

# UNLEASHED

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# UNLEASHED

We want to see  
**every person at CrossPointe  
unleashed for the cause of  
Christ by leveraging their  
time, talent, and treasure.**

## **STUDY OVERVIEW**

We are excited to journey through this study together in community. This study is designed to help you further understand the good news of Jesus and apply the gospel to your life and the lives of those around you. We believe—and have seen over and over again—that hearing God’s Word preached, studying God’s Word privately and encouraging one another through God’s Word in community results in freedom in the gospel and lives changed more and more into the image of Jesus.

Each week the study is broken into various sections to help you understand, apply and pray through God’s Word, both alone and in community. We encourage you to work through the studies individually, which will then prepare you to help others grow through discussion.

## **SECTIONS OF THE STUDY**

**OVERVIEW** - This section gives a basic overview of what the passage is seeking to teach, how it points to Jesus and what it means for us today.

**MESSAGE APPLICATION** - This section gives space to write things you learned, thought were helpful or had questions about from the sermon. In community groups, use these notes and questions to help one another grow in understanding and application of what was taught.

**QUESTIONS** - This section encourages you to study the Bible on your own. Through study, we grow in our desire and ability to understand the written Word of God—how it points to Jesus, how it connects to our lives and how it fuels us to live as a community that brings glory to God and sheds light in a dark world.

**PRAYER / PRAYER REQUEST** - This section reminds us of our dependence on God and how God uses others in our lives to serve and care for us. We are called to persevere in praying for others as well as ourselves. The prayer prompts encourage and that others may experience that good life as well.

**AS YOU GO...** - Use this section throughout the week—not necessarily the night your group meets. It is intended to provoke thoughts and conversations with your kids, friends, spouse, or others as you spend time with one another in everyday life. Think along the lines of Deuteronomy 6, where the call is to talk of the things of God when “you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

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**Unleashed Objective** :: to see every person at CrossPointe Church unleashed for the **cause of Christ** by **leveraging** their **time, talent and treasure**

**Week 1** :: CHURCH Unleashed

**Read** :: Matthew 25:14-30



## **INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW**

In Jeremiah 1:4-5 we read, *Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."* The question we need to ask ourselves is *what has God appointed us to be and to do?* We will be looking at the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25 to help answer this question. As you work through the passage, keep in mind that though the word *talent* is used here regarding money, the bigger context is about stewardship of what we have been given. Although they may vary in degrees, God has given all abilities and **with those abilities come opportunities** to further God's mission and purposes.

D.A. Carson put it this way, "for to fail to do good and use what God has entrusted to us to use is grievous sin." He goes on, "The parable insists that the watchfulness that must mark all Jesus' disciples **does not lead to passivity but to doing one's duty, to growing, to husbanding and developing the resources God entrusts to us**, till 'after a long time' the master returns and settles accounts." (The Expositor's Bible Commentary)

We are calling all of CrossPointe to be Unleashed in a life of contribution (stewardship). This fleshes itself out in three distinct, yet overlapping areas of our lives: **time, talent and treasure**. To steward something is to realize it is not ours, but has been given to us by God to use for the benefit of others and the glory of God. As the gospel works in us, we get the opportunity to have the gospel work through us and to experience the joy that comes from a lifestyle of contribution (stewardship). As we steward our talents, Jesus' prayer of ***Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven***, begins to come true.

Our prayer is that in this you find and cultivate your strengths and talents. May you steward them well for the advancement of the gospel. May you get great joy as God gets his glory!

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## MESSAGE APPLICATION

As you listen to the sermon, write down what catches your attention, challenges or confuses you.

## QUESTIONS

1. Share with the group about yourself ::

What is your faith story (what has shaped your view of God)?

What do you enjoy? What are you passionate about?

What types of things are you good at / gifted in?

2. What are some things we learn about God and his generosity in this passage?

3. From the parable, what are the similarities between all three servants? Differences?

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4. Read John 4:31-38.

What was Jesus' mission and purpose in life?

What did he accomplish?

How is Jesus the perfect steward of what God the Father had given him?

What do we learn about our role in what God is accomplishing?

5. According to verses 24-25, what did the last servant believe about the master? Is he motivated by fear or love of the master?

How does belief in the absolute love and goodness of God, our Master, free us up to use our talents for his kingdom?

6. Big picture, what are some of the main resources and opportunities God has entrusted to you to steward? How can you develop those to accomplish his work?

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## **PRAYER**

- We pray that we will recognize and see the goodness and generosity of the Father who sent the Son and Spirit to accomplish salvation for us
- We pray that, in response to the goodness and generosity of God, we will be unleashed to utilize the resources and opportunities he has given us to accomplish his will.
- We pray that we will be a community and a church that helps others see the goodness and generosity of God and helps them to know Jesus and live for him.

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

## ***AS YOU GO...***

- With the people you are with, take 5 minutes for everyone to speak about the abilities they see in each person (you can do this with kids, friends, co-workers over lunch etc.)
- Take time to write down some resources God has entrusted you with that you can invest. Talk about how you might use those resources to be faithful to God.
- Talk about what it means to be a good steward of the resources and opportunities God has given you. Talk about someone you know who you feel is a good steward.

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**Week 2** :: TALENTS Unleashed

**Read** :: Romans 12:1-21

### **INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW**

The apostle Paul writes in Romans 12:1 *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.* All people are created with unique personalities, strengths and gifts that God calls us to use to reflect his glory and worship him. This isn't out of a sense of duty or a way of earning God's favor—it is a response to the gospel. Paul says "therefore", in light of who God is and what he has accomplished for us through Jesus, that now we know that *from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.* (Romans 11:36)

The rest of Romans 12 paints this beautiful picture of a community of people, the church, who are "one body" made up of "many members" who have different functions, abilities, gifts and talents. And the scriptures call us to use these talents, *having gifts that differ according to the grace given to them, let us use them,* to serve the church and others.

The point of this study is to help us grow in our understanding of God's generosity in his giving of Jesus for us and how that fuels us to live our lives *as living sacrifices*. There will be questions, surveys and a test you can take to help you identify what talents you have and how you might use them to **serve the Lord**. We want to help one another **DISCOVER, DEVELOP** and **DIRECT** our talents so we can be **DEPLOYED** to serve Jesus and his church.

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## MESSAGE APPLICATION

As you listen to the sermon, write down what catches your attention, challenges or confuses you.

## QUESTIONS

1. Scan Romans 12:1-21 and answer the following.

What is the motivation for using your talents?

What is the posture that Paul calls for the people to have when utilizing talents?

What are various gifts/talents you see and how are they fleshed out?

2. **DISCOVER.** Take some time to help discover your talents and gifts. Write them down. Here are some steps / resources to help you in the process.

What are you passionate about (desire)?

What are you good at (ability)?

What avenues are available for you to use your talents (opportunity)?

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Take time to do one (or all) of the surveys or the test listed. Write down what you find.

<http://ebcrochester.org/misc/php/LifeWaySpiritualGiftsSurvey.php>

(free\* Below, there is list of the gifts talked about in the survey )

<https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase/en-US/Product?Path=Clifton%20StrengthsFinder> (\$9.99 - Top 5 Strengths Access)

<https://youruniquedesign.com>

(\$35)

3. **DIRECT.** Think through the avenues that are available for you to use your talents to serve both in the church and in the city. Write down how your talents/gifts could be used in those avenues.

Church - how can you use your talents/gifts to connect with and serve the church - gathered (Sunday Services) and scattered (community groups, events, etc.)?

City - how can you use your talents/gifts to connect and serve those in the city?

4. **DEPLOY.** What is a next step you need to take to unleash your talents to serve Jesus and others?

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### **\*List of gifts from survey ::**

A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church.

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:9-11 contain representative lists of gifts and roles God has given to the church. A definition of these gifts follows.

**Leadership** - Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (Rom. 12:8).

**Administration** - Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor. 12:28).

**Teaching** - Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God's Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).

**Knowledge** - The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God's Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor. 12:28).

**Wisdom** - Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor. 12:28).

**Prophecy** - The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).

**Discernment** - Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor. 12:10).

**Exhortation** - Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (Rom. 12:8).

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**Shepherding** - The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph. 4:11).

**Faith** - Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).

**Evangelism** - God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph. 4:11).

**Apostleship** - The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

**Service/Helps** - Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7).

**Mercy** - Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (Rom. 12:8).

**Giving** - Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (Rom. 12:8).

**Hospitality** - Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9)

## **PRAYER**

- We pray that we will grow in our understanding of the gospel of Jesus and his sacrifice, which will fuel us to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice.
- That we will be diligent in seeking to understand how God created and gifted us so that we can use those gifts and abilities to worship God and serve others
- That we will be diligent in identifying and engaging in opportunities to faithfully serve Jesus' church and others

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

### ***AS YOU GO...***

- Talk about how gifted Jesus is and what it cost him to use those gifts to serve others.
- Be intentional to tell others where you see they are gifted (can do this as an exercise over a meal or just in everyday interactions where you see others' giftedness).
- Look for small ways you can serve others with your gifts, and act on them immediately.

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**Unleashed Objective** :: to see **every person** at **CrossPointe Church unleashed** for the **cause of Christ** by **leveraging** their **time, talent** and **treasure**

**Week 3** :: TREASURE Unleashed

**Read** :: Luke 19:1-10



### **INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW**

The Scriptures reveal that all things come from our creator God and that we are to use them in his ways, for his purposes and for his glory. But, as we see in the story of a tax collector Zacchaeus, the propensity of the human heart and human desires is to accumulate and use money and possessions for our own comfort and our own purposes—no matter the cost.

In this same account, we see the power of a life that is changed by an encounter with Jesus. We see Jesus, who “came to seek and save the lost”, stop, see, call out to, and enter in to the house and life of this sinner Zacchaeus who was an outcast of his culture. Zacchaeus’ encounter with Jesus results in salvation—eternal life with God through trusting in Jesus—and that salvation results in a changed life. A life that was focused on self and greed turns into a life that is focused on God, others and generosity.

Neither Jesus nor the Scriptures resort to guilt tactics in regard to giving and being generous. They simply point to God’s generosity in the gospel and how the only right response is a life of generosity. Regarding giving, the Apostle Paul states:

*“I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:8–9).*

*“Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).*

It is our hope and prayer that you will be so gripped by Jesus that, like Zacchaeus, you will be transformed by the good news of his grace, resulting in a life of generosity towards Jesus, his church and others.

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## MESSAGE APPLICATION

As you listen to the sermon, write down what catches your attention, challenges or confuses you.

## QUESTIONS

1. In this passage what do we learn about ::  
Zacchaeus?

Treasure?

Jesus?

2. In what ways did Zacchaeus' encounter with and acceptance by Jesus transform how he viewed and utilized his treasure?

3. Write down what you learn about money and giving from the following passages

Matthew 6:19-24

2 Corinthians 8:1-9

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

1 Timothy 6:6-19

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5. Jesus says in Matthew 6:21, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." What do your financial statements say you treasure? Why do you value these "treasures"?

What underlying heart issue does this point to (comfort, control, power, approval)?

6. What did it cost Jesus "to seek and save the lost"?

How does Jesus' word and work on our behalf affect our treasure and how we utilize it?

7. What would it look like for you to take a next step in leveraging your treasure for the cause of Christ?

## **PRAYER**

- Heavenly Father, we pray that we will have eyes to see that everything we have is from you.
- Jesus we pray that we would treasure you more than the material things that we so easily pursue.
- Holy Spirit we pray that you will transform our hearts so that we will not be close-handed and greedy but will be sacrificial, cheerful and constant in our generosity toward you and your mission.

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## **PRAYER REQUEST**

### ***AS YOU GO....***

- Talk about instances where you have experienced God's generosity in your life (through circumstances, others, etc.)
- What are things in your culture that people pursue and seek to find treasure in?
- Talk to your kids about what it looks like to be good stewards of finances God has given you (give some. spend some. save some. is one way to talk about it).
- What are some avenues in your life you could give toward that would further God's mission of seeking and saving the lost?

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**Week 4** :: TIME Unleashed

**Read** :: Ephesians 5:15-21

## **INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW**

Every day we have 1,440 minutes that have been given to us. Sometimes we know exactly what we have to do with our time. Often though, we are left trying to sort out what is the best use of the time we've been given. This takes wisdom. Tim Keller has commented that "wisdom is knowing the right thing to do in the situations where the moral rules don't apply." What this means is that sometimes we need to choose the best use of our time and not settle merely for the good. **To consistently choose the best would be to steward time well.**

"This is also Paul's point when he says that we are to make "the best use of the time" (Eph. 5: 16). He isn't saying simply to use our time well. He is saying to maximize it. We maximize it by doing the Lord's will, which means doing good for others. Paul is saying, "Do all the good you can. Make the most of the time." As John Wesley said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can.'" (Matt Perman, What's Best Next)

*"God will never give you more in a day than you can do. You have more than you can possibly do in a day. Therefore, some of the stuff is not God's will for you to do today." --Tim Keller*

But how do we do this? How do we know what is the BEST use of our time? As we journey through this study together, you will see that understanding and believing the gospel is the only way to steward the time that has been given to us.

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## MESSAGE APPLICATION

As you listen to the sermon, write down what catches your attention, challenges or confuses you.

## QUESTIONS

1. What are the things Ephesians 5:15-21 calls us to be about in order to “make the best use of the time”?
2. What do we learn about time and what it looks like to use it effectively from these passages?

Proverbs 6:6-8

Matthew 5:16

Matthew 22:37-40

John 15:12-17

Galatians 6:9-10

Ephesians 2:8-10

Titus 2:11-15

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3. In light of question 2, what specifically has God called you to do with your time?

What avenues do you have to do good for others?

4. Read John 17:1-4. Big picture, what did Jesus do with his time? What did he accomplish?

How does what Jesus accomplished motivate and shape how we use our time?

5. Scan Mark 1:35-2:17. What do we learn about Jesus and how he used his time? (what does he do? where does he go? who is he with? etc.)

6. How might your life look different if you continually believed the Gospel—if you spent your time believing your identity is in Jesus and you became deeply satisfied in Him? How would this understanding affect your daily decisions regarding how you spend your time?

### **PRAYER**

- We pray that we will see and rest in the work that Jesus accomplished on our behalf through his life, death and resurrection.
- We pray that we will find joy in making the best use of our time, which will honor God and bring good to others.
- Our prayer is that we will better know the Scriptures—the wisdom that comes from them and the God they point to—and would respond with lives that *shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

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## **PRAYER REQUEST**

### ***AS YOU GO....***

- Talk about what you like to do with your time—where do you like to go? who do you like to be with? what do you like to do?
- Talk about someone who seems to use their time well—what can you learn from them?
- Discuss how time is a gift. What are ways you can appreciate and best utilize this gift?
- Write down 3 steps you can take to be more effective (not necessarily efficient) with your time to be about the will of the Lord. Talk about how you can encourage one another to take these steps.

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