

## When You Have Nothing More to Give

Welcome to another session of Guidestone University.

So glad to have you back. In the last few sessions, we've been looking at three things that I've learned through an incredibly challenging time in my life and in my work. In this session, we're going to look at one more concept that will bring everything together that we've been looking at for the last three sessions.

We talked about the concept of giving more, despite the fact that we may be going through something incredibly challenging ourselves that we have more to give.

I won't talk about that for just a few minutes here. See, maybe you are already doing some things in your community or in your work or through your family that are making significant impact.

Maybe you're making sure that non-profits in your community or maybe even ministries in your community are getting the funding that they need to continue to do their great work.

Maybe you're giving more by connecting with some initiative in your community and you've found a real cause that's bigger than anything you have ever been a part of, and you're making a huge difference through that.

Maybe you're making a greater contribution and giving more by volunteering to do something throughout the week. You're doing something that most people don't even know that you're doing and you loved that. Some of you are giving more by fighting real challenges; you're coordinating events, you're running races, you're giving to causes, you're praying for people. You're doing things that are making a difference.

Maybe you're giving more by fostering a child who doesn't even have a home. They needed love more than anything else in the world. Some of you here have adopted a child. You've given the one thing that they didn't think they would ever have. You have given them the hope, the love, and you've given more than you ever thought you could give.

I know that in a group this size of the membership of Guidestone University that there's some of us that feel like we don't have any more to give – we don't have any margin.

Maybe you're thinking, "You don't even know my story; you don't even know me. You don't know what I've done; you don't know where I've been. You don't know what I've been through, you don't know how much I gave and how much it didn't seem to matter." Maybe I don't know your story, but I know a lot of stories, and I have a bunch of messy stories of my own.

Maybe somebody criticized your work. You worked hard, you did good stuff, you went above and beyond. The company grew, your organization grew, the team grew, people grew. Maybe you hit record revenue or record donations or record enrollment, record sales. You've poured your life and soul into helping people and the organization to get back on track and things got turned around, and they went right back to the way that it was before.

Maybe somebody took advantage of you. You'll say, "I've done that giving thing. I gave, I've been there, I've done that and I'm never going to let myself be taken advantage of again."

Here's what I want to say, don't let one bad experience, or a series of bad experiences rob you of your life's purpose. Life happens. Give freely anyway, serve freely anyway, keep moving, keep deciding, keep learning, keep leading. Stop complaining, stop whining, stop making excuses, stop questioning yourself, stop criticizing other people, stop blaming everything at everyone else, and start doing this one very simple yet very difficult thing to do – give more. You have more to give.

**Student 1:** What's up, Coach? How strong is Westview this year?

**Brock:** Much stronger than we are.

**Coach:** You've already written Friday night that it's a loss, Brock?

**Brock:** Well, not if I know how we can beat them.

**Coach:** Come here Brock, you too Jeremy.

**Brock:** What? Am I in trouble now?

**Coach:** Not yet. I want to see you do the death crawl again, except I want to see your absolute best.

**Brock:** What, you want me to go to 30?

**Coach:** I think you can go to 50.

**Brock:** The 50. I can go to 50 if nobody is on my back.

**Coach:** I think you can do with Jeremy on your back. But even if you can't, I want you to promise me you're going to do your best.

**Brock:** All right.

**Coach:** Your best.

**Brock:** Okay.

**Coach:** You're going to give me your best.

**Brock:** I'm going to give you my best.

**Coach:** All right, one more thing, I want you to do it blindfolded.

**Brock:** Why?

**Coach:** Because I don't want you giving up at a certain point when you can go further. Get down. Jeremy get on his back. Now get a good tight hold Jeremy. All right, let's go Brock. Get your knees off the ground, use your hands and feet. There you go, go to the left, there you go, show me good effort. That way Brock, you keep coming, there you go. It's a good start. A little bit left, a little bit left. There you go Brock, good strength.

**Student 2:** You got to be kidding me.

**Coach:** That's it Brock, that's it.

**Brock:** Am I at the 20 yet?

**Coach:** Forget the 20. You give me your best, you keep going. That's it. No. Don't stop Brock, you got more in you than that.

**Brock:** I ain't done. Just resting, Sir.

**Coach:** You've got to keep moving, let's keep moving, let's go, don't quit till you got nothing left. There you go, keep moving. Keep moving. Keep moving Brock, that's it you keep driving. Keep your knees off the ground. Keep driving it, your very best, your very best, your very best. Keep moving Brock, that's it, that's it, that's it. Keep going. Don't quit on me keep going. Keep driving it. Keep your knees off the ground. That's it, your very best. Don't quit on me, your very best. Keep driving. Keep driving. There you go, there you go. That's it, you keep driving. Keep your knees off the ground. Keep driving it. Don't quit till you got nothing left. Keep moving Brock. That's it, that's it, that's it. Keep going. I want everything you got. Come on, keep going.

**Brock:** It hurts.

**Coach:** Don't quit on me, do your very best. Keep driving. Keep driving. There you go, there you go.

**Brock:** He's heavy.

**Coach:** I know he's heavy.

**Brock:** I'm about out of strength.

**Coach:** Then you negotiate with your body to find more strength, but don't you give up on me Brock. You keep going, you hear me, you keep going. You're doing good, you keep going. Do not quit on me, you keep going.

**Brock:** It hurts.

**Coach:** I know it hurts you keep going, you keep going, it's not hard from here. 30 more steps, you keep going Brock. Come on, keep going.

**Brock:** It burns.

**Coach:** Let it burn.

**Brock:** My eyes are burning.

**Coach:** It's not hard you keep going Brock. Come on, come on keep going, you promised me your best, your best don't stop. Keep going.

**Brock:** Too hard.

**Coach:** It's not too hard, you keep going. Come on Brock, give me more, give me more. Keep going, 20 more steps. 20 more keep going Brock. Give me your best. Don't quit. No, keep going. Keep going. Keep going, don't quit. Don't quit. Don't quit. Brock Kelly, you don't quit.

**Brock:** It's hard.

**Coach:** Keep going. Keep going, go Brock Kelly. You don't quit on me. Now you keep going, you keep going, go on Brock. 10 more steps. 10 more. 10 more. 10 more. 10 more keep going. Don't quit, give me your all.

**Brock:** I can't do it.

**Coach:** You can. You can 5 more, 5 more. Come on Brock, come on don't quit, don't quit, come on.

**Coach:** 2 more. 1 more.

[Dramatic music]

**Brock:** That's gotta be 50. That's gotta be 50. I don't have anymore.

**Coach:** Look up Brock, you're in the end zone.

[Dramatic music]

**Coach:** Brock, you're the most influential player on this team. If you walk around defeated, so will they. Don't tell me you can't give me more than what I've been seeing. You just carried a 140 pound man across this whole field on your arms. Brock, I need you. God has gifted you with the ability of leadership, don't waste it.

**Jeremy:** Coach.

**Coach:** Can I count on you?

**Brock:** Yes.

**Jeremy:** Coach.

**Coach:** What is it Jeremy?

**Jeremy:** I weigh 160.

Remember DJ in the story that I'd told just a few sessions ago? That day when he called me, I'd encouraged him to go with us on a retreat with a group of young professionals. We were going up into the Smokey Mountains for the weekend. He went home that afternoon, grabbed a bag, packed some stuff, and he came with us on the retreat. Sarah and I pulled him into our raft. Again, we were experiencing some of the most challenging things we'd ever experienced in our life, in our family, in our marriage, in my work and yet we decided, for whatever reason, we decided to pull him into our raft.

For the first few months, I listened a lot. I tried to encourage him, I helped him. I helped him learn to balance a checkbook. I showed him how to use financial software to set up a budget. I mentored him through our work. My wife and I went to a computer store with him. We found a computer and bought him a computer. We helped him get connected to a new church and to a group of people that would help him grow.

Several months later, we were sitting in a restaurant in downtown Chattanooga, Tennessee. We were sitting there, in Blue Orleans Restaurant Chattanooga, and my wife, and his girlfriend got up and walked away from the table. And as we were sitting there he said, "Mike, I want to tell you something." He said, "I've met the girl that I want to marry." He told me that he was going to propose to her within a few weeks.

A few months later, I got another phone call. His tone was really serious and he said, "There's something I want to ask you." I said to him, "What is it? I'll do anything for you." He said, "I know you would. Because I know you would, I want to ask you to be the best man in our wedding. Would you do that?"

Now, this might not seem weird to you, but for me it was totally unexpected. I knew he was getting married, because we were planning to go to the wedding. But he has six brothers, and any one of them could have done – I mean, they are all great guys, and any one of them could have done this. He has a lot of guy friends; in fact, many of them worked for me, I mean they were in our office; they were on our team. He said, "You've just been a great friend to me and your influence has profoundly impacted my life. I can't think of anybody else that I'd rather have serve as my best man."

At that time, I was in my mid-thirties. I mean, normally, you don't do that kind of stuff when you're that far away from college. In fact, I have never been asked before to be a best man in a wedding, I've never been asked since.

Within days that he asked me to be his best man, I'd started looking at what is the best man supposed to do and how am I going to navigate all the differences and personality of these, there's a bunch of college guys there and you know the typical best man's stuff, and how am I going to make it happen.

I learned that one of the responsibilities of a best man is to make a toast for the bride and the groom at the wedding, and that toast was generally preceded by a best man's speech. Have you ever had to write a best man's speech?

And so, I prepared a speech for one of my best friends in all the world. I want to share with you the speech that I wrote for him. I wrote:

"I want to thank all the people who made this day possible, especially to the parents of the bride and the parents of the groom, not just for this beautiful day, but for their influence into the life of these two wonderful people. I want to thank all of you for coming to celebrate this wonderful day with this sweet couple. There's no place that I'd rather be.

"DJ, he's been a great friend to me. He's always treated Sarah, my wife, with great respect. Occasionally, he treats me with respect. He has loved Madison, our daughter, like his own family and she loves playing with his dog. He has considered me his mentor, even though he knows me very well. Sarah, Madison and I have great memories together with him like Sundays when we drove to Chattanooga for church, and then Sarah would talk us into going shopping afterwards, when none of the rest of us wanted to do that.

There's times when we chased golf balls around Dayton Country Club, where we both learned that we can benefit from a few golf lessons. I also remember sitting in a restaurant in Chattanooga when DJ realized that this is it, he's found his match. I've learned that she and DJ perfectly balanced one another. He's a saver, she's a giver. He's competitive, she's good at calming him down. He eats for recreation, she eats religiously healthy. He can't stand being late, she doesn't mind it. He's a hard worker, but she's going to make all the money."

"When I made the decision to accept a new position at another university, one thing I knew right away was I wanted to continue to work with DJ. I guess I won't be calling him late at night about work related stuff for a while. He's going to be a little busy." – I actually said that in the best man's speech.

Then I said, "He and I spent a lot of time together. Usually, it was when one of us was going through something incredibly challenging. And in those incredibly challenging circumstances, he was a great friend to me. And today, my friend marries his best friend. Marriage is not about finding the person whom you can live with; it's about finding the person that you can't live without – and my friend has found that person.

"So, here's to the union of my two wonderful friends; one will never remember the anniversary and one will never forget it. May you be friends to each other as only two lovers can, and may you love each other as only two best friends can."

Over the next few years, I gave DJ opportunities to grow in the leadership positions. First within our team, then leading one of our departments. Then I asked him to lead one of our regional campuses. His campus became the fastest growing campus of all of our campuses.

A few months later, he accepted the higher level of position in a larger university in our state. And he served in that university for a couple of years. Then one day I got a call, DJ had been offered a position at the largest professional services company in the world. And about the same time, his wife was getting ready to complete her doctoral physical therapy degree at the university of South Carolina – only 16 people each year are admitted into this prestigious program. The amazing thing about both of them was all of these happened when they were still in their twenties.

Now here's what I want you to see about the story. Again, we began working with DJ during the most challenging times in our lives. In fact, I don't think that we've ever faced something as challenging as what we were experiencing at the time. We thought that we were connecting with him, and that we were giving to him – and what ended up happening is, our giving and our experiences together with him allowed him to become a friend to me when no one else was.

These were some of the darkest moments in my life and in my career. Very few people even knew about some of the things that we were experiencing, yet he was there with



me. No matter what you're going through, somebody needs you. They may need just a little bit of attention, they may need a little bit of time, they may need a little bit of love or compassion, they may need some money; whatever it is, they need you to give a little more. So, dig deep. No matter where you've been, or what you're going through, somebody needs you – so give more. You have more to give.

Here's what I want you to do today, here's our action step. In session two, you have more to give. You wrote down somebody who needs your help, and then you wrote down how you can help them. I want you to go back, and I want you to look at that person's name again and how you're going to help them or one way you're going to help them. And I want you to make a step today; take a step today toward helping them. If you haven't already done it – do it. If you have already done something, take another step.

I mentioned several ways that we helped this young man, we mentored this young man. Stop what you're doing right now, and write down a few things that you could do just like the needs that they have, things that you can help them, whether it's time or resources or money or connecting them with some other people. Take that step. It's going to be our action step today.

And we'll see you in the next session of Guidestone University.