



the giving
discipleship
journey

*"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."*

John 3:16

What does this journey look like at The Church at Severn Run?

God is generous!

His incredible heart makes the hope of heaven possible. This hope is possible because God's love overflowed into the giving of His only Son, Jesus (John 3:16). When we receive the generosity of God, we agree to live a new way, the Jesus way. In life-changing salvation, we begin the disciple's journey into the endless generosity of God. And not only are we changed by the journey, we get to be a part of God's work in the world by changing others as well. Having received, we get to give!

The call of God is on your life!

There is so much religion in the world that never transforms the human heart into the image of Christ. But to confess "Jesus is Lord" is to live from a changed and challenged heart. To say "I am a follower of Christ" is to say I've heard God speak to me in Christ and I've answered! To truly believe in Jesus is to actively follow Jesus, doing what He said in growing trust. You and I are called to life-changing salvation that overflows into world-changing service. The generosity that saves us is the generosity that inspires us to be the difference in the world.

Giving is forevermore than money...

Generosity isn't a financial transaction, it's our heart beating with God's. Giving is the real-world trust of a transformed heart. Giving is the overflow of our salvation. Generosity is a matter of the heart. The disciple's journey to generosity is designed to help you discover where you are and to help you keep moving to where God wants you to be.

The Five Major Steps on the Journey

Let me invite you to use this booklet as a prayer guide. It's up to you to determine where you are now and what you believe about God's call to grow. Let's explore the five defined levels we will use to help self-identify where we are on the giving journey and where we can go next. One thing is certain: we can't stay where we are and be where God is. Jesus said "Follow me!" and we can't do that standing still (Matthew 4:19). By faith, we step into the unknown only to discover Jesus is already there with open arms.

the beginning giver

Everything, except God, has to have a beginning, a starting place. Like the sunrise, from faith's beginning, a new day dawns. The Beginning Giver is someone who's never given significantly before but feels the call of God to start. Giving to the local church is supporting God's plan to change the world. Thank God for new beginnings!

*"But forget all that—it is nothing compared to what I am going to do.
For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun!
Do you not see it?"*

Isaiah 43:18-19a

Questions to consider:

- Have I ever given a financial gift to a local church before?
- What's been keeping me from starting?
- Do I think I could trust God with just one gift to see what faith-filled generosity feels like for me?





the consistent giver

Life is habit-forming, for better or for worse. The Consistent Giver is someone who's making a habit out of trusting God by giving regularly.

In the Old Testament, God's people gave ten percent and then more in offerings on special occasions (Leviticus 27:20). In the New Testament, the early church gave everything they had, as a beautiful declaration of the difference Christ had made in their lives (Acts 4:32-33).

If you can't begin with ten percent (or beyond), choose any consistent percentage to give in response to the generosity of God who delights in you. This is all about our response to love, not religious legalism.

Choose to see your commitment as a part of your journey, open to growth along the way, instead of as a hard rule forever. Online giving is one of the easiest ways to make our call to generosity a habit we live instead of a thought we intend.

*"Those who know your name trust in you, for you,
O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you."*

Psalm 9:10

Questions to consider:

- What would it be like for me to give every month? Week? Paycheck?
- What information am I missing about my finances in order to make my generosity consistent?

the intentional giver

The Intentional Giver is someone who is beginning to think about their giving in relation to the other things on which they spend money. An Intentional Giver wonders, “Why am I giving more for my cable bill than I’m giving to the Kingdom of God?”

When we begin to think about the meaning of money in our lives in relation to the reality of God, we’re knocking on the door of intentionality.

This may well be the part of the journey when someone begins to earnestly pursue the tithe.

“But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity.”

Isaiah 32:8

Questions to consider:

- Do I have a line item in my budget that prioritizes generosity?
- Are there any value inconsistencies showing up in my spending?
- Do I spend the most money on the things I care about most?
- Should I consider a generosity goal amount this year?





the *sacrificial* giver

The Sacrificial Giver is someone impressed by the cost of the cross. Sacrificial Givers realize it's impossible to outgive God!

The sacrifice of Christ inspires a high-cost response. Jesus sacrificed His life for me, so I'll sacrifice everything in my life for the cause of His Kingdom.

This person gives in a way that changes them! They give in a way that requires high-level dependence on the faithfulness of God's ability to show up on time, every time.

A Sacrificial Giver's generosity governs their spending. They don't spend on what they want first, only to see what's left. God has begun to shape their desires to match His own and they live on what's left. The Sacrificial Giver is a visionary, faith-dependent person actively inspired by the eternal generosity of God.

"And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ."

Philemon 6

Questions to consider:

- Have I been totally comfortable in my giving lately?
- Is there something I am called to fund that will require me to pause on a financial luxury in my life?

the *Legacy* giver

The Legacy Giver lives in the full light of eternity. They think about generosity in terms of their part in the eternal story of God, not just annual giving bound by their lifetime. The Legacy Giver asks, "what's the maximum impact I can possibly make in the financial giving of my life regardless of my income?"

All God wants is all we have. A given life is a giving life! How much more could God have given? Legacy Givers ask, "How much more can I give?"

Legacy Givers give to their full Holy Spirit inspired capacity. They think of what they give before they consider what they keep. They want to give more than they keep! They buy a house or car not based on what they can afford, but upon how it will impact their ability to give to God. They save after giving in a way that resources saving work.

"Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ."

Philippians 3:8

Questions to consider:

- What organization is doing an excellent job of supporting a cause or group of people that I want to see served for generations?
- How can I partner with them in a no-strings-attached way?





How to Give:



Online

Give one time or set up a recurring gift at severnrun.com/give.



Text

Send a text message with the amount you want to give to 410-844-4438.



On Campus

Drop off your tithe on Sunday mornings, or Monday through Thursday, 10 AM - 4 PM.



Mail

Mail in your gifts via the USPS to 8187 Telegraph Road, Severn, MD 21144.

So where am I on the journey?

The first part of the giving discipleship journey is to identify where you are now. Ask God. Now, take a moment to flip back through the pages, is one standing out? Now take a moment to celebrate and thank God for showing you where you are now and what he's done through your journey so far.

If you share your finances with a spouse or family member, ask them if they agree with your assessment. Then take some time together to discuss and praise God for the work of generosity in your lives.





Let's keep moving...

Wherever you are on your own personal journey into the generosity of God, it's always time to ask yourself, "Is now the time for the next step?" Don't stay stuck. Life's too short to waste. Eternity's too close to ignore. For a short time on earth, we have the chance to trust God and make a difference! (John 20:21)

But it's going to take each of us choosing to live an active faith at what may feel like an impossible cost. But in light of the cross and its cost, what's impossible? Nothing! (Luke 18:27) So, what's your next step, and will you choose to move there now?

A round loaf of bread and a bundle of wheat stalks are placed on a dark wooden surface. The bread is golden-brown with a cracked top. The wheat stalks are tied together with a piece of twine. The background is a dark, textured wood.

...but be
transformed
by the
renewing
of your mind...

what's
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next
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