



The following schedule shows how I broke up this series with my youth group. It was our first series of the new year, which is the ideal placement for it, but with some tweaking you could do this series at any point in the year.

Week 1: Giving

We challenged students to start giving a tenth of their income or allowance, as commanded to us in Scripture. Giving a piece of our income—and recognizing that all we have is God’s, not ours—is a huge step!

Takeaway: Have students take home a “tithe envelope” in which they can store a tenth of their earnings/allowance, to give to the church once a month.

Week 2: Memorizing Scripture

We challenged students to hide God’s Word in their hearts.

Takeaway: Give each student a sheet of paper with verses to memorize. Follow up with them through small groups, or by creating a table where they can “turn in” their verse memorizations.

Week 3: Bible Reading

We challenged students to have a consistent quiet time with God.


Takeaway: Give each student a 14-day quiet-time journal that they can use to jot notes about the passages they read each day. (There’s an example included in the “Responses” folder that requires Microsoft Publisher to access.)

Week 4: Accountability

We challenged students to keep each other accountable.

Takeaway Have students keep each other accountable. Have them sign an accountability contract to get together with an accountability partner weekly.

If you have the capacity to pull it off, we also did a night of worship to tie up the series. (You can see our rundown for the night below.)

9:00	Hangout Just hang out, students will be all over the place. Find some and get to know them!	
Big Group Meeting (Sit with students)		
	5:00	5 Min Countdown 6:39-6:44
+	10:00	Introduction of Night & Announcements <Nick> edit remove 6:44-6:54 Make the band members guess the key-word
	4:00	Alive 6:54-6:58
	4:00	Let It Be Known 6:58-7:02
	10:00	Wheel of Game Shows <Megan> 7:02-7:12
	20:00	Message 7:12-7:32
	5:00	In Tenderness 7:32-7:37
	5:00	Jailbreak 7:37-7:42
	5:00	Greater is He 7:42-7:47
	8:00	Challenge/Recap <Nick> 7:47-7:55
	5:00	Close 7:55-8:00
		add an item
	90:00	
		• 2 contributors



We're starting a new series today called "Make this the best year ever." Show of hands: how many of you think getting more stuff or money will help make this the best year ever?

Well, I want to talk about a time where I got something.

[Speaker Note: Start out with a personal story about when you were really upset, potentially when you were a kid, about not getting the present you wanted for Christmas or for your birthday. For example, I talked about the time I got a book of puzzles and was ticked that my brother and sister got cool toys.]

I think the reality is, if we're not careful, all of us can naturally become selfish. Think about it! Put one toy in the middle of a room with two babies. Nobody has to teach the babies to fight over it, right? They naturally will want the toy! Right?

It's not just little kids either. Let me ask you guys a question: How many of you think you can do a better job of hanging onto your money by holding your hand in a fist [make a fist], than by holding your hand open like this [hold your hand wide open]? We all naturally have a closed grip on stuff, just like babies, just like me when I was younger and got that gift I didn't like. We all are naturally selfish, which looks like this. [closed fist]

But today we're going to look at how *money, and the way you hold it*, can influence whether this is the best year ever, or just another mediocre year.

But first, I'd like you discuss these two questions among yourselves:

- Have you heard the word "steward" before? What does it mean?
- Where do churches, like this one, get the needed money to operate?

In the first century, a steward was somebody who managed the money and possessions of wealthy people. Stewards managed crops, crop rotations, household affairs and money. So when the Bible was originally written, those who read it would they would understand what the word "steward" meant. It was common language in that day. However, nowadays, it's not so common, is it?

I need two people to come up here.

[Choose two students to come up to the front of the room. Give person A \$10 in ten \$1 bills.] You, **[Person A]**, have ten dollars. How great is it to have 10 dollars? Now, let's say **[Person A]** has \$10 and, he **[or she]** is going to go to the bank and put my money in a savings account. **[Person B]**, you're the bank. **[Have Person A hand their 10 dollars to the person B]**. Now you hang onto the money. This is what most Americans do: we put our money in the bank.

Let's say **[Person A]** goes down to the bank and says, "Hey! I want one of my dollars, please!" What if the person in the bank said, "Well, you know, I was hungry, and I forgot to pack my lunch to work today, and I saw your \$10 lying there, so I decided I would run to McDonalds and buy a McRib, and also buy nine more McRibs for all my other bank co-workers. And I'm really sorry, but I spent your \$10."

How would you respond if you were **[Person A]**? I'd be like, "GIVE ME MY MONEY!"

Why do we feel this way? Because **[Person A]** right here is the rightful owner of the \$10, and this bank person, **[Person B]**, is just the manager, or the steward of the money, right?

Here's what we need to actually understand when it comes to God's ways of handling money. **[Person A]** here isn't actually you! GASP! **[Person A]** is actually God. God is the owner. And you, **[Person B]**, are simply the manager, or the steward of the money. You can go ahead and sit down. Let's give them a hand.

Did you know that God asks you to give him a tenth of your money, or just one of those dollars from our little illustration (or a tithe)? Here are the verses:

Proverbs 3:9: "Honor the LORD with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest."

Malachi 3:10a: "Bring the full tenth [tithe] into the storehouse so that they may be food in my house..."

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