

WEEK 2 - Generosity: Overflow & Belovedness

Canopy Guide // Fall Focus 2026

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Use the questions below to kickstart a community-building, all-play conversation that connects to our weekly topic. If your group meets for dinner, these might be great questions to share around a table.

- Tell a story about one major blessing in your life.
- What is the best gift or compliment you have received?

VIDEO INTRO: WEEK 2

STUDY GUIDE

In our current cultural moment, people often measure themselves and each other by their productivity and efficiency. These values have become the axis on which much of modern life turns. As a result, many assume that blessings, worth, and acceptance are earned through success and achievement.

Last week, we began our study of generosity by focusing on the generous character of God and exploring how His generosity flows from who He is. This week, we will examine Jesus' baptism and see how God's blessing is given to His beloved children.

In Matthew 3:13–17, Jesus comes to John the Baptist at the Jordan River to be baptized. As He emerges from the water, the Spirit of God descends like a dove, and a voice from heaven declares, **“This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”**

This passage occurs early in Jesus' life and ministry. At this point, He has not performed miracles, preached to crowds, or accomplished the works for which He would become known. Yet God publicly affirms Him with acceptance, love, and honor. God's approval

is not based on achievement; it flows from His character and His relationship with His beloved Son.

Because of Christ, the same truth is extended to us. Our lives are not defined by productivity or performance. We are beloved children of God, fully known and fully loved. As God's beloved, we are freed from the relentless pressure to prove our worth through accomplishment.

Henri Nouwen writes, *"When we claim and constantly reclaim the truth of being the chosen ones, we soon discover within ourselves a deep desire to reveal to others their own chosenness."* Rather than making us feel superior to others, the knowledge that we are loved by God opens our eyes to the dignity and value of those around us.

This truth is reflected throughout Jesus' ministry. There is little evidence that the people He healed or helped had somehow earned His favor. He blessed them not because of what they had done but because of who He was. As followers of Christ, we are called to embody that same grace and generosity toward others.

Generosity is not easy in a world that constantly preaches scarcity. That is why we must continually remind ourselves that we are God's beloved children. When we rest in that reality, generosity becomes more than an obligation—it becomes the natural overflow of God's love at work within us. It is the fruit of a transformed life, not merely a commanded practice.

Scripture to Read:

- Matthew 3:16-17
- 2 Corinthians 3:12-18
- Ephesians 1:1-16

Discussion Questions: *(feel free to pick & choose the questions your group wants to tackle together)*

- How does it resonate with you that Jesus is declared to be God's beloved before he sets off into the work of ministry? Do you feel you have to work to earn your own belovedness?
- How do you understand the connection between being beloved by God and living

generously? What ways do you see generosity expressed as an overflow or reflection of God's love for us?

- Read the Ephesians text and note every spiritual blessing given to those in Christ. How might those particular gifts overflow to others as we consider our own embodiment of generosity?

PRAYER

Reread the main passage and slowly repeat Matthew 3:17, to allow the words to take root.

EXTRA RESOURCES/ARTICLES/RESEARCH

- [*Life of the Beloved*](#), Henri Nouwen - This classic is a Katy favorite and is well worth the read.
- Hank Unplugged Episode 111 "You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit with James K. A. Smith: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qqh69IEvmyl>;
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6N7J0WFKjSdnjfWo4ckJkf?si=5bc7b100e73949b1>
 - Based on thoughts from the book, [*You Are What You Love*](#), by James K.A. Smith
- Sermon from Henri Nouwen:
 "Being the Beloved" (FULL SERMON Part One) | Henri Nouwen at the Crystal Cat...