Gratitude can be learned. Researchers Robert Emmons and Mike McCullough randomly assigned people to keep a daily diary for two weeks, either of happenings they were grateful for, of hassles or simply of life events. Joy, happiness and life satisfaction all rocketed up for the gratitude group.

The format they used is simple. Keep a pen and a journal or piece of paper by your bed. At night, before you go to sleep, take a few minutes to reflect on five events during the day that prompted gratitude. It could be as simple as waking up in the morning, seeing the face of someone you care for, eating a great taco, hearing words of affection from a friend, or completing a challenging assignment at work.

As you write down these events remember that each of them came to you from the hand of God. Use them to reflect on how good God must be to give such gifts. Recognize that each of them is an expression of His love to you. Whisper to Him how grateful you are for His gifts.

John Ortberg. [When The Game Is Over It All Goes Back In The Box](#). Pages 154-155.

### **Application:**

1. What reasons does the Psalmist give for giving thanks to the Lord?
2. What story of thanksgiving or being redeemed do you have to tell from this fall?
3. Do you agree that gratitude can be learned?
4. Think of all that God has done and showed you during this “Welcome to the Party” ten-week study. What is one thing you’re most thankful for?

### **This Week:**

1. Using the method described in the “Consider This” section write down five events you’re thankful for from that day.