

LESSON 3

GENEROSITY AND CHEERFUL GIVING

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Be Generous

SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 9

GOD'S BIG STORY: Paul writes to the Corinthian Christians, encouraging them to give generously to the believers in Jerusalem and reminding them that God loves a cheerful giver.

WORD OF WONDER: The three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love. —1 Corinthians 13:13

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: What's the most generous thing someone has ever done for you?
- Curiosity Questions
- STEM Experiment: Soapy Generosity!
- In Awe of God's Wonder
- Word of Wonder: 1 Corinthians 13:13
- Word of Wonder Activity
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Responding in Worship: Generosity Plan



Walking in Love Elementary Spotify playlist

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 13:13

I lived for a time in a small farming community. I wasn't on a farm, but all my friends were. I learned from them a great deal about planting and harvesting. When it comes to planting, you'll almost always overspread seeds. If you hold back from putting them out there, you'll find that by harvest time you won't get a great return.

When it comes to generosity, the same is true. If we hold back from being generous, we miss out on the amazing returns that could have come our way.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–14. Paul understood this principle: We're to be generous with our time, talent, and treasure the way God is generous with His love for us.

There's also a second principle with generosity that has to do with our heart attitude: "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). If we give grudgingly, we can miss the gifts God desires for us. Still, we all struggle sometimes. My encouragement? Give anyway. What I've realized is that if I give God all I have, even when my heart doesn't feel all that grateful, God takes my little and turns it into abundance. Because that is who God is!

Is there something you're only releasing a little of? Give God all of it, and see what He does!

—Tom Bump

Children's Ministry Leader, Author, and Coach
Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 3 FOR LEADERS GENEROSITY AND CHEERFUL GIVING

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Corinthian assembly of Jesus' followers were prone to create divisions between people of different economic status. Paul writes to them with care, using rhetoric to build them up and prompt the desire to give generously.

WHAT?

The collection Paul mentions comes up elsewhere too (see Romans 15:25–26). Paul planned this effort to help the poor of Jerusalem, and he saw a financial gift as a way for Gentiles to bless the people of Israel, showing their unity in Christ.

WHERE?

As the capital of the region of Achaia, Corinth was a wealthy city by ancient standards. It had a thriving mercantile industry, where Paul earned a living as a tentmaker according to Acts 18:3.

WHEN?

There isn't a consensus for dating 2 Corinthians, but Paul would have likely exchanged letters with the Corinthians in the AD 40s and early 50s. The collection Paul successfully brought to Jerusalem precipitated his arrest, which eventually brought him to Rome.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus is careful to warn His followers, "You can't serve God and money at the same time" (Matthew 6:24). Followers of Christ are commanded to help the poor and share from material abundance, since wealth can only come from God.

Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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Pre-Service (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#)

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

I’m curious ...

- **Do you think generosity is a good thing? Why or why not?**
- **Who has been generous with you recently?**

Small Group Begins: Welcome Question 2–3 min

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

As kids arrive, invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question:

“What’s the most generous thing someone has ever done for you?” Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

Right at your service time, move into Small Group time by sharing your own answers and allowing kids to talk about their answers.

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

Gather kids together, hand a Bible to each one, and invite them to turn to 2 Corinthians 9. Help kids find 2 Corinthians 9 in the second half of the Bible, near the back. Remind them that this beautiful letter is from Paul to the church in the ancient city of Corinth. Encourage adult volunteers to help kids find the passage.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–14.

- **What did Paul ask the Christians in the city of Corinth to do with some of their money?**
- **What kind of attitude does God want us to have when we give to others?**
- **When is a time you were generous to someone else? Was it easy or hard to be generous? How did being generous make you feel?**
- **How has God been generous to you?**
- **What are ways God helps us be generous to others?**
- **Who can you be generous to this week?**

"God has been very generous to us. He has given us everything we need in life. In turn, we get to be generous to others. Let's pray to our loving heavenly Father, who loves to give good things to His kids."

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to share one way they can be generous with others this week. For example, they might want to share a toy with a sibling or put some money in the offering at church. Consider sharing a way that you plan to be generous this week as well. Take turns praying for each person, asking God to make cheerful generosity a part of each kid's life.

Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for bringing each kid here today. Thank You that You have been so generous to us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Open our hearts to hear Your truth, and help us be generous to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Generosity Title Slide, [Generosity and Cheerful Giving God's Big Story Video](#)

Display the Generosity Title Slide. Gather kids together, hand a Bible to each one, and invite them to turn to 2 Corinthians 9. Help kids find 2 Corinthians 9 in the second half of the Bible, near the back. Remind them that this beautiful letter is from Paul to the church in the ancient city of Corinth.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story! Call on four or five kids who volunteer to read. Assign each about two verses from 2 Corinthians 9:6–14. If you have all young kids in your group, read the passage yourself. Ask volunteers to help younger kids follow along with the verses. Then do one or both of the following:

- View the [Generosity and Cheerful Giving God's Big Story Video](#)
- Use the following Generosity and Cheerful Giving Experience It! Script

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Gather kids together, hand a Bible to each one, and invite them to turn to 2 Corinthians 9. Help kids find 2 Corinthians 9 in the second half of the Bible, near the back. Remind them that this beautiful letter is from Paul to the church in the ancient city of Corinth. Encourage adult volunteers to help kids find the passage.

Give a brief overview of the history and context using the info on page 3 of this guide.

Call on four or five kids who volunteer to read. Assign each about two verses from 2 Corinthians 9:6–14.

- **Who did Paul encourage to be generous when he wrote this letter?**
- **Why did the Christians in Jerusalem need the money Paul was collecting from the Corinthians?**
- **Paul uses a farming example to talk about how God helps us be generous to others. What was the example Paul used?** If kids struggle to answer, point them back to 2 Corinthians 9:6, 10–11.
- **What are some of the benefits of giving to others, according to God’s big story today? Have you seen this to be true in your life or in your family? Tell us about it.**
- **Think about all the Bible stories about Jesus that you can remember.** Pause for kids to think quietly.
- **How is Jesus generous in each of the stories you thought about?**
- **How has God been generous to you?**
- **How can you be generous this week?**

Leader Tip: Kids who are new to church may not be familiar with Jesus or know many (or any!) Bible stories about Him. Plan to share brief descriptions of several of your own favorite stories so they can participate in this wonder-filled conversation.

"God has given us everything we need in life—and so much more! Best of all, He gave us His own Son, Jesus, who died to save us from our sins. God wants us to give to others as well. Let’s pray to our loving heavenly Father, who delights in giving good things to His kids."

Prayer Time: Older Kids

If they haven’t yet, invite kids to share one way they can be generous to others this week. For example, they might want share a toy with a sibling, give preference to a friend while playing video games, put some money in the offering at church, or donate some personal items to a local rescue mission. Consider sharing a way you plan to be generous this week as well. Take turns praying for each person, asking God to make cheerful generosity a part of each kid’s life.

Older Kids – Notes Page

**Complete the Notes Page with kids. Helping them to fill out all of the spaces. This is an important way for parents to see what their kids are learning each way and have meaningful conversations at home!

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

"We're learning today that God helps us be generous. God loves a cheerful giver! Generosity flows naturally from a heart that's filled with God's love, and our Word of Wonder from 1 Corinthians 13:13 helps us better understand His love."

Read 1 Corinthians 13:13 aloud as kids follow along in their Bibles. Then invite them to repeat the verse with you several times. Invite kids to whisper the words *faith*, *hope*, or *love* the first time they say the verse. Then each subsequent time they say it, they can get increasingly louder until they're shouting those three words.

Leader Tip: For Older Kids. For additional fun, ask kids to lie down on the floor and spell out *faith*, *hope*, and *love* with their bodies, arms, and legs! Consider taking a picture of their word art from above and sharing it with their families.

Talk about these questions:

- **The greatest thing anyone can show is love. What are some ways others have shown you Christlike love? What are some ways you have shown Christlike love to others?**
- **How does love help us be generous to others?**

Leader Tip: As kids discuss *faith*, *hope*, and *love*, refer to these definitions as needed:

Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). To have *faith* is to trust with our hearts; this trust is shown through our actions.

Hope is a confident expectation that God will do what He said He will do; it's more than wishful thinking—it's certainty that God will come through.

Love is not just a feeling but selfless actions that put others before ourselves. Love is who God is. As Jesus-followers, we can be filled with God's love so that *Christlike love* becomes what describes us best!

Word of Wonder Activity

RESOURCES: *Word of Wonder Sheets NlrV* (1 set per small group)

Ahead of time, print a set of *Word of Wonder Sheets NlrV* for each small group. There will be just one word per page.

Encourage kids to sit in a circle or in rows. Hand each kid one page from the *Word of Wonder Sheet* set in order so each kid is sitting next to kids holding words that appear in the verse immediately before and after their word.

Say the *Word of Wonder* several times together. When kids are ready, invite them to say their parts of the verse in order, one at a time, hopping up from their seats to say their assigned words and holding out their sheets before sitting down again. Encourage kids to try to recite the verse without pausing between words. After each time through the verse, randomly take a verse sheet from one or two kids, and have everyone go through the recitation again, in order. (Kids without sheets will still hop up from their seats to say their words from memory.) Do as many rounds as it takes for everyone to say the verse from memory (still hopping up to say their assigned words as they go!).

Leader Tip: If you have more sheets than kids in your group, give multiple sheets to some or all of the kids. If a kid has multiple sheets, her sheets must contain consecutive words.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids may not be able to easily hop out of their seats. Encourage volunteers to assist kids who need help. If a child is physically unable to rise from a sitting position or is simply not comfortable doing so, assure her that it's OK and suggest that she raise her hand from where she's sitting and say her word on her turn.



Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Generosity Plan

SUPPLIES: paper, writing and coloring utensils, butcher paper (optional), tape (prep only, optional), area rug (optional), paper slips (optional), jar (optional)

RESOURCES: [Walking in Love Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Designate several areas in your room as response stations where kids can think and pray about different ways they can practice generosity. Set each area up ahead of time, as needed. Here are some station ideas—feel free to utilize them or create your own:

- Prayer station: Clear an area for kids to pray quietly about how they can be generous and ask the Holy Spirit to help them. Consider placing an area rug on the floor. You might tape butcher paper to the wall and set out markers. Invite kids to write their prayers on the prayer wall. Or, you might set out small slips of paper, pencils, and a jar, encouraging kids to jot their prayers on slips and place them in the jar.
- Journaling station: Set paper, pencils, and pens on a table. Encourage kids to write their generosity ideas down as a journal entry.
- Drawing station: Set paper and coloring utensils on a table or tape a sheet of butcher paper to the wall. Invite kids to draw pictures of their generosity ideas.

Gather kids together. **"Today we read part of Paul's letter to the Christians in Corinth, where he encouraged them to be generous to people they'd never even met. God loves a cheerful giver, and He helps us be generous! Let's spend a few minutes asking God to help us be generous to others this week."**

Show kids each response station. Invite them to visit one or more stations and to pray and think about how they can be generous to others. Being generous is hard! Remind kids that God doesn't leave us on our own to try to be generous. Through the Holy Spirit, He helps us! Encourage kids to ask God for help.

During this time, quietly play music from the [Walking in Love Elementary Spotify playlist](#). Consider visiting each station as kids participate, praying over kids by name. After several minutes, gather kids back together. Some kids may be eager to share their generosity ideas with the group, so give them an opportunity to do so.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Come prepared with generosity ideas to help any kids who might struggle with ideas on their own. For instance, you could encourage them to let others take the first turn in games, let a sibling or friend pick toys first during playtime, give a compliment to a family member, etc.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids might not be able to verbally express themselves in prayer or physically illustrate their thoughts on a sheet of paper. If so, encourage them that it's OK and offer to pray and write or draw for them with the ideas they share or ones you suggest.