

LESSON 57

God Loves a Cheerful Giver

2 CORINTHIANS 9



BIBLE TRUTH

EVERYTHING WE DO, INCLUDING OUR GIVING, SHOULD SPRING FROM GRACE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 2 Corinthians 9 from the Scriptures or read story 135, “God Loves a Cheerful Giver,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

A Giving Testimony

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

A Cookie Gift

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ fresh-baked cookies (It is important for this exercise that you ask your pastor for money to purchase the cookies or the supplies for baking them. The idea is to help the children connect with how the general offering of the church supplies the money to bless others.)
- ✓ something for the children to drink

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Encouraging Parents

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ blank cards—one for each student
- ✓ colored pencils or markers

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 20 MIN

The Rich and Poor of the Bible

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker
- ✓ Bibles for the class

TOTAL 90 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Cheerful giving is grace-motivated giving—Paul had written earlier to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:1–3) and asked them to give an offering for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. In his second letter, Paul wrote to remind them to complete the work of giving they had begun and cheerfully offer the gift they promised (2 Corinthians 9:5). Paul reminded them that everything comes from the Lord by his grace. Even the act of giving is the result of a work of grace. It was Paul’s desire that their faith be stirred so that their giving would bring them joy and be offered cheerfully.

Generous giving flows out of God’s generosity to us—When we understand that everything we have comes from God, it is much easier to share what we have with others. God supplies both the seed and the harvest. He is the one who makes us rich so that we might be generous on every occasion. Our giving is a demonstration of thanks to God. We thank him for what he has given us by giving it away! When we give to others, we are actually participating in God’s generosity to them, which results in their giving thanks as well. Our giving is an expression of thanks toward God, resulting in others giving thanks toward God!

Grace-motivated giving results in praise to God—When we give to others, we can expect two wonderful responses. First, they will be grateful and thankful to us for our gift. But even more important, they will be grateful to God for the gift he gave to them through us. Isn’t it amazing that our gift toward others can result in glory to God (2 Corinthians 9:13)!

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Offering for Jerusalem

The Christians in Jerusalem were experiencing real hardship, and other churches started a collection to help them. Paul mentions this collection in Romans 15:25–28. The offering had been started by the Corinthians a year earlier, but, for some reason, had not been completed (2 Corinthians 8:10–11; 9:2). The offering is also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:1–4 where Paul asked the Corinthians to set aside money each Sunday to be added to the offering.

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Paul was excited about the cheerful giving of the Corinthians. He was excited because their giving flowed out of their "confession of the gospel of Christ" (2 Corinthians 9:13). Jesus gave the greatest gift of his life by dying for us on the cross. It is out of our great thanks toward God that we should be motivated to give toward one another.

Although giving to others is a work, God intends our giving to always be motivated by grace. By remembering the gift God gave us in the cross, our hearts are stirred by the Holy Spirit to give. Paul said it like this, God is able to make "all grace abound" (2 Corinthians 9:8) to us so that the treasures of this world no longer have a grip on us and we become cheerful givers.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 2 Corinthians 9 from the Scriptures or read story 135, "God Loves a Cheerful Giver," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

A Giving Testimony

Every church has testimonies of people who were going through a rough time and were greatly blessed by the generous giving of the church around them. Ask someone with this kind of story to share with your class. This will help your students personalize the amazing way giving can impact the lives of others.

You could also make a list of all the ministries supported by your church. Ask the children how those ministries help others so that you can connect what might seem like abstract giving on Sunday with tangible ministry during the week.

Then discuss the following questions with the class:

- **Do children your age ever talk about money?**
(Yes they do.)
- **What do they say about money?**
(They talk about how much they got for their birthday or what they are hoping to buy.)
- **Do they ever talk about giving to others?**
(No, not really. Sometimes?)
- **Do you think kids your age think enough about giving to others? If not, how do you think today's Scripture could help kids your age think more about giving?**
(Accept any answer.)

Pray for the class and ask God to help them grow in their generosity.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

A Cookie Gift

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ fresh-baked cookies (It is important for this exercise that you ask your pastor for money to purchase the cookies or the supplies for baking them. The idea is to help the children connect with how the general offering of the church supplies the money to bless others.)
- ✓ something for the children to drink

Use the funds you received from the church to purchase the cookies or the supplies to make them.

Tell the class that you have a gift for them. Then pass out the cookies, and while you are doing so, explain to them that the money you used to purchase or make the cookies came from the offering on Sunday morning. The pastor gave you _____ dollars to use to buy them for the class.

Now ask three students to pray, thanking God for the cookies and keeping in mind where they came from. The point is to help them see that God uses people and that when the offering is collected on Sunday it is used for real ministry during the week. Some of that money goes to keeping up your church facility, some goes to providing for the church staff, and some of it goes toward helping others. Today a portion of that money covered the cookies in your classroom!

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Encouraging Parents

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ blank cards—one for each student
- ✓ colored pencils or markers

Have the children write a thank-you note to their parents and give it to them as a gift. Help the children understand that there are ways they can give even though they don't have a lot of money. They can give of their work, their time, their encouragement, etc.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 20 MIN

The Rich and Poor of the Bible

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker
- ✓ Bibles for the class

Write out 2 Corinthians 9:6–8 on the whiteboard. Divide the class into groups of three. Have each group read one of the following passages and, keeping the 2 Corinthians passage on the board in mind, decide what we can learn from the person in their story about wealth.

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2–8)

The rich man (Luke 12:16–21)

Mary (John 12:2–9)

The widow (Mark 12:41–44)

The rich young ruler (Matthew 19:16–26)

Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57–60)

Talk about 2 Corinthians and the unique things we learn from this passage that can help us give out of grace. Remember, we have something that the people in the above stories did not have—knowledge of the gospel. We, who have been given such a treasure as the gospel, must be generous.