## Personal Devotions

### Week 4: The Tax Collector

A Cannonball of Surrender

### Monday Read Deuteronomy 34:1-9

God leads Moses up to the mountain to show him what is in store for God's people.

Moses finally sees with his eyes the vision he has pursued for his whole life. God is faithful, the vision is about to be realized. Even before this day God's people needed to trust in God's vision. In the same way, before we dive into the work God planned for us, we must catch vision from God. Do you have a sense of where God is leading your life? Do you have a vision of what your life would look like in five years if you were living in God's will? What would our church look like? Pray that God will use the Cannonball Initiative to give you a clearer vision of who God is calling you to be.	
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## Tuesday Read Hebrews 11:8-19

Vision gives power to our	lives.
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The book of Hebrews has	
an entire chapter of heroes	
and heroines who followed	
God's vision with their	
faith even if they never saw	
the vision with their eyes.	
Because they pursued God's	
vision, God secured that vision for them. When we	
see the destination we can	
jump into the work of God	
and enjoy the faithfulness of	
God to the fullest; just like	
Abraham. When we leap	
into a Cannonball, we see the water and trust that it	
will hold us up. When have you experienced the power	
of a trustworthy vision that	
inspired you to action? Do	
you believe God can do that	
again today?	
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### Read Matthew 16:21-23 Wednesday

Peter was so distracted by Jesus' words that he lost sight of Jesus' purpose.

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	things of God." Peter
THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF THE	was worried about the realities of Jesus' predictions.
	Often, we become like Peter,
	losing sight of the vision
	God gives and focusing
	on the stumbling blocks.
	We stand on the diving board worried about how a
	Cannonball might hurt. God
	knows our fears but God
	is able to sustain us, so we
	can wholeheartedly jump into God's mission. What are
	some of the uncertainties
	or worries that make you
	hesitate to jump into God's
	work? What are some practical ways that you can
	overcome these doubts or
	worries? In your prayer today,
	entrust these worries to God.
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## Thursday Read Matthew 28:16-20

Imagine standing on that mountain and listening to Jesus before He goes into heaven.

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single word as He leaves	
you with your mission.	
When the Church plunges	
into the mission of God, it	
looks exactly like what Jesus	
described in Matthew 28.	
Jesus calls us to live this	
mission today, knowing He	
is with us in every part of	
the vision, to the far ends of	The state of the s
the earth. What words and	
feelings came to mind when	
you read verse 20? How does	
it feel to know Jesus is with	
you, every step, as you chase the vision of God? How is	
your life leaping into these	
different parts of the mission of God? Does knowing Jesus	
is with you broaden the	
scope of your vision? Are you	
seeing too small?	
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## Read Luke 19:1-10 Friday

It is easy to give lip service to change, to feel a need to take a stand but never actually stand up.

We need a plan in order to follow through on good ideas. Zacchaeus was a man with a plan. He does not commit to be generically nicer or better. He makes a specific plan to give to the poor and to give back what he stole. Now that is a serious Cannonball. This Cannonball Initiative is an opportunity for you to do more than just think nice thoughts about committing to God's work. You should make a plan, share the plan and work the plan. First plan then plunge.
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Watch Week 4 LIFE Group Video.
Videos can be found at communitycannonball.com.

#### **Opening Discussion Questions**

- 1. What does the word "surrender" mean to you?
- 2. Have you ever surrendered? When?
- 3. How does the world's definition of surrender and God's definition of surrender differ?

#### **Further Discussion from Scripture**

Read each Scripture passage below and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the lines provided below before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

# The Tax Collector Surrendered Without Holding Back

#### Read Luke 18:9-14

"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get." But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."



1.	Who do you most resonate with in this passage - the Pharisee or the tax collector? Why?
2.	Do you feel that you have surrendered everything over to God and are going before Him in this Cannonball initiative with open hands, or are you holding something back?
3.	What makes you nervous as you think about making a two-year commitment to generosity for the Cannonball initiative. How can your LIFE Group be praying for you to help you overcome this?
4.	Take some time to write down these prayer requests and pray over them right now.



# Committing To A Life Of Generosity Is Not The American Dream. It's The Heavenly Call.

#### Read Luke 12:13-21

"Someone in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.' Jesus replied, 'Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?' Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

5.	Some people struggle with spending too much, and other people
	struggle with saving too much. Both are indicators of our desire to
	want to live the American dream and control our situations rather
	than to turn them over to God. Do you resonate with this passage and
	struggle with excessive saving or excessive control over the future?

### What You Are Committed To Reveals The Nature Of Who You Are

#### Read Matthew 6:19-24

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness.



If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

6.	Church - not just in our local church as part of Community but in any Kingdom enterprise?
7.	Have you ever thought about your cumulative giving like that? God sees it like that. As you make your commitment to the Cannonball initiative, see this as an extravagant investment into a lifetime of giving that you are making into the Kingdom.
8.	How does this change how you think about your giving?