

Study Series: Difference Makers

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 Lesson Title: “The Give-and-Go” (pp. 131-143)

Session 11

February 13, 2022

**The main point of this lesson is:** Difference makers give generously and go where God calls them.

**Focus on this goal:** To help adults give generously and go where God calls them

**Key Bible Passage:** Ezra 1:1-6

Before the Session

1. **Provide** margined notebook paper for each participant. (Steps 1 and 7)

2. **Be prepared** to read the C. S. Lewis “too easily pleased” quote (<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/702-it-would-seem-that-our-lord-finds-our-desires-not>) (Step 6)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

**Give** each participant a sheet of notebook paper. **Lead** the group to read in unison the Difference Maker Declaration (p. 66). **Ask:** *Which of these statements: Excite you? Intimidate you? Convict you? Motivate you?*

**Request** adults identify from the third sentence in that Declaration what believers must do for Jesus to work deeply and clearly through them. **Instruct** them to write *Pray, Give, Go* in the middle of their paper. **Ask:** *Which of these call us to get off the sideline and into the game? Explain.*

**Read** the main point and goal statements of this session (p. 142).

Step 2. The Give-and-Go of Jesus

**Assert** that Jesus, as the ultimate difference maker, is our model for giving and going. **Invite** a volunteer to read the Day One pull quote (p. 132). Use Day One remarks and activity 1 (pp. 131-132) to **examine** how Jesus modeled give-and-go.

**Emphasize** from Day One (p. 132), “Everyone is going and giving their time and resources … It’s a matter of choosing where we will go and to what we will give.”

**Invite** responses to Day One, activity 2 (p. 132).

Step 3. Ezra

Use the first Day Two paragraph (p. 133) to briefly **summarize** Sessions 9 and 10. **Ask** adults if they recall from Session 9 the disposition of difference makers *(we know we’re not lost sheep, being children of God is the most fundamental part of our identity).*

**Explain** the Book of Ezra is about the beginning of the end of the exile. **Invite** a volunteer to read Ezra 1:1. **Discuss** Day Two, activity 1 (p. 133). **Explain:** *Seventy years is often regarded as a round number, however it was literally seventy years from when Daniel was taken into exile (606 BC) until the first group of exiles were led back to Judah in 536 BC.*\*

**Note** God had planned in advance to use Cyrus to bring His people home (Is. 44:28–45:6, written 140 years before Cyrus).\*\* **Invite** a volunteer to read Cyrus’s proclamation (Ezra 1:2-4). **Ask:** *If you were a Jew living in exile, how might you have felt when you heard this proclamation? Why?*

**Ask** a volunteer to read Ezra 1:5-6. **Discuss:** *Why might it have been hard for the first group to choose to go? Why might it have been hard for the second group to give rather than go? What led both groups to make their choice? Which group was more important?* **Note** both groups were equally important—what really mattered was their obedience to respond as God prompted them.

Step 4. Give

**Invite** a volunteer to read the second Day Three paragraph (p. 135). **State** the most extensive teaching on giving in the New Testament is in 2 Corinthians 8–9. **Invite** responses to Day Three, activity 1 (p. 135).

Use remarks in Day Three (p. 135-136) to **explore** how believers can reach the place of cheerful generosity. **Invite** a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 8:1-14. Draw from these verses additional ways believers can become cheerful, generous givers.

**Discuss** Day Three, activity 2 (p. 136). **Guide** adults to determine specific ways to begin living generously, referencing the author’s suggestions in Day Three (pp. 136-137).

Step 5. Go

**Invite** a volunteer to read Matthew 28:19-20. **Read** the pull quote in Day Four (p. 137).

**Discuss** Day Four, activity 1 (p. 138) in a general, rather than personal, sense. **Examine** what the call to go might or might not entail.

**Invite** responses to Day Four, activity 2 (p. 139).

Step 6. A Challenge

**Ask:** *We already saw in Day Three that God owns everything, and His omnipresence means He is everywhere. So why does He call us to give and go?*

**Read** the C. S. Lewis quote. **Discuss** Day Five, activity 1 (pp. 139-140). **Read** from the last paragraph of Day Five (p. 141), beginning with “being a difference maker isn’t reserved ….”

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

**Request** adults imagine their notebook paper (from Step 1) represents their lives and consider what percentage of their “life” is filled with their own bills, responsibilities, and activities. **Declare** it’s important to leave margins in our budgets and schedules so we have something left to give when God prompts.

**Ask:** *What steps can we take to begin building margins into our lives so we can give and go when the Lord directs?* **Encourage** adults to write suggestions in the margin of their sheets of notebook paper and pray over those this week.

**Close** in prayer.

\* CSB Study Bible note on Jeremiah 25:11, p. 1180

\*\* CSB Study Bible note on Isaiah 45:1-8, p. 1108

