



Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

USE THIS GUIDE TO PREPARE FOR THE DISCUSSIONS IN COMMUNITY GROUP.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

This month, we're in a series called "Dollars and Sense" and we're taking a look at the resources we have and how we can be better stewards of them. Week 1 took a deep dive into some verses from Malachi 3 and showed us that when we don't give, it isn't a money problem: it's a problem that stems from a heart that has moved away from the Father. God's solution is found in Malachi 3:7 - "Return to me." How do we do this? We stop stealing from God and start partnering with God **in our giving**.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- Why do you think money is such a hard topic for people to talk about?
- Have you ever thought that churches talk about money too much? Did you know that the Bible references money and possessions 2,350 times and that Jesus talked about the subject more than he talked about love, and more than he talked about heaven and hell combined? Why do you think the Bible speaks to the subject of money and possessions so much? What light does Matthew 6:19-21, 24 shine on the issue?
- In Malachi 3:8-9, God accused his people of robbing him in giving. The Greek word has a meaning similar to embezzlement. What's your reaction to God using such strong language about what people were - and were not - giving? What had happened to the entire nation as a result (see v. 9)?
- When we see giving as nothing more than a financial transaction, we treat God like a business partner. God's desire is to have kingdom partners through whom he can bless the world. What does v. 10 say is the first step in being a kingdom partner with God in our finances?
- When we steal from God, we're cursed. When we partner with God, we're blessed. What are some of the blessings mentioned in Malachi 3:10-12 that we can expect when we honor God in our stewardship?