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**Adult
Bible Study
in
Simplified
English**

**Teaching
Guide**

WRITER
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**Living Generously
Because of Jesus**

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

Living Generously Because of Jesus

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Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious lawkeeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English.

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.

About the Writer

Bob Coder is retired and lives in Allen, Texas. He is a member of the First Baptist Church of Richardson where he is co-director of a senior adult class. Bob has previously written teaching procedures for youth Sunday School lessons. After taking early retirement, he and his wife, Lenora, served for three short-term mission assignments in Zimbabwe, Africa, and London, England. His wife died in November 2009. Since returning from the mission field, Bob has written several previous teaching guides for this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English curriculum.

Suggestions for Teaching

General Suggestions for Teaching Simplified English Audiences

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word List before beginning the study. Provide Study Guide pages for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide blank paper for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse.

6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story

Focus on fluency, not just accuracy

Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar

Minimal error-correction as students tell the story

2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead transparency.

Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.

2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:

An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.

Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

Suggestions for Teaching

Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become "stage prompter" at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another "semi"-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student's turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)

- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- Cloze (supplying a written copy with every nth word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.
- Ask students to write the story in their own words.

Bible passage as content for reading

Procedure

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

Suggestions for Teaching

Checklist for Successful Classrooms

Right Kind of Input

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
 - Realia or authentic materials
 - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
 - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
 - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

Low Anxiety Environment

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

Checklist for Real-Life Interaction

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. Use of information gap activity in which partners

- have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
 9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders.

Online Resources and Study Helps

- **EasyEnglish** is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: (www.easyenglish.info) contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for you to download and use.
- Use the following free helps: Additional adult Bible study comments by Dr. Jim Denison, “Teaching Plans,” and “Teaching Resource Items” available for each lesson online at www.baptistwaypress.org.
- Additional teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard www.baptiststandard.com. Go to the website, then to Departments, then Bible Study.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 1: Our Generous God

Lesson Focus

All the Bible tells of God's great love and goodness to us.

Focal Text

Genesis 1:1; Psalm 100; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 8:8-9; Philippians 2:5-8; James 1:17-18.

Memory Verse

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Whoever puts his trust in God's Son will not be lost but will have life that lasts forever." (John 3:16)

Connect with Life

1. Comment that we will be looking today at some of the great verses of the Bible. Observe that some of these verses come from the Old Testament and some come from the New Testament. Note the lesson title and question the class as to what it means to be generous. Use any responses to explain that to be generous is to give more than might be expected or to give more than "just enough." State that God was very generous in giving us life and a world in which to live.

2. Mention that there are several difficult words in today's Word List. Define and explain each of these words at this time and then review the meaning as needed when you come to the word (in bold type) in the lesson commentary.

Guide the Study

3. Refer to the introduction at the beginning of the study guide for today's lesson. Point out the questions asked in each paragraph of the introduction but defer answering the questions asked there until the appropriate Scripture passage provides the answer.

4. Ask a class member to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible Text. After the reading, question the class as to what God used to make the heavens and earth. Lead them to understand that God created, or "made from nothing," all the planets and stars and moons and our world. Ask teasingly, *Can any of you make something out of nothing?* Use the last paragraph under "Our

Generous God Begins" to emphasize God's generous sharing of His love as the reason for His action in making "from nothing" the heavens and the earth. At this point, recall the question in the first paragraph of the study guide introduction. Ask: *Why did God create the earth, heavens, and people?* Guide them to the answer that it was because He is a loving and generous God.

5. Permit a class member to read the first paragraph of "Praising Our God's Generous Love" from the study guide. Then read Psalm 100 from the Bible Text. Finally, read or relate the content of the last paragraph of this section of the study guide. Emphasize that God's love is generous beyond our understanding.

6. Observe that we now come to the one verse that most Christians learn to say from memory. Note that it is also the Memory Verse for today's lesson. Identify this verse as John 3:16. Invite anyone who can to recite the verse from memory. Then lead the class to recite the verse all together from the Bible Text. Call attention to the subtitle, "Our Generous God's Sacrificial Love" in the study guide. Lead the class to understand how God gave His only Son, Jesus, sacrificially for us. Explain that His purpose in doing this was to give us a way to have life that lasts forever. Note that this answers the question raised in the third paragraph of the study guide introduction.

7. Introduce 2 Corinthians 8:8-9 as an example of how Paul encouraged the Corinthian Christians to be generous givers to the cause of Christ. Describe how, in doing this, Jesus when with God was rich but He became poor when He sacrificed His life for our good. Note that this answers the question in the second paragraph of the introduction.

8. Ask a class member to read James 1:17-18 from the Bible Text. Then read from "Live in the Light of Our Generous God" in the study guide as your commentary. As always, encourage the class to follow in the study guide as you read.

Encourage Application

9. Ask: *How generous was God to those who put their trust in Jesus?* Direct the class to look again at John

3:16, the Memory Verse. Read the first sentence of that verse, stressing “so loved the world.” Express the idea that because of our generous God’s great love, He gave us a way to have life that lasts forever. Say: *All we have to do is put our trust in Jesus.* (You may want to invite class members who have not yet done so to put their trust in Jesus at this time...or see you after class to do so.)

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ To illustrate the word **generations**, explain to the class that they and their brothers or sisters are one generation, their children are the second generation, and their grandchildren are the third generation. Explain that one generation covers about 20-30 years. Make copies of the chart below to help students see their own generations.

Connect with Life handout

Generations	
<i>Write the names of your family members and add more</i>	
Grandfather	
Grandmother	
Father	
Mother	
Spouse	
Me	
How many generations?	

◆ To illustrate the term *generous*, suggest that you go to an ice cream shop and order a serving of your favorite ice cream. If you get one dip of ice cream, it is not enough. If you get two dips, that is just about right to fill you up. If you get three dips, that is a generous serving.

Guide the Study

◆ As an illustration of creating something from nothing, go through the process of pretending to pick up “nothing” from a table or out of a bag. Carefully carry the “nothing” over to a class member or two and ask them to hold out their hands to receive the “nothing.” Gently place the “nothing” in their hands. Then ask them to create, or make, something from the “nothing” you just handed them. Go on to explain that people cannot make something from nothing but, when God made the world, He made it from “nothing.”

Encourage Application

◆ (Use before Step 8 of the teaching procedures.) Display a chart you have prepared in advance, as follows:

Human Love	God’s Love
• For today	• Forever
• Mostly for family and friends	• For everyone
• Takes from others	• Gives to others
• Based on feelings	• Based on relationship
• Sometimes weakens	• Always strong
• Selfish	• Generous

Add to this list any other contrasting characteristics you can think of. Invite class members to comment about the two kinds of love. Ask them how they can become more generous and God-like in their own love.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 2: God Cares for You

Lesson Focus

God's generosity is expressed in His continual, deep care for people and their needs.

Focal Text

Psalms 23; 27:1-5; 116:1-9; Matthew 6:25-33

Memory Verse

"The Lord is my light and the One Who saves me. Whom should I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom should I be afraid?" (Psalms 27:1)

Connect with Life

1. Recall that last week we talked about "Our Generous God." Remind the class of the Memory Verse for that lesson (John 3:16). Quote the New Life Version of the verse: "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Whoever puts his trust in God will not be lost but will have life that lasts forever.*" Emphasize that God was very generous in giving us life and a world in which to live.

2. Say: *Today's lesson is entitled "God Cares for You."* Read or relate the thoughts from the introduction to the study guide, stressing the first paragraph of that introduction.

Guide the Study

3. Because most of the words in the Word List are used in the first section of the study guide, briefly review the new words at this time.

4. Refer in the study guide to the section entitled "God Cares If Your Heart Is Ready." Inform the class that you will lead them in doing what is called a responsive reading of that section. Mention that this reading involves all six verses of Psalm 23. Explain that you will read the beginning paragraph first and that the class will then read a verse. State that you will respond by reading the comments in the study guide that follow each verse. You may want to do a trial run of Psalm 23:1 to be sure the class understands the procedure. Then proceed with the class reading one verse at a time and you reading the response to that verse as outlined in the study guide.

5. Move on to the study guide section entitled "Living In A Caring God." Ask someone to read Psalm 27:1-3. Suggest that these verses seem to be drawing a picture of a stronghold, shelter, or place of safety that God provides. Use the picture below or a similar one to illustrate.



<http://download.net.pl/img/c31bcf7e9d25cc4a49522616a544ee1e.jpg.jpg>

Say: *With God's protection, we have nothing to fear. As the psalmist says in verse 1, "The Lord is the strength of my life."* Let another person read Psalms 27:4-5. Comment that instead of praying for God to defeat his enemies, the psalmist asked only that he may "live in the house of the Lord for all the days of his life."

6. Advise the class to follow in the study guide as you read Psalm 116:1-9 yourself. Read as if this were your own experience. After the reading, comment that the psalmist never told us the cause of his troubles, but when he talked about "strings of death," "fear of the grave," and "trouble and sorrow," it was clearly serious. Refer to the last two paragraphs from "Living in a Caring God." Point out how the lesson writer tells that we all suffer with trouble and sorrow but have hope in the Lord.

7. Pause and ask class members: *Why do we worry?* Affirm appropriate responses and lead the class to the conclusion that we worry because we are afraid that bad things are going to happen.

Say: *Let's look at what Jesus had to say about that.* Instruct the class to look at Matthew 6:25-33. Either select someone you know to be a good reader to read the entire passage, or read it yourself. After the reading, remark that five times in this passage Jesus said, "Do not worry." Suggest that we should have concern for the

events of tomorrow but not worry about them.

Encourage Application

8. Recall that in Psalm 23, the psalmist speaks of the Lord as his shepherd. Say: *We might wonder if Jesus had that psalm in mind when He spoke the words of Matthew 6:25-33. Observe that sheep do not need to worry about finding their next pasture or water to drink because the shepherd does that for them. Suggest that, in the same way, God's people need not worry as to what they will eat, or drink, or wear. Say: Jesus, the Good Shepherd, will see that we have these things.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Provide a brief explanation of what psalms are and who wrote them. Define psalms as religious poems or songs, of which most are addressed to God. Observe that psalms were commonly used by the Hebrew people in public worship. Explain that psalms were written to praise God, to give thanks to God, or at times to express sadness for some wrong they had committed. State that many of the psalms were written by David, the Jewish shepherd boy who killed the giant, Goliath, and went on to become king of Israel.

Guide the Study

◆ Observe that in Psalm 23:1, God (the Lord) is pictured as a shepherd. Explain that the shepherd in Bible times was very close to his sheep. He could call each one of them by name, much as we do with a dog or cat today. The sheep would come at the sound of his voice. The shepherd would lead the sheep (rather than drive them) to a new pasture or water. He protected them from wild animals or other dangers. In Psalm 23 God is pictured as watching over His people in the same way. Conclude that God watches over us as the shepherd watches over his flock of sheep—and He knows each one of us by name.

◆ Before class, write this lesson outline on the board:

God Cares for Us

Our Loving Shepherd (Psalm 23)

Our Place of Safety (Psalm 27:1-5)

Our Savior (Psalm 116:9)

Our Provider (Matthew 6:25-33)

Encourage Application

◆ Call attention to Question 1 of the Things to Think About. Instruct the class to do as the lesson writer suggests, that is, put their own name in anywhere the words *me*, *my*, or *I* appear. Use the following poster or worksheet to help class members with this suggestion:

Request one or two volunteers to try doing so, reading the psalm aloud and substituting their name for each of the pronouns. First, question the readers and then the entire class to see if this helps them feel God in their hearts as David did when he wrote the 23rd Psalm.

Psalm 27:1

The Lord is _____'s light

and the One Who saves

_____. *Whom should*

_____fear? The Lord

is the strength of _____'s

life. Of whom should

_____be afraid?

Teaching Guide

Lesson 3: Obeying Our Generous God

Lesson Focus

God's gracious generosity calls for the generous commitment of our lives.

Focal Text

Psalms 116:12-19; Mark 8:34-37; 2 Timothy 1:8-12

Memory Verse

“ ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.’ This is the first Law. ‘The second Law is this: You must love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other Law is greater than these.” (Mark 12:30-31)

Connect with Life

1. Welcome the class to another week of Bible study. Suggest that you begin the class time by looking at the Things to Think About in the study guide. Allow a different class member to read each question aloud, in order. After each question is asked, encourage the class to talk about and answer the question as best they can. Spend just enough time on this activity to arouse interest and then move on to the next step.

2. Ask: *What should I do, or what should you do, to show thanks to God for what He has done for us?* Without waiting for responses, reveal that the lesson today brings out four basic things we can do to honor God. Present this outline as a poster or handwrite it before class time on the board:

Obeying Our Generous God

Give thanks for God's blessings
(Psalm 116:12-19)

Keep your promises to God
(Psalm 116:12-19)

Practice obedience to God
(Mark 8:34-37)

Stand up for God without shame
(2 Timothy 1:8-12)

Guide the Study

3. Comment that last week we talked about the psalmist who wrote Psalm 116:1-9. Recall how he talked about “strings of death” and “fear of dying,” as well as “trouble and sorrow.”

Say: *These were all bad things so that we know it was a very serious situation from which God saved him.* State that today we will talk about the last few verses of that psalm. Ask the class to look at Psalm 116:12-19 to find out the rest of the story. Request a volunteer to read those verses from the Bible. After the reading, repeat Psalm 116:12.

4. Say: *The psalmist answered his own question in verses 13-18. In those verses he named two things he would do to honor God.* Ask: *What were those two things?*

Lead the class to identify the two things as giving thanks (verses 13 and 17) and keeping his promises to the Lord (verses 14 and 18). Identify these as points on the lesson outline that is displayed on the board or as a poster. Ask the class if they have ever done a favor for someone who never said *thank you* for that favor. Question them as to how it made them feel. Suggest that God likes to hear us say *thank you* to Him for all He does for us as well. Add that God also expects us to keep our promises to Him just as we expect other people to keep their promises to us.

5. Observe that the study guide section entitled “Giving Thanks and Honor to a Generous God” uses Paul and David as examples. Affirm that both of these men certainly thanked and honored God often. Suggest that while the experts think David did write many of the psalms (some think all of them), we do not know for sure who wrote this particular psalm. Refer to the question asked in the first paragraph of this study guide section. Ask: *What good things has God done for you? Have you thanked and honored God for these things?*

6. Say: *Let's talk about obedience.* Refer to this word in the Word List. Explain that obedience is simply doing what you are told to do. State that the next group of Bible verses is Mark 8:34-37. Identify this part of the study as the third point on the outline. Ask someone to read Mark 8:34-37. After the reading, identify the three

steps of obedience to God listed by Mark:

Mark's Steps of Obedience

- Give up himself and his own desires (v. 34)
- Take up his cross (v. 35a)
- Follow Jesus (v. 35b)

Allow someone to read "Giving Up Yourself for God" from the study guide as commentary.

7. Identify the fourth and final point of the outline from the poster or as written on the board. Emphasize that when Paul wrote his second letter to his young friend, Timothy, he was in a Roman prison for speaking and teaching about God and His Son, Jesus. State that, even in prison, Paul continued to openly speak and write of his beliefs without shame. Instruct the class to listen as you read 2 Timothy 1:8-12. After the reading, ask: *Do you do that? Do you tell others about Jesus openly and without shame?*

Encourage Application

8. Invite a class member to read all three paragraphs of the study guide section entitled "Stand Up, Do Not Be Ashamed of God." Lead the class in reading the Memory Verse, Mark 12:30-31, to close the session.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Say: *We've learned in the lessons for the last two weeks that God is a generous God and that God cares for you. Our lesson today presents another question. How do we respond to God's generous love?* Encourage the class members to respond with appropriate answers. Introduce the word *obedience* from the Word List. Stress that we should honor our generous God with our generous love and obedience.

Guide the Study

♦ Type or write the words defined in the Word List on a sheet of white paper. Cut the printed words into small strips so that there is one definition on each slip. Likewise prepare, on paper of a different color, small strips each with one of the definitions from the Word List on it. Place all of the slips into one basket and let ten class members each draw one of the slips. Then direct the ten people with slips to circulate and try to match their words with the correct definitions. Provide

assistance, if needed, and then ask each person with a slip to read her or his word and the person with the matched definition to read that definition.

Encourage Application

♦ Involve the class in a discussion of humanity. Refer to the Memory Verse, which is actually two short verses that go together (Mark 12:30-31). With the class members looking at the verse, observe that Paul uses four words to describe how we are to show our love for God. First, ask the class to identify those four words (*heart, soul, mind, body*). Explain the meanings of these words as used by Paul in verse 30, by writing the following on the board or by creating a poster with these definitions:

MARK 12:30-31

Heart	The center of one's feelings and thoughts
Soul	One's spiritual feelings of right and wrong
Mind	One's ability to think and reason
Strength	How strong one's body is

Suggest that these four words together will describe all parts of a human being. Emphasize that all four of these are to be given over to God in love. Stress that the first Law, then, is to love God.

Ask: *And what is the second Law?* Lead the class in reading from verse 31: "*You must love your neighbor as yourself.*" Conclude, saying: *No other Law is greater than these.*

Teaching Guide

Lesson 4: God's Glad-Hearted People

Lesson Focus

The Jerusalem Church models the joyous unity in Christ that leads to generous sharing of life and the things we own.

Focal Text

Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35

Memory Verse

“You have shown me the ways of life. I will be full of joy when I see Your face.” (Acts 2:28)

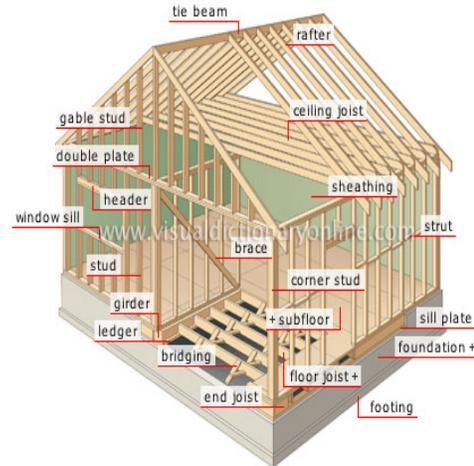
Connect with Life

1. Ask: *Wouldn't it be nice if we lived in a perfect world?* Involve the class in a discussion of what a perfect world would be like. As the class members suggest what would be good about living in a perfect world, counter with a question suggesting how that circumstance may not be so perfect after all. For example, if the weather is bright and sunny all the time, the flowers would get no rain and would die. Or, if people didn't have to work, wouldn't they be bored and lazy? Remind the class that God once gave Adam and Eve a perfect world to live in, and they broke the rules. Affirm that we can have a more perfect life, though, by being a part of “God's Glad-Hearted People,” the Church.

2. Recall the word *foundation* from Lesson 1 of this study as meaning *the base on which something rests*. Describe how the foundation is the strong, bottom part of a house or building that supports the house or building. You may want to draw on the board the rough sketch of a house, identifying the foundation, floor, house, and roof. A sample picture is included for you to use.

Emphasize that the foundation gives a firm, solid and strong base to the structure. Observe that the foundation is always the first part of a building to be made. Explain that the word *foundation* can also mean the basic idea or starting point of something. Indicate that this is how it is used in today's lesson in talking about the foundation of God's Church.

<http://visual.merriam-webster.com/images/house/structure-house/frame.jpg>



3. Refer to the introduction at the beginning of today's lesson. Ask someone to read that introduction aloud to the class. Advise the class to follow along in the study guide as the introduction is read.

Guide the Study

4. Call attention to the lesson title and sub-titles that use the expression *glad-hearted people*. Question the class as to what they think it means to be glad-hearted. Affirm reasonable responses and further explain as needed that glad-hearted people are those who feel good inside about themselves and about life.

5. Recall how we said earlier in this lesson (Step 1) that the Church is “God's glad-hearted people.” Ask: *How did the Church get started?*

Explain that in the first two chapters of Acts, Luke tells us how the Church came to be. Remind the class that Jesus had just died on the cross, had reappeared to the followers, and had then gone to be with His Father, God (Acts: 1:1-11). Provide additional background information to explain the events of Acts 2:1-40. Use the following chart to help class members understand the circumstances surrounding these verses. Draw a blank chart on the board or give students a blank worksheet to fill in.

Guide the Study handout

How the Church Began
(Acts 2)

<i>The followers of Jesus were all in one place at a special time.</i>	(v. 1)
<i>The Holy Spirit came upon them.</i>	(vv.2-4a)
<i>The followers began to speak in languages they did not know.</i>	(v. 4b)
<i>Many religious Jews from other countries heard the story of Jesus in their own language and became Christians.</i>	(vv. 5-13)

Refer to the first verse of today's Bible Text in the study guide (Acts 2:41). Call on a class member to read that verse. After the reading, say: *And that's how the Church began.*

6. Ask: *As members of God's Church, how should we live?* Allow the same person who read verse 41 to continue reading Acts 2:42-47. Then say: *And that's how the Church grew.*

Direct the class to look at the section "God Changes Us to Be Glad-Hearted People." Observe that when we become Christians, God leads us to change our behavior. Question the class as to how we should change as we live the life of a Christian.

Say: *Let me give you an example of how one person changed.* Then tell the story beginning in the second paragraph of this section. Call attention to the fifth paragraph which begins with "God changes our behavior..." Use the remainder of that section to lead in a discussion of how that change occurs. Lead them to understand that, as Christians, we must be generous with our love for God and our love for other people.

7. First, read Acts 4:32-35. Then, direct the class to look at the next study guide section entitled "The Blessings of Glad-Hearted People." Ask for a volunteer to read both

paragraphs of that section aloud as all other class members read along silently. After the reading, direct class members to look again at the illustration of the house foundation from Step 2. Summarize by saying that Jesus Christ is the foundation on which the Church was built.

Encourage Application

8. Say: *Jesus Christ went to be with God and the Holy Spirit came to be with us more than 2,000 years ago. And the glad-hearted people of God's Church are still around, praising His name.* Encourage class members to make a list of reasons to praise His name this week and keep that list in a place where they can see it several times each day.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas
Connect with Life

◆ Explain that Paul's friend, Luke, wrote two books of the Bible. State that he first wrote the Gospel of Luke to tell about the life of Jesus. Go on to say that Luke then wrote the Book of Acts to tell the story of the early Church. Mention also that Luke was with the apostle Paul during much of Paul's travels. Stress that he saw for himself how God's Church came to be these glad-hearted people we are talking about today.

Guide the Study

◆ In connection with Step 5, after reviewing the events of Acts 1:1-11, raise the question: *How many followers do you think there were at that time?* Write on the board these numbers: *11, 12, 120, 1,000 or more.* Encourage volunteers to guess and then question them as to why they chose that number. After several guesses, provide the correct number of "about 120" (see Acts 1:15).

Encourage Application

◆ Prepare a poster before class with the Memory Verse printed on it. Display the poster on a focal wall. Lead the class in reading the verse all together once or twice. Then remove the poster and challenge individual class members to say the verse from memory. Say: *As Christians, we will all be glad-hearted and full of joy when we see the face of the Lord.*

◆ Call attention to the Memory Verse. Observe that God has shown us how to live and how to have life that lasts forever. Say: *He wants us to be His glad-hearted people.* To close, lead the class in reciting the verse together as a prayer.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 5: Always Encouraging

Lesson Focus

Barnabas is an example of the kind of generous life that helps and encourages other followers of Jesus.

Focal Text

Acts 4:36-37; 11:19-26; 15:36-40

Memory Verse

“When he got there and saw how good God had been to them, he was full of joy. He told them to be true and faithful to the Lord. Barnabas was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and faith. And many people became followers of the Lord.” (Acts 11:23-24)

Connect with Life

1. As the class members arrive, greet each person or group and begin to aggressively encourage them in their use of the English language. Express that you are pleased with their progress and how well they are doing with their pronunciation, learning new words and so on. Impress upon them that they need to keep learning more words and speaking in English at home when they can. Try to be sincere and truthful but “always encouraging” them in their study.

2. Question the class as to what you were doing as they arrived. Use any comments they make to bring out that you were simply *encouraging* them to do well in their study of English—and having a little fun at the same time. Stress that while helping them with their language study, you want to do what today’s lesson title suggests. Tell them that you want to encourage them not only in their language skills, but in living the Christian way of life.

Guide the Study

3. Recall that in last week’s lesson we learned how God’s Church got started. Remind the class of how a large number of Jews were together in Jerusalem and that the Holy Spirit came upon the followers (apostles) so that they could speak in all the languages of those Jews from other countries. Recall also how 3,000 people were added to the Church that day and how they shared with and were generous with one another. State that the lesson today picks up in the very next Bible verse after

that, Acts 4:36-37. Allow a class member to read those two verses from the Bible.

4. Question the class as to what they learned from the reading of Acts 4:36-37. Display an informational chart like the one below and help them complete the left column.

Guide the Study handout

What’s in a Name?	
Barnabas’ real name	<i>Joseph</i>
What the missionaries called him	<i>Barnabas</i>
The meaning of Barnabas’ name	<i>Son of Comfort</i>
One way he lived up to his name	<i>Sold land and gave money to help others</i>

Explain that *Son of Comfort* means that Barnabas put people at ease and made them feel comfortable and happy with life. Explain to the class members how Barnabas sold some land and gave the money to the missionaries to help other members of the Church. Request a class member to read the first two paragraphs only of “Encourage by Doing” in the study guide.

5. As background information, mention that Stephen was one of seven men chosen to be special helpers to the twelve followers (apostles). Explain that because of Stephen’s strong preaching and teaching, he was stoned to death by the Jews in Jerusalem. With that background explanation provided, ask a class member to read Acts 11:19-21. Be prepared to help pronounce the place names as needed. Review the first paragraph of the study guide section entitled “Encourage Wherever You Are” and add other comments on verses 19-21 as needed.

6. Call on another class member to read Acts 11:22-24. After the reading, say: *Good news travels fast. The good news of Greeks trusting in Jesus soon reached Jerusalem.* Go on to say that the Church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to see what was really happening in Antioch. Call attention to the statement in verse 23 which says that “he told them to be true and faithful to the Lord.” Say: *That’s our Barnabas! Always encouraging.* Relate this to the lesson title.

7. Write on the board these words: *A friendly disagreement.* Ask the class if it is possible to have a disagreement without either party becoming upset or angry. Acknowledge any responses and then invite the class to look under the study guide section entitled “His Will Be Done.”

First, request a volunteer to read just the first paragraph of that section. Next, instruct the class to follow along as you read Acts 15:36-38. And then, point out that the second and third paragraphs of this section provide some background for the argument. If time permits, let someone read those two paragraphs.

Ask: *What was the result of the argument between Paul and Barnabas?* Point out that there is no evidence that the two were ever angry with one another. To reveal how the argument ended, read Acts 15:39-40. Then read the last paragraph of the study guide.

Encourage Application

8. Instruct the class to look back to the section in the study guide entitled “Encourage Wherever You Are.” Call attention to the last paragraph of that section. Read the entire paragraph aloud, then conclude, saying: *That is what God wants us to do. He wants us to be “always encouraging” others as we live the Christian life.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Guide the Study

◆ Ask someone to read the story of the lesson-writer’s friend who, though in a wheelchair for many years, is still an encourager to others. This story can be found in the study guide. After the reading, comment that this woman is the one that needs encouragement; yet, she is the one who encourages those around her. Suggest to the class that each one of them can have a willing heart to comfort others and share God with those around them who need an encourager (which would include just about all of us at times).

◆ After the reading of Acts 11:19-21 in Step 5 of the teaching procedures, display a map showing the relative

locations of Phoenicia, Cyprus, and especially Antioch. If a wall map is not available, perhaps you could pass around a Bible atlas or a map at the back of your Bible. A map of Paul’s or the apostle’s travels will likely show these areas. Phoenicia is the narrow strip along the eastern Mediterranean Sea (modern Lebanon); Cyprus is an island in the northeastern Mediterranean; and Antioch is a city in Syria about 300 miles north of Jerusalem. Point out that it was in Antioch that the people who put their trust in Jesus were first called Christians. A suitable map is included below:



http://www.lakesideministries.com/images/ActsMap_Barnabas_and_Saul_to_Antioch.jpg

Encourage Application

◆ Things to Think About often includes questions of a personal nature. These questions are more for class members to read and think about in private. There are two questions in today’s lesson of this nature, however, that you may want to call to the attention of the class. These are the two questions concerning those who may be returning to their homeland sometime soon. Do not ask for answers to the questions, but simply call them to the attention of the class and encourage them to think seriously about the questions at home.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 6: Giving Themselves First

Lesson Focus

The collection for the saints models generosity in the giving of material possessions in response to the example of Christ and the needs of others.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:6-15

Memory Verse

“You are proving by this act of love what you are. They will give thanks to God for your gift to them and to others. This proves you obey the Good News of Christ.” (Acts 11:23-24)

Connect with Life

1. Challenge the class to think of someone in need. Suggest that this could be a family member, a friend, a neighbor, or someone far away. Add that it can be one person, a family, or a group of people. Say that the person or persons you are thinking about may be hungry, without jobs, their homes may have been destroyed by a storm, or they may live where there is fighting and war. Refer to the lesson title and ask: *How can we help?*

2. Either let someone read the lesson introduction or present the main ideas of that introduction in your own words. Provide also an explanation of the situation and what Paul was trying to do. State that his first concern was to help the Christians in Jerusalem. Add that he also wanted the gift of money by the people who were not Jews (Gentiles) to help the Jewish Christians accept the people who were not Jews (Gentiles) into the Church.

Guide the Study

3. Compare the situation in Corinth with the situation in Jerusalem. Explain that the people of Corinth had a home and plenty of food, clothing, and other things. State that they lived a good life. Use the first paragraph from “How Can We Help?” in the study guide to describe the very different situation of the Christians in Jerusalem. Emphasize that the famine and the way they were persecuted by the Jewish leaders made life very hard for Christians in the Jerusalem church, most of whom were Jews. Note that the second paragraph in this

section tells how Paul had encouraged the churches of Galatia and Macedonia to take up a collection for the same purpose.

4. With that information provided, request a class member to read 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 to the class. Observe how Paul very carefully worded his letter (verses 2-4) so that he himself did not handle the money. Explain that some false teachers had said Paul took this money and used it for himself. Remind the class of how Paul worked as a tentmaker to support himself on his mission trips and would not accept payment for his service to the churches. Emphasize that the four Corinthian men were to carry and deliver the money so that Paul would not be responsible for it. Use the last paragraphs of “How Can We Help?” to explain the tithe as a small amount of what we earn that God tells us to surrender, or give back to His work.

5. Ask: *When we tithe or give money to the church, how should we do it?* Call attention to the next study guide section entitled “Each One Give Willingly and Completely.”

Say: *We should also give in private.* Recall the word from last week’s Word List. First, read to the class from 2 Corinthians 8:1-15. Then select two members of the class to read this section of the study guide aloud. After the reading, comment only to say that Paul made it clear to the Corinthians that the Christians in Macedonia, who were not as well off as the Christians of Corinth, had set a good example for the Corinthians to follow.

6. Ask for a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 9:6. Say: *Let’s think about that. The harvest depends on how much you plant. God loves a generous giver.* Call for the class to follow along as you read 2 Corinthians 9:7-11. Note that Paul was speaking to the Corinthians about sending money to the needy Christians in Jerusalem. Emphasize that everything he said, though, applies to Christians of all times.

7. To continue the analysis of 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, refer to the study guide section entitled “Don’t Lack Faith in Giving Generously.” Enlist a class member to read the first three paragraphs of that section. Encourage one or two volunteers to tell of a time, as the lesson writer suggests, that God has been generous to them. Or tell of

an experience of your own in which God provided generously. If time allows, read the rest of the study guide, or encourage the class members to read the section at home.

8. Ask a class member to read 2 Corinthians 9:12-15 to the class. Note that this was a situation in which everybody would win. Say that the Corinthian churches had the good feelings of knowing that they had helped other Christians in need, the Christians in Jerusalem had received help they did not expect, and God was honored through it all. Repeat 2 Corinthians 9:15: *Thank God for His great Gift.* The greatest gift God has given us was the death of Christ on the cross for us.

Encourage Application

9. Remark that the Christians in the churches of Macedonia, Galatia, and, yes, even Corinth, gave money to help the needy Christians in Jerusalem. Use a map like the one below to help students locate the churches involved.

<http://www.biblestudy.org/maps/location-of-seven-churches-of-book-of-revelation.jpg>



Ask: *Where is our Jerusalem?* Pause for any response and then conclude that the whole world is our Jerusalem. Go back and reread 2 Corinthians 8:7 to conclude the lesson.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Begin by commenting that one of the words in the Word List today is *situation*. Say: *Here is the situation*

right now. To illustrate the meaning of this word, continue by saying the following: *We are sitting here in the classroom. We are getting ready to begin our Bible study for today. I am teaching the class. You are all trying to learn English. You are also learning about God and the Bible. That is the situation right now. The situation will change when we finish the Bible study and go home. The situation changes whenever we do something different.*

Guide the Study

◆ Before the class, prepare and print for each class member a copy of the short summary below of today’s lesson. Explain that the summary has blank spaces in which they are to write in the appropriate word from today’s Word List. You may want to allow class members to work together in pairs or in small groups.

The Jerusalem Christians

The _____ for Christians in Jerusalem was not good. There was a great _____ in the land and the Christians were hungry. Christians were also being _____ because of their religious beliefs. Paul wanted to help the Jewish Christians, but he did not want to be responsible for carrying the money himself. Paul wanted each Christian family in Corinth to _____ a tenth of their income, or _____, for the four men from Corinth to take to Jerusalem to help the hungry Jewish Christians.

(The answers, in order, are **situation, famine, persecuted, responsible, surrender, and tithe.**)

Encourage Application

◆ Go back to 2 Corinthians 9:7-8 and read those verses aloud, stressing each significant detail. You may want to modify verse 7a to say that “each *person* should give as he or she has decided in his or her heart.” Indicate that these verses give some leeway so that new Christians may choose not to start out with a tithe. Make it clear, though, that every Christian should work toward giving a tithe to God’s work. Emphasize that God loves anyone who gives because he wants to give.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 7: More Blessed to Give

Lesson Focus

Paul's life and ministry model the importance of generosity in the Christian life.

Focal Text

Acts 20:17-35

Memory Verse

"In every way I showed you that by working hard like this we can help those who are weak. We must remember what the Lord Jesus said, 'We are more happy when we give than when we receive.'" (Acts 20:35)

Connect with Life

1. Welcome the class and then advise them that we will be looking today at why it is "more blessed to give" than it is to receive. Explain that this is the lesson title. Suggest that we all like to receive money or gifts or favors from family and friends and that we are almost always very pleased after receiving these. Then ask: *But don't you feel good inside when you give a gift to someone else and you can tell that they really like it? Or, more importantly, when you give them something you know they really need?* Explain that it is that good feeling inside when you give generously that we will be talking about today.

2. Call on one of your best readers to read the study guide introduction to the class, or read it to them yourself. Follow up with comments about missionaries today taking Christianity to all parts of the world. State that these missionaries have a passion for telling others about God's love. Point out that many of these serve in very poor countries where life is hard or where they are not wanted. Tell about a missionary you know of who has had a hard life or lived where there is danger because of his or her mission work. Or relate this true story:

Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, was a day that would live in infamy. Meanwhile, as war raged on the other side of the ocean, the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society had twenty-one missionaries in the Philippines. By April 1942, ten of the twenty-one had been captured by the Japanese military. While the remaining eleven had opportunity to flee the country, they chose to stay. They fled to a retreat in the high

mountains of the central part of the Philippine Island of Panay. This hideaway became their home. They lived in grass huts with bamboo floors, survived on limited sustenance, and made every necessary adjustment to a primitive lifestyle. This retreat also became a center of Christian ministry to the locals around them. In a wooded glen these missionaries built a place of worship for themselves and all who joined them in praise and adoration of God. They named this place "Hopevale." The danger of their situation was known to the missionaries. Even so, the very name they gave to their community, "Hopevale," revealed their faith and expectation of ultimately achieving a larger freedom. That expectation was not realized in terms of rescue or escape. In December 1943, they were discovered by Japanese military forces. While the missionaries expected to be taken as prisoners, they were told by their captors they would be put to death. Twenty-four hours later, these eleven missionaries and one child were executed. They were martyrs who stayed faithful to God's call on their lives to the very end.

(Source: <http://storage.cloversites.com/hopevalechurch/documents/HC3%20Brochure.pdf>)

Guide the Study

3. Recall last week's lesson in which Paul encouraged the Corinthian Christians to take up a collection of money for the Christians in Jerusalem. Report that in today's text, Paul was on his way to Jerusalem to see that the money was delivered and to visit his Christian friends there. Explain that Paul was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem but wanted to see the leaders of the church at Ephesus while he was so near. Recall that Paul had started that church sometime earlier. Continue to say that he was in a place called Miletus, a seaport about 36 miles south of Ephesus. To pick up the story from that point, ask a class member to read Acts 20:17-21.

4. Use the study guide section entitled "Give Humbly With Passion and Integrity" to provide a brief biography of Paul's life. Emphasize that he went from persecuting Christians to becoming a leader of the Christian movement, a complete turn-around of what he was doing. A good way to illustrate this complete reversal of one's position is with a demonstration of the military "About Face" command. Perform this movement by

yourself or get someone familiar with the movement to demonstrate. Stress that whatever Paul did, he did with a passion.

5. Enlist someone to speak as Paul and do a dramatic reading of verses 22-27. This person should begin by saying: *I am Paul, the apostle chosen by Jesus Christ Himself...* and then read the Scripture passage as if he were Paul speaking the words. After the reading, request a class member to read the first four paragraphs from “Giving Yourself to Others” in the study guide.

6. Review the scene for class members by reading the following summary: *Paul had left Corinth and sailed by boat to a seaport called Miletus. He was on his way to Jerusalem. Miletus was near Ephesus where Paul had started a church earlier, so Paul sent word for the church leaders at Ephesus to come to Miletus. Paul was saying his final good-bye to the church leaders of Ephesus, and he was encouraging them and warning them as to what to expect in the future.*

7. Call on a class member to read Acts 20:28-31. After the reading, ask someone else to read the first paragraph from “Giving Your All” in the study guide. Repeat the last sentence and remark that Paul’s purpose in life was to tell as many people as he could about God’s love and generosity.

8. Identify the last set of verses in the Bible Text as Paul’s last words to the church leaders from Ephesus and then ask someone to read verses 32-35. After the reading, use the next two paragraphs of the study guide to describe Paul’s feelings about this occasion. Explain that he felt sure this would be his last time to see and encourage these leaders in the Ephesus church. Note that Paul had given his all, not accepting money or favors from the churches, but working as a tentmaker to pay his own way, and that Paul was happy and blessed because of what he had done.

Encourage Application

9. Examine the remainder of the study guide. Either read or relate the content of these closing remarks in your own words, stressing the theme of this lesson: *It is more blessed to give than receive.*

10. Arrange ahead of time for a class member to share a short testimony. Conclude this week’s lesson by having her share about a time when she experienced that giving is better than receiving.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Bring to class a small gift of homemade cookies, a small knick-knack, or any kind of inexpensive gift that will likely be well-received by each class member. As you begin to pass out the gifts, explain that this is your gift to them for being faithful in attending class every week. Suggest that you hope everyone enjoys your gift as much as you have enjoyed giving it to them because, as we will learn in the lesson today, we are more happy when we give than when we receive.

Guide the Study

♦ Provide a map like the one below of Paul’s travels as a missionary to show where he was at the time the events of this lesson took place.



http://www.bibletrack.org/notes/image/Paul_Third.jpg

On the map, identify Corinth. Recall last week’s lesson as to how Paul encouraged the church members at Corinth in the collection of money to be sent to the needy Christians in Jerusalem. Then point out how far Paul had traveled to Miletus, where the events of today’s lesson took place. Also identify Ephesus, where the church leaders in today’s lesson came from for their visit with Paul. Finally, locate Jerusalem, where Paul was headed.

Encourage Application

♦ Encourage the class to suggest ways Christians can help one another that require little or no money. Brainstorm a list on the board. Ask the class members to select one idea from the list that they could accomplish as a class. Identify one or two leaders in the class who would agree to help organize this effort.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 8: Greedy Living

Lesson Focus

If we do not help others in need while selfishly gathering earthly things for ourselves, we will someday regret it.

Focal Text

Luke 12:13-21; 16:19-31; James 5:1-6

Memory Verse

“Then Jesus said to them all, ‘Watch Yourselves! Keep from wanting all kinds of things you should not have. A man’s life is not made up of things, even if he has many riches.’” (Luke 12:15)

Connect with Life

1. Call the class’ attention to the introduction at the beginning of the study guide. Pause while they find it and then read just the first sentence and the question that follows it. Ask: *What do you think?* Listen to any responses and then summarize to say that the word *root*, as it is used here, means the source or cause of something. Say: *What the saying suggests is that money is the source or cause of all evil.*

Read the remainder of the introduction, beginning with “Don’t we need money...” Explain that it is not money itself but how the money is gotten and how it is used that results in the evil.

Guide the Study

2. Note the lesson title: “Greedy Living.” Question the class as to what it means to be greedy. Use any responses to conclude that to be greedy is to keep on wanting more money, more honor, and more things. To be greedy is to keep trying to get more than what you have, more than what you deserve, or more than what you need. Invite the class to listen to one of the stories Luke told about being greedy. Then allow someone to read Luke 12:13-15. Suggest that Jesus did not do as requested because He could see that the man was being greedy. Explain that what He did do was to warn the people. Jesus said, “Watch yourselves!” He warned against being greedy.

3. Comment that the next part of the Bible Text is a picture-story (parable) used by Jesus to teach about the

sin of being greedy. Advise the class that as you read the picture-story, they should listen for all the times the man refers to himself. Begin reading Luke 12:16-21, saying: *Then He (Jesus) told them...* This will help class members to identify Jesus as the speaker. As you read, stress with your voice all of the references of the man to himself as *I, me, my*, and even (talking to himself) *soul, you, and your*.

4. Refer back to the man in the picture-story told by Jesus. Point out that Jesus did not say it was wrong for the man to be wealthy. Stress that He was saying it was wrong for the man to be greedy and keep it all for himself. Say: *It was his attitude that was the problem.*

Recall that the lessons we have studied for the last few weeks have all been about how God has been generous with us. Observe that, in return, God expects us to be generous with other people and with His Church. Make it clear that we cannot be generous and helpful with others if we are greedy and selfish like the man in the picture-story. Point out the study guide section entitled “The Heart of the Matter: Greed.” Explain that this section talks about the proper attitude a Christian should have about the use of money. Urge each class member to read it at home.

5. Mention the fact that Jesus often used picture-stories to make a point. Observe that He does so once again in the next part of today’s lesson. Instruct the class to find the study guide section entitled “The Right Thing to Do.” Request a class member to read just the first paragraph of that section. Then read Luke 16:19-31 yourself. Follow that by selecting four readers from the class to each read one paragraph, beginning with the second paragraph of the study guide section entitled “The Right Thing to Do”.

6. Request a class member to read James 5:1-6 from the Bible. Comment that James came down very hard on those rich men who treated their workers so badly. Describe how these uncaring men would pay very low wages to begin with and then cheat the workers out of some of those wages. Add that they even killed some of them so that they could keep their wages to add to their own wealth. Note that James did not even try to get them to turn away from their wicked ways. Express that there was no hope for them to have life that lasts forever.

Mention also that, according to James in verse 6, at least some of these workers killed by the rich men were “right with God” and would therefore have life that lasts forever. Either read or comment using the thoughts under the section entitled “Uncaring Living” in the study guide.

Encourage Application

7. Write on the board:

THE EQUATION OF LIFE

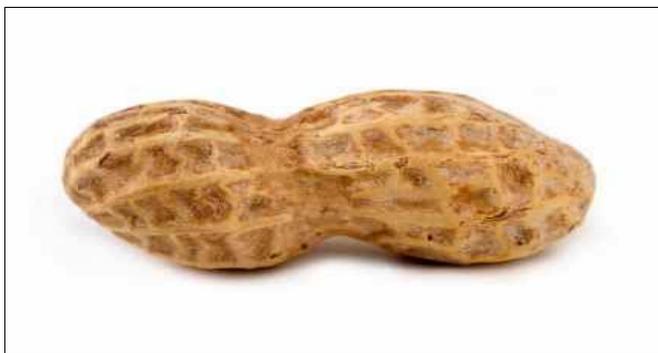
*Greedy + Uncaring =
Death*

*Generous + Loving Trust in Jesus =
Life that Lasts Forever*

Ask class members to discuss their thoughts about what you’ve written. Affirm appropriate responses. Say: *I’ve made my choice. Have you?*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life & Encourage Application

♦ If you can find them, bring a bag of unshelled peanuts to class. Open the bag and give one or more peanuts to each class member. Hold one up for the class to see, and identify it as a peanut. Mention that there are usually two peanuts inside the shell, one at each end. If unshelled peanuts are not available, simply draw the shape of a peanut shell on the board or locate an image of a peanut like the one below from the Internet.



<http://www.copykat.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/peanut.jpg>

With that introduction, observe that we have a phrase in the English language that we use when we want to say something in just a few words. Explain that we use

this phrase: *That’s it in a nutshell*. Tell class members that this expression roughly means: *That’s it in just a few words*.

At this point, ask someone to read the Memory Verse aloud to the class. Say: *That’s the lesson in a nutshell, but let’s look at it in detail*. Follow the lesson plan in this teaching guide and then, as the final step, read the Memory Verse again, then say: *Well, that’s the lesson in a nutshell!*

Guide the Study

♦ Mention that during class time you do not always have time to read or talk about everything in the study guide. Encourage class members to read the entire lesson aloud at home, answer the questions under Things to Think About, learn the words in the Word List and try to learn the Memory Verse. Express how this will help them to learn to speak English better as they learn about God’s Word. Suggest that they bring any questions to class the following week and that you will try to answer their questions at that time.

Encourage Application

♦ Ask: *How do you feel about money?* Without referring to Things to Think About in the study guide, simply read the questions presented there under Question 4 one by one, pausing only briefly after each question. After reading all of the questions, advise the class to find them all under Question 4 of Things to Think About in the study guide. Challenge the class to look up at home the Bible verses listed after each question to see what the Bible has to say about money.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 9: Choosing Things Over Jesus

Lesson Focus

Putting possessions ahead of following Jesus leads to a tragic result.

Focal Text

Mark 10:17-31

Memory Verse

“They were very surprised and wondered, saying to themselves, “Then who can be saved from the punishment of sin? Jesus looked at them and said, ‘This cannot be done by men but God can do anything.’”
(Mark 10:26-27)

Connect with Life

1. Say: *Look at the title of the lesson today, “Choosing Things Over Jesus.”* Place special emphasis on the word *things*. Lead the class to think about all the things in their lives. Ask them to think about all the things we own, including money, houses, cars, furniture, clothing, jewelry, and other things of value that we own or keep around us. Make a list on the board like the one below:

Things in Our Lives Today
• <i>money</i>
• <i>houses</i>
• <i>cars</i>
• <i>furniture</i>
• <i>clothing</i>
• <i>jewelry</i>
•
•
•
•
•

Mention that some of us have a lot of things and some own very little in the way of worldly goods. Remind the class about last week’s lesson entitled “Greedy Living.” Recall how we learned that our attitude towards money and things determines whether we are greedy and uncaring or generous in sharing our good fortune with others who have little or nothing.

2. Observe that the media—newspapers, magazines,

radio, and television—all try to sell us things today. Point out that life was very different in Bible times. Involve the class in naming some of the things we have now that the early Christians did not have. For example, there was no media, no big business, no utility companies to provide water, gas, and electricity, no computers, no automobiles, no supermarkets, etc.

Say: *Life was very simple then.* Suggest that there were still rich men, though, who owned much land, silver or gold, sheep or goats, large orchards or vineyards, and the like. Our lesson today is about a rich man who came to Jesus with a question.

Guide the Study

3. Mention that today we will read another one of Jesus’ picture-stories, or parables. Identify this one as “The Parable of the Rich Young Ruler.” First, tell how Jesus had been in a house and had been blessing the little children who came to Him. Then explain that He was leaving the house to go somewhere else. Lastly, instruct the class to listen and follow along as you read Mark 10:17-22.

4. Say: *This young man seems to have had everything he needed or wanted in this life. He was young. He was rich. He had a good life. He was a good Jew who followed all of the Jewish Law. He was a leader in the synagogue. What more could a young man ask for in that place at that time?*

Go on to say that what he wanted was for Jesus to tell him how to keep all his things and have life that lasted forever, too. Observe that Jesus’ answer was simple; he advised the young man to get rid of all his things and give to the poor, then come and be His follower. Lament that this was simply too much for the young man, so he turned and walked away from the chance to have life that lasts forever.

5. Refer to the study guide section entitled “Trusting the Comfort of Possessions.” Use the comments therein to talk about modern-day storms, accidents, or other disasters and how a family can lose some or all of their possessions suddenly. Emphasize that we cannot always depend on having the things we now own but our trust in Jesus will always assure us of having life that lasts *forever* (for emphasis, drag out the word *forever* as you

pronounce it).

6. Call on a class member by name to read Mark 10:23-27. After the reading, repeat verse 23b which says: *How hard it is for rich people to get into the holy nation of God.* Question the class as to whether they believe that or not and why. Suggest that one reason to believe it is that Jesus said it was true. State that you will talk about other reasons but that you first need to look at a couple of words in the Word List. Briefly review the meanings of *influence* and *barrier*. Then ask a volunteer to read the comments from the study guide section entitled “Given and Not Earned.”

7. Request yet another class member to read Mark 10:18-31. Following the reading, say: *Peter! Dear old Peter. Always questioning what Jesus said.* Refer to the study guide section entitled “Earthly Desires or Heavenly Treasures.” Use the comments there to explain how Christians may make sacrifices to follow Jesus, as Jesus’ followers did, but the sacrifices will be few and small compared to the rewards of life that lasts forever with Jesus.

Encourage Application

7. Ask: *What barriers are there that keep you from giving your life to Jesus completely?* Advise class members to think about that question but to answer the question to themselves only. You may have introduced the expression *in a nutshell* last week from the Supplemental Teaching Ideas. If not, you may want to explain it at this point. Then suggest that rather than this rich man possessing things, the things possessed him. Then say: *And that is the lesson in a nutshell.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

♦ The three-and-four-syllable words in today’s Word List are likely to be quite difficult for some of your class members. Take the time to review their pronunciation and meanings. Talk about each word individually in simple terms. Speak of a *barrier* as being a road block, something that keeps you from moving ahead. Describe *contentment* as being happy with things as they are. Say that *financial* means anything having to do with money. Suggest that *influence* means the power to change someone else’s mind. Finally, say that if you know something will happen before it happens, then it is *predictable*.

Guide the Study

♦ You may want to bring out that this same parable is told in Matthew 19:16-30 and Luke 18:18-30. Explain that, in these versions of the parable, we learn that the man who came to Jesus was not only rich, but was “young” and “a ruler” as well. State that “young” meant that he was in his middle 20’s and that “ruler” meant he was a leader in the local synagogue where the Jewish people gathered for worship. Stress that he was obviously someone of importance and a strict follower of the Jewish Law.

Encourage Application

♦ Mention that compared to people in the rest of the world, most Americans would be considered rich. *If It Were My Home* is an interesting website that compares living conditions around the world with those in the United States. The information on the following chart was taken from that website. Share this information with the class.

How much money would you earn if you lived in another country?

98.06% less money	Ethiopia
78.02% less money	Brazil
93.32% less money	Mexico
70.91% less money	India
67.46% less money	Russia

<http://www.ifitweremyhome.com/compare/US/ET>

Suggest that most of us are not having to “build bigger barns” in which to store our riches, but we may have more than enough money in the bank and enough things to place us on a level with the rich young ruler. If class members have experience living in less affluent cultures, allow volunteers who are willing to share about those experiences. Ask: *How does that change your thinking about the lesson today?*

Teaching Guide

Lesson 10: Failing to Be Generous

Lesson Focus

Failing to extend generous care to even the most lowly and needy of people tells us that we do not really trust in Jesus.

Focal Text

Matthew 25:31-46

Memory Verse

“Then the King will say, ‘For sure, I tell you, because you did it to one of the least of My brothers, you have done it to Me.’” (Matthew 25:40)

Connect with Life

1. Prior to the session, arrange the chairs into two sections divided by an aisle down the middle. As class members arrive, allow them to choose their seats in either section but try to keep about the same number of occupants on both sides. To begin the session, hold up your left arm and say: *This is my left arm*. Then hold up your right arm and say: *This is my right arm*. Identify those seated on your left as goats and those seated on your right as sheep. Question those on the left as to what they know about goats. Then shift to the right side of the class and question them, in the same manner, about sheep. Use the board to create a comparison chart like the one below:

Goats	Sheep
• <i>four-legged animals</i>	• <i>four-legged animals</i>
• <i>used for milk, meat, hair, skin</i>	• <i>mostly white in color</i>
• <i>fight by butting heads and horns</i>	• <i>short, fluffy hair (wool)</i>
•	• <i>no horns</i>
•	• <i>graze and eat grass</i>
•	• <i>used for meat, skins, wool</i>
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

Remind those on the left side of the classroom that they are the goats. Ask them if they are happy about being goats. Then ask if they would rather be sheep and why. Likewise, question those on the right side of the classroom as to how they feel about being the sheep and if they would prefer to be goats. You may want to entice the sheep on the right of the room with a sweet treat of some kind to get them to move over with the goats, or the goats who want to move to stay on the left side. Explain that you have separated the class for a reason, as they will learn when we read today’s lesson.

Guide the Study

3. Instruct the class to look at today’s Bible Text and listen as you read Matthew 25:31-33. After the reading, say: *That’s the way it will be when Jesus comes back in all His glory*.

Explain that, as we have done, Jesus will divide the sheep and the goats. Note that He, too, will put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left. Comment that we haven’t yet learned why Jesus divided them this way, but the next verse will tell us. Read verse 34 to the class and then carefully explain that dividing the class with “goats” on the left and “sheep” on the right was just a fun way to get into the lesson. Explain that where you are sitting in the classroom does not mean that you do, or do not, trust in Jesus. Emphasize that it is how you feel in your heart and mind and soul that makes you a Christian.

4. Call attention to the study guide section entitled “Nations Gathered Before Him.” Either read this section or draw comments from it, defining the four words from the Word List first, or as you come to them during your commentary.

5. Recall how in verses 33 and 34, Jesus put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left, and then He invited the sheep on His right into His kingdom. Call on someone to read verses 35-36 to learn what happened next. After the reading, observe that Jesus talked as if He were the One being helped. Say: *That wasn’t exactly what the followers expected*. Picture them as confused by Jesus’ words, looking at one another in wonder. They could not recall a time when they had helped Jesus personally.

6. Remark that Jesus saw the wonder in their faces and went on to explain. Advise the class to follow in the study guide as you read verses 37-40. Summarize the lesson writer's comments under "In Faith We Serve" to explain that Jesus is talking about little things we do out of kindness and mercy from day to day that help people who are less fortunate than most of us are. Suggest that when we are kind, helpful, and generous with others, we show them that we have God's kind of love for them.

7. Say: *Okay. That takes care of the sheep, those people on God's right side. Now let's see what Jesus has to say about the goats. The goats are those on His left side. They are the people who are not generous. They are not kind and caring. And they do not help those who are in need.* Then read verses 41-46 from the Bible Text. Finally, let three different people each read one paragraph from the study guide section entitled "Failing to Be Concerned."

Encourage Application

8. Go back and reread Matthew 25:31-33 from the Bible Text. Ask: *When Jesus comes again in all His glory, where will you be? On His left with the goats? Or on His right with the sheep? Say: Be kind. Be helpful. Be generous.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Greet the class and then advise them that we are still talking in this lesson about generosity, or being generous in doing God's work. Say: *Or, in the case of today's lesson, we will be talking about what happens when we are not generous.* Refer to the lesson title, "Failing to Be Generous." Then enlist a class member to read aloud the study guide introduction.

Guide the Study

♦ Observe that the gathering referred to in verses 32-33 will include people of "all the nations," including both Jews and people who are not Jews (Gentiles). Comment that this group will also include both those who trust in Jesus and those who do not. Suggest that the use of sheep and goats in the story may be because the sheep in Palestine were usually white and goats were often black. Add that the people of Palestine also thought that goats destroyed the grass and things that grow.

Encourage Application

♦ Direct the class to look again at verses 35-36 of the

Bible Text. Comment that these verses name some of the most common ways we can help people in need. State that there are other ways of helping people not named here. Suggest that each class member think back over his or her lifetime. Ask: *Can you think of any times when you really helped someone in need?*

Caution class member to only think of these things to themselves and to not reveal them to the class. Mention that it is not necessarily how often they have helped people in need, but what their attitude is about helping others. Ask: *Are you willing to help when you have an opportunity to help someone truly in need.*

Indicate that you can help people by being generous and giving money to organizations that help people in need. Suggest strongly, however, that it is better to be involved personally in helping. Encourage class members to watch for ways they can help others.

Refer to the Memory Verse, read it aloud, and comment as to how when we help people in need, we are helping Jesus in His work. Then lead the class in reading the Memory Verse together in unison.

♦ Arrange ahead of time for a guest speaker to come and share with the class about an opportunity to serve others through a ministry in your church or in your community. You may have several speakers who can share about several different ministries. If it is not possible to arrange for guest speakers, consider having a ministry fair—of sorts—at the end of class and make information about various ministries in your church or community available for your students to review.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 11: Be Generous in Your Relationships

Lesson Focus

Christians are to be generous with kindness and love in all the relationships of their lives.

Focal Text

Colossians 3:12-14; Hebrews 13:1-8, 14-16

Memory Verse

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

Connect with Life

1. Recall that in an earlier lesson, we talked about saying something “in a nutshell.” Question the class to see if anyone remembers or knows what that means. Refresh their memories as needed to say that the part of a nut you can eat is small and is packed inside a hard shell. Thus, to say something in just a few words is “to put it in a nutshell.”

Comment to say that we all have relationships with other people just about every day. Ask: *What should those relationships be like? As Christians, how should we treat other people?* Encourage the class members to respond and then, to “put it in a nutshell,” quote the Lesson Focus to them: *Christians are to be generous with kindness and love in all the relationships of their lives.*

2. Let a class member read the study guide introduction to the class. Explain the expression “clothe ourselves with love.” Say: *Just as we wear clothes to protect us from the weather, we need to wrap ourselves in God’s love to protect us from the coldness of the sinful world.* (For a more advanced class, you may want to mention that clothe is a verb—an action word—while clothes is a noun—a person, place, or thing.)

Guide the Study

3. Comment that in the first part of our Bible Text today, Paul is writing to the Colossian church. Say: *These were Christians to whom he was writing. Listen to what Paul had to say.* Read Colossians 3:12-14, verse by verse, with these comments after each verse:

After verse 12, say: *As members of God’s Church,*

we should show loving-pity to others. Most Bibles use the word compassion here rather than loving-pity. Compassion means having love, kindness, and pity for others.

After verse 13, say: *We should understand and forgive others in the same way that God understands and forgives us.*

After verse 14, say: *Compassion, kindness, forgiveness, and love all work together to make a happy life.*

4. Direct attention to the study guide section entitled “Clothe Yourself With Love.” Let someone read just the first paragraph of that section. Comment that the lesson writer says we have good days and we have bad days. Ask: *Is that true or not?* Express agreement that we sometimes just have a bad day when everything goes wrong.

5. Explain first that we’ve already talked about compassion and the word *compassionate* just means that a person has or feels compassion. Then call attention to the two other words in bold print, *qualities* and *negative*. State that qualities are the things about a person that make him or her who or what they are. Suggest that a person can have good or bad qualities. For example, a person could be smart, polite, or understanding. These are good, or positive, qualities. A person might be lazy, rude, or a trouble maker. These are bad, or negative, qualities. Suggest that most of us have some good qualities and perhaps a few negative qualities. Encourage the class to read the rest of this section of the study guide at home.

6. Mention the next study guide section entitled “The World Changes, Christ Does Not.” State that we will come back to talk about the title a little later. Suggest that we first look at first paragraph of this section. First, describe a merry-go-round. Perhaps you can remember and describe your first experiences on a merry-go-round—or have a child or grandchild come to the class to tell about her or his experience on one. Then let someone from the class read just the first paragraph under the above heading.

7. Recall the title of this section. Call on one or two class members by name and ask: *(Name), can you*

explain what that means?

Listen to their comments and then advise the class to follow along as you read Hebrews 13:1-8. After the reading, suggest that verse 1 sets the stage for all of the verses that follow in this reading. Call attention to verse 1 and comment by saying: *It is all about love.*

Use the rest of this study guide section to comment briefly regarding kindness to strangers and to those in prison, those who are suffering, respect for marriage, proper use of money, and showing respect to those who first spoke God's Word to you. Conclude by saying: *The world changes. Christ does not.*

8. Comment that the writer of Hebrews had been talking about the old way of worship through the sacrifice of animals. State that he now begins to talk about the new way of worship. Explain that Jesus died on the cross as the last sacrifice ever needed. With that background, ask someone to read Hebrews 13:14-16. Comment to say that what this means is that we who trust in Christ are looking for a new city, the city of God. Go on to explain that, instead of sacrificing an animal, we can best honor God by telling other people about Him and about the saving power of Jesus. Explain lastly that we please God when we do good things that help other people.

Encourage Application

9. Remark that if you have never learned a Memory Verse before in this class, the Memory Verse for today's lesson is an easy place to start. Challenge the class to take one quick look at it and then see if they can say it from memory. Offer several of them—perhaps everyone—an opportunity to do that. Remind them to be sure to learn where the verse can be found in the Bible as well, Hebrews 13:1-8.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Guide the Study

♦ Before Step 6, ask: *Does the world ever change or does it remain the same year after year after year?* Involve the class in a discussion of how the world has changed. Lead the class to discuss things like changes in the way people dress, how they travel and get around, what or how they eat, the comforts of their homes, or how they think.

Then say: *Here's another question. Does God ever change?* Involve the class in a lively discussion of how the world continually changes but God remains the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. You may want to point out that those last three words represent the past, present, and future.

Guide the Study

♦ As an example of how the world changes in Step 6 of these teaching procedures, suggest that one way the world has changed is in how we treat strangers. Explain that in Bible times, it was the custom to welcome strangers into your home. Observe that this was especially true of travelers. Describe how travelers often walked long distances along lonely, dusty roads. Note that there were no hotels or motels on those roads. When travelers came to a home along the way, the family living there would welcome them and treat them well. The travelers could report the latest news from the towns and villages along the way. And the family living there was happy to have someone to talk to. Compare this to how travelers today travel by car, train, bus, or airplane, stop at motels or hotels along the way and eat in restaurants. Add that people in homes are afraid to open their doors to strangers because there are so many bad people today. Express that most cities have ways to feed and provide a place to sleep for people who have no home of their own.

Encourage Application

♦ Remind the class that today's lesson title is "Be Generous in Your Relationships." Then ask someone to read again Hebrews 13:16. Suggest how that verse of the describes our lesson today "in a nutshell."

Teaching Guide

Lesson 12: Be Generous With Your Gifts

Lesson Focus

Christians are to use generously each gift God has given them so as to bring glory to God.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 12:4-31a; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11

Memory Verse

“There are different kinds of gifts. But it is the same Holy Spirit Who gives them. There are different kinds of work to be done for Him. But the work is for the same Lord.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-5)

Connect with Life

1. Point accusingly at first one person and then another. Try to keep a light-hearted demeanor. To each one, as you point, say something like this: *Jack, you’ve got one!* Or say something like: *Jill, you have one, too! Patty, you certainly have one!* After naming several individuals in this manner, spread your arms out to include the entire class and say: *You all have them.* After a long pause, ask: *You wonder what I’m talking about, don’t you?*

Suggest that they might learn what you are talking about if they look at the lesson title or the Memory Verse for this lesson. When someone comes up with the word *gifts*, affirm that answer. Explain that we are talking about a special kind of gift, though, and that these are gifts of the Holy Spirit, or spiritual gifts.

2. To begin the explanation of these gifts, call on a class member to read the introduction to this lesson at the beginning of the study guide.

Guide the Study

3. Suggest that we begin with the Memory Verse, which just happens to be the first two verses of the Bible Text. Request a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 12: 4-5 to the class. After the reading, comment that we will learn about some of the gifts of the Spirit later, but all of the gifts come from just one Lord. Recall how last week’s Memory Verse was very short and easy to learn but that this one will be more difficult. Encourage them to at least remember that there are many different gifts of the

Spirit, but they all come from one source, God’s Holy Spirit.

4. Comment that we will now learn what some of these gifts are. Assert that not all of the gifts are listed here, but that there are enough mentioned to help us understand the kind of gifts Paul is talking about. With that introduction, and with the class members following along, read 1 Corinthians 12:6-11. Put stress on verse 11 to emphasize that all spiritual gifts come from one source, God’s Holy Spirit.

5. Since several of the words in the Word List are first used in this study guide section entitled “Spiritual Gifts Generously and Freely Given,” spend some time at this point to review those words. Suggest that to *counsel* someone is to try and help them through a problem or difficult situation. Then suggest that spiritual gifts are given to us by God’s Holy Spirit and we should not take *credit*, or honor ourselves, for what God has done in our lives. Play with the word *outcome* and say that it means simply the way things come out in the end and how, in this case, the outcome depends on whether or not God is pleased with the way we use our gift. Lastly, identify *rivalries* as two or more groups of people working against one another, usually causing bad feelings between the groups.

6. Ask a class member to read from the study guide just the first paragraph from the study guide section entitled “The Same in Christ.” Remind the class that this is a story told by the writer of the study guide. Advise the class, with that story in mind, to listen as you read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. Read those verses, then pause and ask: *After all that, does your body feel all twisted up in a knot?*

Suggest that Paul told the Corinthians these things, with parts of the body talking to each other in such a strange way, for a reason. Advise the class to follow now as you continue reading verses 27-31a which talks about the body of Christ, the Church. After reading that passage, let a class member read the last two paragraphs from this study guide section

Encourage Application

7. Be aware that this was a lengthy lesson. With that in

mind—and if time permits—let a class member read the study guide section entitled “Glory to God.” Remind the class that, in the second paragraph of that section, it is the lesson writer who is telling the rest of her broken-leg story. If time is too short for reading those closing comments, encourage all class members to read that part of the study guide at home.

8. Conclude the session by reading 1 Peter 4:10-11 as a challenge to the class to “...use generously each gift God has given them so as to bring glory to God,” as the Lesson Focus states.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Write the word *gift* on the board. Question the class as to what they think of when they hear that word. Likely they will mention only the type of gift, or present, given to someone on their birthday, at Christmas, or for other such special occasions. Observe that this type of gift is usually bought and paid for by the person who gives the gift, but is free to the one who receives it. Say: *Actually, a gift is anything given to someone without any kind of payment in return.*

Advise the class that God has given every Christian at least one gift. State that these are called gifts of the Spirit, or spiritual gifts, and that we will learn more about these special gifts in our lesson today.

Guide the Study

♦ Comment that the different kinds of gifts that ought to be used to help everyone are sometimes the cause of trouble in the church. Observe that the Church has had this problem from the beginning. Note that the Corinthian church was especially bad about this and that is partly why Paul wrote this letter to them. Comment that the Corinthians seemed to think of gifts as things they owned or had earned.

Ask: *What is wrong with that kind of thinking?* Remind the class that a gift is something that is given freely—at no cost to the one who receives it. Affirm that gifts given to us by God’s Holy Spirit are free but that God expects us to use them to help the Church and other Christians as well.

Encourage Application

♦ Refer back to 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 where some of the spiritual gifts are listed. Emphasize that these are not the only gifts of the Spirit. Suggest that just listening to other people’s troubles and giving them comfort might be your

gift, or that being able to tell others about Jesus is a special gift not all Christians have. Throw out any other examples of gifts you can think of. Use examples such as helping people who are hungry, making people feel good about themselves, calling or sending cards to people who are sick, or any other gift that helps in God’s work. Encourage each person to just think about what he or she is good at, feels especially able to do, and feels good about being able to do. Say: *These are your spiritual gifts. Use them for God’s glory!*

♦ Remember that not every class member may be familiar with spiritual gifts. Give a brief overview of common spiritual gifts and their definition in a chart like the one below. Encourage interested class members to complete a spiritual gifts inventory. A useful spiritual gifts inventory can be found on the Internet at: http://hydeparkumc.org/fileadmin/pdf_files/SpiritualGiftsAssessment.pdf

Common Spiritual Gifts

- **administration:** organizing people and ministries effectively
- **apostleship:** adapting to a different culture to share the gospel or do ministry
- **discernment:** distinguishing spiritual truth from error
- **evangelism:** sharing the gospel effectively and passionately
- **exhortation:** encouraging others as they follow Jesus
- **faith:** seeing God’s plan and following it with passion
- **giving:** investing with unusual sacrifice and joy in God’s Kingdom
- **hospitality:** using your home and/or resources to help others follow Jesus
- **intercession:** praying with unusual passion and effectiveness
- **knowledge:** discerning and sharing the deep truths of God’s word and will
- **leadership:** motivating and inspiring others to serve Jesus fully
- **mercy:** showing God’s grace to hurting people with unusual passion
- **music:** sharing God’s truth and love with unusual effectiveness
- **prophecy:** preaching the word of God with personal passion and effectiveness
- **servicing:** meeting practical needs with unusual sacrifice and joy
- **shepherding:** helping others grow spiritually
- **teaching:** explaining God’s word and truth with unusual effectiveness
- **wisdom:** relating biblical truth to practical life with great effectiveness

http://hydeparkumc.org/fileadmin/pdf_files/SpiritualGiftsAssessment.pdf

Teaching Guide

Lesson 13: Be Generous With Your Money

Lesson Focus

Since God richly provides for us, Christians are to be generous with their money. They should be ready to share it but not love it, keep it all for themselves, or put their trust in it.

Focal Text

Luke 21:1-4; Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19

Memory Verse

“Tell them to do good and be rich in good works. They should give much to those in need and be ready to share.” (1 Timothy 6:18)

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *How many of you would like to be rich?* If there is any hesitation, rephrase the question to ask who would like to have a million dollars in the bank. (If everyone doesn't hold up their hand, you may want to inquire to be sure the question was understood.) Comment that almost everyone would like to be rich but that a rich Christian is vulnerable to the sin of loving money more than God. Assure the class that there is nothing wrong with being wealthy so long as you trust in God and continue to be generous with your money.

Guide the Study

2. Refer to the introduction at the beginning of the study guide. First, emphasize that these were the Jewish religious leaders who had a problem with earthly riches and the desire for money. With that explanation, ask for a volunteer to read the introduction from the study guide. After the reading, describe how it was greed that led these Jewish religious leaders to do shameful things in a religious setting.

3. Call attention in the study guide to the story told by the lesson writer. This story is told in the study guide section entitled “True Generosity Gives of Self.” Read the story to the class and, as you begin to read, remind them that it is the lesson writer who is telling this story. After telling the story, comment that Aunt Lida was a widow who trusted in God, and God somehow provided for her needs. Then remark that our first Bible story

today is about another widow who trusted in God. Ask someone to read that story as it is told in Luke 21:1-4. Compare this widow's gift to God to someone dropping two pennies in the collection plate today.

Say: *The rich men in this story could well afford to give the money they put in the money box, but the poor widow gave the only money she had to live on. She put all of her trust in God to provide for her needs. Add that the rich men in this story just didn't understand how to be generous with what God had given them.*

4. Comment that life is a constant struggle between being content and being tempted to always want more. Indicate that the next part of the Bible Text tells us how these two sides fight against each other. Explain that Paul is writing to his young friend, Timothy, with some words to help and encourage Timothy. Let a class member read 1 Timothy 6:6-10. Observe that verses 6-8 talk about people who are content and quite happy with the life and things God has given them. State that verses 9-10 then tell about the greed—the desire for more money and more things—that leads people away from God. Either read or draw comments from the study guide section entitled “Living in Contentment or Temptation.”

5. First, let someone read the lesson writer's comments in the study guide section entitled “Desire to Share.” Then, mention that the last three verses of the Bible Text were some of Paul's words to his young friend, Timothy. Ask a class member to read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. Instruct class members to listen for Paul's advice in these verses. Note that Paul was telling Timothy what to say to the rich people. Make a chart and lead the class members to identify the four key points of Paul's advice.

Paul's Advice to Timothy

- Do not be proud.
- Do not trust in money.
- Trust in God.
- Do good and be rich in good works.

Comment that, by following those four rules, Paul assures us that we will “have the only true life.” That is, we will have life that lasts forever.

Encourage Application

6. Comment that some people have a lot of money and some have little—and then there are the rest of us. Remark that it doesn’t matter how much money we have, it is how we think about money that is important to God. Explain that you are going to take Paul’s words to Timothy and put them in words that apply to us today. Then read the following:

You who are rich in this world, do not be proud and do not put your trust in your money. Money cannot be trusted. Put your trust in God. He gives us all we need for our happiness. Do good and be rich in good works. Give much to those in need and be ready to share. You will be gathering together riches for yourselves. These good things are what you will build on for the future. Then you will have the only true life!

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Display the following numbers on the board as class members arrive:

- 74, 000, 000, 000
- 56, 000, 000, 000
- 50, 000, 000, 000
- 41, 000, 000, 000
- 39, 500, 000, 000
- 31, 100, 000, 000
- 31, 000, 000, 000
- 30, 000, 000, 000
- 27, 000, 000, 000
- 26, 500, 000, 000

As students begin to notice the figures on the board, ask them if they have any guess as to the meaning of this list of numbers. Engage class members in a guessing game of sorts as other members continue to trickle in. When everyone is gathered, reveal to class members that this list represents the earnings in dollar amount of

Forbes’ ten richest people in the world for the year 2011. (<http://www.dailyfinance.com/2011/03/09/forbes-the-richest-people-in-the-world-2011/>)

Continue by having a fun discussion about what class members might buy if they had that much money. Then make this comment: *When you came into this world, you brought nothing with you. When you leave this world, you will take nothing with you. So why do most of us worry and struggle to gather money and different kinds of possessions while we are here?*

Comment that this may seem like a silly little question. Suggest, though, that it is something to think about. Then observe that Question 4 of Things to Think About in the study guide is our question for the day. Encourage each person to think seriously about their answer to that question.

Guide the Study

♦ Provide a brief explanation of how women and children in Bible times were especially dependent on men. Describe how the man had all the power in the family, kept all the money and managed all of the business matters. Remark that a widow was particularly vulnerable. Refer to the lesson writer’s comments in the fourth paragraph from the study guide section entitled “True Generosity Gives of Self.” Note that in Luke 20:45-47, referred to there, Jesus was talking about the keepers of the Law (scribes) but that the same was true of almost all of the religious leaders. Note that verse 47 says that they took houses from poor women whose husbands have died. Suggest that the poor widow in the story may not have even have had a home to live in.

Encourage Application

♦ Perhaps you or someone you know has a testimony as to how they or someone else has been blessed through the generosity of another person or group. If so, be sure you have all the details and tell the story, or invite that person to attend the class and tell the story themselves. You could also use the testimony of someone who has been especially blessed in giving a gift of money to a person or family in need. Then pray to thank God for the kind of people who are generous with their money and time to help those in need.