

Session 3

Giving

❖ OPEN IN PRAYER

***Suggestion:** Thank you, Yahweh, for your Holy Spirit leading everyone and bringing them here. Thank you for showing us the good things you put in our lives like fortitude and honor. Help us now to see You and know You more while we learn about giving and all that You give. We ask that You make Your words in the Bible speak to us. Help us to learn how to use the Bible more so You can show us more about this life You have given to us. Amen.*

❖ DEFINING THE TOOL

>>><< GIVING >>><<	
Definition	Freely transferring the possession of (something) to (someone). Causing or allowing someone or something to have something, especially something abstract by providing or supplying.
Synonyms	bestowing, allowing, awarding, contributing

Physical gifts and money can be a joy to give and receive. But we humans were created with a capacity to give so much more than just materials. Giving is a sacred thing and is associated with honoring. Giving our thanks and praise to Creator is a form of honoring Him.

❖ DIGGING IN

Giving is also done as a sign of love – a choice of action, or sometimes a natural response that is an outpouring of overflowing love from within. Yeshua/Jesus told this story about a Father and a Son.

Read aloud from your Bible: Luke 15:11-32 (The story of “The Prodigal Son”)

Group Leader: *Have people take turns reading verses.*

- **Discuss the ways in which the father was giving.**

- **In what ways does the father show his love for both sons?**

Compassion, mercy and forgiveness are great gifts to give. They take a conscious choice, and there still may be a cost to them. But forgiveness, even when it wasn't earned, is one of the greatest tools there is in restoring relationships. This is what Creator/Father did for us through Yeshua/Jesus: by sending Him to be a sacrifice, he made it possible to forgive everyone who believed in Him and restore us to a right relationship with our Creator.

There is nothing we could ever do to earn this; our Creator/Father **gave** this to us as His loving **gift**. He saw us in the distance, and loved us, and wanted us to come to Him even after all of the sinful things we've done. He loves us that much.

Someone said that they remembered the wisdom **given by an elder** that meant the most to them: “The words were gentle and said only once. It was never yelled or said over and over again.”

- **Look at the words spoken by the father in this Bible story. Did he yell at or lecture either of his sons?**

- **Did he cut them down for their mistakes and take away their dignity, or build them up by giving love?**

We owe a great deal to our elders. There is a special kind of love that develops when we are grateful to those who walked before us, or who lead us now. That love guides our actions toward them. ***Giving to an elder*** is showing them honor by listening to their words and obeying their directives.

- **Consider the servants in the story. Did they balk at the father's instructions? Did they refuse to honor the son who had wasted his inheritance? No, they prepared the feast, and then joined the father in the celebration!**

We can also gift an elder with a seat to sit in, or let them go first in line, or offer them a helping hand. It is a blessing to be treated well!

In the community of the Creator, ***children are considered sacred***. The father in our story knew how special his son was and welcomed him back. We honor the sacred, ***blessing the children by giving*** them our best, teaching with love and gentleness, and offering forgiveness and compassion and mercy like the father in the story. As parents and elders to these children, in the love of Yahweh in Yeshua, we pray that they will follow this same path that we have walked before them.

❖ THE CHALLENGE OF GIVING

This Creator Father is easy to give honor to. Sometimes we have mothers or fathers who are difficult to honor.

- **If you are willing, share if you have had a parent who is difficult to honor.**

You don't need to give details. It can help to share this experience with others. Sometimes you will find you are not alone. Or, others may have walked alongside people in the same situation. Feelings of anger, shame and judgment you fear may have kept you closed in or feeling isolated – recognize that these fears and feelings are not from God! One strength of gathering in a community of believers is the Presence of Yeshua/Jesus (Matthew 18:20) in each member of the gathering. He teaches us with love and gentleness to stretch the tired, sore, sometimes injured muscles of compassion and forgiveness to each other. Eventually, through this support, He may even prepare us for a restored relationship with that parent.

The Bible says we should honor our mother and father. Honoring can be as simple as being thankful that they ***gave*** you life even if that life was hard. In the Prodigal Son story, the father still gave honor to his son even though the son had taken and spent all of his inheritance. The son returned home with his prideful spirit broken, ready to humble himself and beg his father's mercy. The father honored him and ***gave*** him love just for coming home again. He ***gave*** forgiveness and restoration before even a word could be spoken.

❖ **LOOKING FORWARD**

- **Is there someone in your life to whom you could give more honor or mercy or forgiveness or kindness in love?**
- **Think about this person and ask God to help you take a step to do that this week, no matter how small it is - even if it is just coming to some kind of new peace inside of you through the help of Creator.**

❖ THE GOD OF GIVING

The Bible tells us that Moses was a friend of Creator/God. At one time he asked God to show him His glory. Moses asked for the ultimate from God and God ***gave*** it to him.

Read aloud from your Bible: Exodus 33:18-23

- **List the ways you see God showing kindness and caring for Moses in this passage.**

Read out loud 1 John 3:1-3.

Group Leader: *Pause and let the message soak in. Read it again and say:*

“This is for you, because He loves you.”

Read aloud from your Bible: Matthew 11:28

- **What does Yeshua say He will give you?**

One of the most difficult journeys we walk is the journey of our own hearts. We wear ourselves out desiring to be loved or accepted or respected. When we are hurt we do things we sometimes regret by hiding the pain or worse.

When we realize how much Yahweh/Creator/Father loves us, by knowing that he gave us His only Son, we don't have to keep wearing ourselves out trying to find love. We find it in Him and He gives us rest, peace, eternal life and so much more. **He loves to give. He gives to love.**

Read out loud the following conversation Yeshua/Jesus has with the Father/Yahweh in John 17:22-26:

“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

John 17:22-26 (NIV)

❖ **CLOSE IN PRAYER**

Suggestion: *Thank you, Father for loving us so much and for giving your Son Yeshua/Jesus. Thank you for Your words in the Bible that let us know how much you love us and give to us. Help us to be better at loving and giving, too, to do that this week so that others will know they are loved and honored in Your name. Thank you for giving us your love. Amen.*