

# Passages

VOYAGE THROUGH THE  
GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

## Small Group Discussion Questions Session 4: Generosity

**As you begin:** Spend a few minutes in small talk. Try using another ice breaker question that you received in your Small Group Starter Kit or make up one of your own. To get people moving in the direction of this session's theme ask people to...

- Tell about a time in your life when you experienced the extraordinary generosity of someone. What did they do and how did you respond?
- Tell about a time in your life when you experienced the extraordinary generosity of God. What did he do and how did you respond?

**VIDEO #4: Watch the video. (You can download the video prior to your meeting.)**

1. Now that you have the overview of the whole book of Matthew, why is Jesus such a controversial person? What did he do and teach that was so scandalizing that they crucified him for it? As you think about all of the teaching that Jesus did, what is one of the most encouraging things he taught (for you personally)? What is one of the most challenging things he taught (for you personally)?
2. The Parable of the Vineyard Owner: (Matthew 20:1-15) Read this again if you need to (assign readers to read each of the parts including the narrator—have your readers get into it—like show some indignation when the complainers show up). There are three main characters or groups of people in the story—the vineyard owner, the laborers who were hired at 5:00 pm (and worked one hour) and the laborers who worked the whole day (12 hours was the normal work day) who complained. If you had been there at pay time, what would you have observed about each of these characters? What were they thinking and why? What do you think about the various reactions?
3. The Vineyard Owner: What do you like about him? Why does he keep hiring more and more of these laborers? What can you discern about the character of him by the way he treats and pays these laborers?

4. The Laborers: Why don't they have regular employment? What is unemployment like for people in our community? How would each of them (the ones hired first thing, at noon, at three and at five) have responded when they got hired? What does the fact that there are still laborers looking for work at 5:00 pm tell you about those workers? What was their life like?
5. Paytime: Why do the laborers who were hired first think that they are being treated unfairly? Why are they so bothered by the owner's generosity?
6. What is Jesus trying to teach about God's nature through this parable? Who (in that culture) were complaining about the generosity and grace of Jesus? Why did that bother them so much?
7. When have you been bothered by the generosity of Jesus? When have you been envious of others because they received God's generosity (and you didn't)? Why is it (sometimes) so difficult to celebrate others' good fortune?
8. When have you been the recipient of the grace and generosity of Jesus? How would you like the people around you to celebrate this? What is an experience of God's generosity to you right now that your group can celebrate with you?

**As you finish:** Remind your group about your upcoming plans for session 5 (or 6). Perhaps you want to add 30 minutes next week, eat a meal together and then finish session 5 together. Or you could meet for your regular time during session 5 and add the meal for week 6 (Holy Week).

We're also suggesting that your group could attend the Good Friday service at Crossroads, take communion together and even hang out afterwards together.

**After Easter:** We are starting a new series after Easter called The Blessed Life. How do I arrange my life using God's principles regarding my resources (all of my resources) so that I am walking with him in all areas? We are planning to continue providing small group videos during that series. It'll be around 5 sessions. If your group wants to continue after Easter—please do.

Close with some prayer time.