



HEART OF GOLD

Week 4

BREAKING THE ICE

What was your favorite side dish from your Thanksgiving meal this last week?

Out of everyone in your family, who is the most generous? What can you learn from their generosity?

What are some of your favorite organizations you give to and why?

MAIN CONTENT

This week Pastor Kevin was back reminding us that we won't be remembered for what we stored up, but for what we poured out for God and for others. When we live an extravagant life of generosity people see Jesus through us.

To know how to live an extravagant life of generosity we go to the scripture and compare and contrast the story of Mary and Judas from John 12.

Read John 12:1-8

There are three things from this scripture that show us how to battle greed and live a life of love and extravagant generosity. The first thing is Mary's extravagant gift of perfume to Jesus. The gift was worth a year's wages and most likely her dowry.

1. What is the most extravagant gift you have ever received?

Mary did not have much to give but she gave Jesus what she did have. The second thing we can study from this scripture is how Judas responded. Judas was frustrated about the extravagance and thought it was wasteful. Judas's heart had drifted away from God and he was more concerned about money than Jesus.

2. Where have you become more concerned about what things you have in your life than you are concerned with Jesus?

Pastor Kevin gave us four questions to ask ourselves to identify the greed within us. Take time to talk through these questions with your group.

- + Is there anywhere that I love my stuff more than Jesus?
- + Am I ever quick to criticize somebody else's worship or be outwardly cynical of somebody's devotion?
- + Do I sometimes say or do things to appear to be more compassionate publicly than I am privately?
- + Do I get offended or defensive when somebody corrects me or offers a rebuke?

Even though Judas was in the process of betraying Jesus and didn't agree with the extravagant gifts of Mary, Jesus still loved him. Jesus spent time with him, he had communion with him and he prayed for Judas.

The third thing we can learn from this scripture is how Mary's actions showed us to rebel against indifference and move toward extravagant love and generosity. She did this by spending time at Jesus's feet. Mary sat and listened to Jesus. He was the strongest voice in her life.

3. Who is the strongest voice in your life? Where do you need to make Jesus the strongest voice in your life?

The second action we can learn from Mary is to bring what you have to Him. Mary brought the most expensive thing she owned to Jesus and gave it to Him. Pastor Kevin gave some examples of how we can steward our things for Jesus. Whether it's our home, car, finances or time we can use them to glorify Him.

4. How can you steward your things for Jesus?

The third action we can learn to combat greed is to have the poor among you. When we are surrounded by people that have less than us it reminds us of the gifts we have been given. It allows us to see the world differently and to see what is really important.

5. What is one thing you have learned by spending time with someone in a different socio-economic class than you?

When we surround ourselves by people who would be considered poor, we see an abundance of joy, love and peace not from possessions but from the gift of life.

The last action to help fight against greed is to take the long view. They say the longer the view you take, the better decisions you make. When we make a short-term decision it can result in a short-term result. When we look at the long view, we are thinking through what is to come and not instant, short-term satisfaction. How we live our lives today impacts eternity.

6. What decisions do you need to make with the long view in mind instead of short-term satisfaction?

CLOSING PRAYER

God, thank you for being an extravagant God. You are the ultimate gift giver. Will you show us where we put our things above Jesus and how greed affects how we live our lives? Holy Spirit convict us where we need correction and surround us with those who can help us live a life representative of you. Help us steward our lives to be extravagantly generous. Amen.

ACTION STEP

1. Spend time this week asking these questions:

+ Is there anywhere that I love my stuff more than Jesus?

+ Am I ever quick to criticize somebody else's worship or be outwardly cynical of somebody's devotion?

+ Do I sometimes say or do things to appear to be more compassionate publicly than I am privately?

+ Do I get offended or defensive when somebody corrects me or offers a rebuke?

2. Combat greed this week by doing the following: spend time at Jesus's feet, bring what you have to Him, have the poor among you and take the long view.

3. Join us as we start the advent season by following along with our BEHOLD Advent Devotional at <https://crosspoint.tv/behold/>