

Practice

Exercise: Be generous to the poor.

Our exercise for this week is to share your resources with someone in need. **You can give to an organization doing good work serving the poor, either globally or locally.**

Around the world

Here are two great organizations that serve the poor around the world:

- [Compassion International](#)
 - Through Compassion's signature "Sponsor a Child" program, gifts of around \$50 per month connect children in the developing world to the church, education, nutrition, mentoring, and medical care.
- [Hope International](#)
 - Hope International disburses small loans (microloans) to help marginalized people around the world. Through savings group communities, Hope shares biblical truth and practical wisdom. Recipients repay the funds 98 percent of the time, allowing gifts to flow to more and more people in need. Consider sending \$25 per month, which would invest in the dreams of one micro-entrepreneur each month.

In your community

Many churches have ways to jump in and connect with those in your local community. If your church doesn't have that, here are two faithful organizations to check out that may be working in your community:

- [Citygate Network](#)
 - Citygate is a network of rescue missions that point people toward Jesus. If you're in North America, see if there's a place for you to consider both giving financially and getting involved personally.
- [The Salvation Army](#)
 - Operating in 130 countries through thousands of local offices, Salvation Army meets the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people in need through social services, disaster relief, and more.

Or you can give to someone you know in need in your relational circle. This could be a member of your extended family, someone in your community or church, or just someone you know of in your circle of reach.

If you give directly to someone you know, you could buy someone groceries, send cash to help pay bills, purchase an item they need, or drop off money or necessary items at their home anonymously.

If you don't know what to do, pray for God to illuminate an idea in your heart and direct your steps into what is pleasing to him.

Practice

Reach Exercise: Give not just your money but your time.

If you see a need, meet it yourself.

This could look like serving dinner at your local rescue mission, or mowing an elderly neighbor's lawn, or mentoring a kid in your local school, or having a meal with someone on the margins. There are a thousand ways to express the love of Jesus.

The goal is to blur the lines between giver and receiver; to become kin and family of God.

Go Deeper

Read

Giving Is the Good Life by Randy Alcorn

Chapters 13-18 (pages 167-261)

Listen

Rule of Life Podcast on Generosity

Episode 04

Reflect

Before your next time together with the group for the Bonus Session, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions.

- 01 Where did I feel resistance or overwhelm?
- 02 What aspects of this exercise felt natural or unnatural to me?
- 03 What did I sense God doing in me as I gave?

Discuss (Optional)

For those of you who would like to slow down and integrate this practice more deeply into your life, here is an *optional* group session you can do before you move on to the Bonus Session of this Practice.

Read this introduction

Hope was once described by a pastor as “strength borrowed from tomorrow for today.” As humans, we are hope-generators, constantly trying to borrow strength and security from all sorts of sources to get through life: some reliable and some ... not so much. In today’s passage, Paul highlights one of the more tempting but unreliable sources of security: wealth. With a pastoral urgency, Paul lovingly commands Timothy and those under his care not to place their hope in riches and the life they bring, inviting us to ask the question: On what foundation are we building our sense of hope?

Discuss (Optional)

Read this Scripture

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

—1 Timothy 6:17-19

Discuss the text

- 01 Depending on how you interpret the text, Paul offers seven commands in this short teaching to the rich. See if you can name them.
- 02 In light of global inequality, who are the “rich” in our world? If this passage is for us, not “someone else,” which of the seven commands you listed feel most personally convicting?
- 03 What might the world look like if people believed they can “lay up treasures for themselves” eternally? How would it be different than it is now?
- 04 What are the signs that someone has “put their hope in wealth”?

Discuss the Practice

- 01 How has this Practice revealed the ways you have put your “hope in wealth”?
- 02 Are you coming to believe the generous life is “truly life” as Paul says? Why or why not?
- 03 Paul adds another dimension to generosity here: “to be rich in good deeds.” In what particular ways can you be generous beyond the giving of your money in this season of your life?
- 04 What patterns or themes have you noticed emerge as you live into more generosity?