

Give Cheerfully and Generously

MAIN IDEAS

- **Jesus has designed that the needs of His church be met through the giving of His people.**
- **Jesus wants His disciples to give cheerfully and generously.**
- **God promises spiritual blessing for those who give cheerfully and generously.**

MEMORY VERSES

...whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
 7Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
 —2 Corinthians 9:6-7

SCRIPTURE

- 1) 1 Chronicles 29:14
- 2) Luke 12:32-34
- 3) Mark 12:41-44
- 4) 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, 10-12



TEACHER INTRODUCTION

Jesus had a lot to say about money, and what He said was typically radically at odds with most people's sensibilities of that time—and also our time. And yet, what He said offers marvelous freedom for His people to be cheerful and generous givers for the sake of His kingdom.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.—Luke 12:32-33

In this lesson, the aim is to give the students a fundamental foundation for giving money, and how Jesus has designed giving to the Church as a means of blessing His people and furthering His kingdom work. The students will also be taught the importance of regular, thoughtful giving.

Pray that God would be at work in the students, bringing forth in them a lifelong practice of cheerful and generous giving. Pray that the students would grow in their understanding and love of the generosity of God in their own lives, so that they would be free to give more joyfully and generously.

CURRICULUM RESOURCES

- Love God Most Heart/Salvation Sign:
 - › Give Heart (30A, cut out)
- Print double-sided:
 - › One Tenth—Front (30B)
 - › One Tenth—Back (30C)
- Five Dollars 1-10 (30D-30M, cut apart)
- Growing in Faith Together Page for Lesson 30 (for each student)

OTHER SUPPLIES

- Bible (English Standard Version)
- 10 dimes
- Offering plate or basket
- \$10 bill
- Whiteboard and markers
- Tape or mounting putty

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Designated Offering (for each student)

- › Offering Card (OA-30, 1 page for 3 students)
- › Envelope
- › Glue

2. Memory Verse

- › Choose a game or activity from the Appendix.

SUBSTITUTE
TEACHER
REFERENCE
LESSON

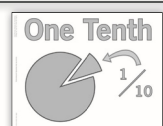
Large Group Lesson

Illustration. -----

10 DIMES

(Choose a student to come to the front and hand him **10 dimes**.)

Suppose I gave [student's name] 10 dimes. How much money does he now have? [\$1] What if I tell him that I want him to give another student one-tenth of his dimes. How many dimes should he give a student? [one dime] How much money will he have left? [90 cents] Would you say that I had required him to give too much? Why or why not?



(Have the student return to his seat and display the front of the **One-Tenth** sign. Point out that in the Old Testament “one-tenth” had a special significance in regards to money. Turn the sign over to reveal “Tithe.”)

During Old Testament times, God appointed priests for Israel from the tribe of Levi. These priests served in the tabernacle and later in the temple. This is where Israel came to worship God. God gave the priests specific duties to perform. This was to be their full-time occupation. God commanded His people to “tithe” by giving one-tenth of their income to be used for paying the priests and providing them with an income.

This one-tenth was to be set aside for your offering before using it for anything else. God considered tithing a very important command. When Israel failed to tithe, God actually accused them of robbing Him (Malachi 3:8-9).

Do you think that God was requiring them to give too much? Why or why not?

(Read 1 Chronicles 29:14 to the students.)

1 Chronicles 29:14—But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you [God], and of your own have we given you.

- Just as I gave the student the 10 dimes, we are to understand that, ultimately, all of our money comes from God.
- His requirement to give back one-tenth was not burdensome.
- He graciously allowed them to keep the other nine-tenths.

Illustration. -----

FIVE DOLLAR 1-10
VISUALS

(Display the **Five Dollar 1-10** visuals and hand them to a student and pose the following scenario.

? Suppose [student's name] lived back in Old Testament times. He earned 50 dollars—10 five-dollar bills. How much should he set aside and give as his tithe? [one-tenth, five dollars]

OFFERING PLATE

(Have the student place one **Five Dollar** visual in the **offering plate**.)

? How much remains in his keeping? [\$45] Could [student's name] now say something like, "I have given my tithe. I've done my duty as the law commanded. The rest of the money is mine to do with whatever I please!" Would that type of attitude be pleasing to God?

And what about now? Are disciples of Jesus supposed to give one-tenth of their earnings, too? And where are we to give our offerings?

- The Old Testament temple and priests were temporary.
- Jesus came to establish the church—the community of believers who are trusting in Him for salvation.
- Jesus still wants us to understand the importance of giving to the church and others, too.

Do you think that Jesus wants His disciples to tithe, giving one-tenth of their earnings to the church?

(Have a Sword Drill, dividing the class into two groups, assigning to each one of the following: Luke 12:32-34 or Mark 12:41-44. Choose a student from each group to read the Scripture. The class should listen very carefully and note whether or not Jesus is commanding His disciples to give a tithe.)

Luke 12:32-34—“Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Mark 12:41-44—And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴²And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. ⁴⁴For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

❓ *In these verses, does Jesus refer to giving a tithe—one tenth of your earnings? No. What point do you think Jesus is making in these verses? (Allow the students to respond.)*

- These verses, and others like them, help us to understand that Jesus is more concerned about our hearts—how we view our money and possessions, and how we view the work of His kingdom.
- Jesus wants His disciples to be more concerned with the work of His kingdom than with gaining and storing up more money for ourselves.

❓ *So, does that mean that we all must sell everything and give all our money to the church and to the poor?*

(Have the students turn to 2 Corinthians 9:6-7. Before reading the verses, give the students the context of Paul's words.)

- The early church in Jerusalem was in need of money to support the men who worked preaching the Gospel, and also for the daily needs of the Christians who were facing increasing persecution.
- Paul was urging other churches outside Jerusalem to give an offering to send to Jerusalem.
- Paul gave instructions as to the right attitude to have when giving and also the amount to give.

2 Corinthians 9:6—The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Paul uses an illustration of someone who sows—who plants seeds for a crop. If he plants only a few seeds, will he reap much? No. But if he plants a lot of seeds—a bountiful amount—he will reap a lot. In other words, Paul is saying we should be generous in our giving.

Now look at verse 7.

2 Corinthians 9:7—Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

❓ *How will a person decide what is generous? [look to his own heart]*

❓ *What does it mean to do something reluctantly or under compulsion? [You don't really want to do it. You feel forced to do it.] What kind of attitude should we have instead? [a cheerful attitude because you are glad to give]*

WHITEBOARD AND
MARKERS

(On the **whiteboard** write the following.)

Amount = Generous

Attitude = Cheerful

GIVE HEART VISUAL,
LOVE GOD MOST
HEART, TAPE, AND
\$10 BILL

(Choose a student to remove the **Give Heart** from the pocket of the **Love God Most Heart**. **Tape** this heart onto the larger heart. Explain that being a generous and cheerful giver is pleasing to God because it shows that you treasure Jesus and His kingdom more than you treasure your money and possessions. You are also showing that you believe He is a good, loving, and generous heavenly Father. You know that if you give generously, God will provide for your needs. Display the **\$10 bill**.)

So, let's say that you receive 10 dollars for walking the neighbor's dog during the week. Instead of automatically putting one dollar in the offering plate—a tithe—you should first ask yourself some important questions:

How important is this 10 dollars to me? Is God more important to me?

Do I believe that God has been generous to me this week? Do I understand that this money is from Him?

Am I thankful for and content with what I already have?

Is there a way that this money could be used to store up heavenly treasures?

Do I love Jesus' church and the people in the church?

Do I want to see other people come to know and love Jesus all around the world?

What might God do with this money to help make that happen?

How might asking these kinds of questions change the way you view the 10 dollars?

How might asking these questions change your attitude toward giving an offering?

(Point out that many Christians believe that disciplining yourself to set aside one-tenth of your earnings for giving to the church is a good way to form a habit of regular and generous giving—a godly habit that serves to help us “grow into” a heart that learns to become more generous and cheerful over time.)

Jesus also wants us to know that generous and cheerful giving is not only used to supply for the needs of the church and others, but it also provides a type of harvest and reward for the person doing the giving.

(Read 2 Corinthians 9:10-12.)

2 Corinthians 9:10-12—He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. ¹²For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.

When you are a generous and cheerful giver, it serves to help you grow in righteousness so that you become more and more like Jesus.

When you are a generous and cheerful giver, it serves to help you grow in thanksgiving toward God.

When you are a generous and cheerful giver, it serves to help the whole church grow in thanksgiving toward God.

Small Group Application

Choose one or more of the following suggestions for interacting with the students during this time.

Workbook

Assign students to look up the verses listed on their workbook page. Have each read their assigned verse aloud and instruct them to match the reference with the correct statement. Talk about the meaning of each and some personal implications. Next, read and talk about 1 Chronicles 29:14. What should this verse remind us of? Why is this important to remember?

The Rewards of Generous and Cheerful Giving

Review 2 Corinthians 9:10-12 again. Give the students a concrete example from the life of your church in which generous and cheerful giving was expressed in praise and thanksgiving to God.

How does this serve to encourage and build up other Christians and the church as a whole? How does it show that God is good and generous? Have you experienced this in your own life? What do you think Paul meant when he said, “increase the harvest of your righteousness”? Does he mean that if you give generously, God will increase your wealth and make you more prosperous? No. God will increase something much more important and valuable. What is righteousness? Why is it more rewarding than getting more money? What can happen to money and possessions?

Examining Our Hearts before We Give

Review Luke 12:32-24 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-7.

Do you take these words seriously? Does Jesus make giving optional for His people? When you get an allowance from your parents, or earnings from doing a special chore, or a gift of money from your grandparents, do you stop and think of verses like these before you do something with the money? Why or why not? Is anything hindering you from becoming a generous and cheerful giver? If you are already in the habit of giving, do you simply do it without thinking about it or do you also examine your heart?

God's Design is that the Needs of the Church Be Provided for through the Generosity of His People

Remind the students that Jesus came to establish His church—all the people who come to salvation in Jesus. The church gathers together in many small, local churches all around the world. Meeting together and doing the various ministries of the church requires money for buildings, pastors, missionaries, and helping those in need.

What would happen if God's people decided giving wasn't important or necessary? Would that show a love for God and His church? Would it be loving toward other Christians? How do you personally benefit from the generous giving of God's people? In what way can you help others to benefit? Does God care how much you give—for example do you feel like your little bit can't do much? What did Jesus say about the widow who gave just a little amount?

Emphasize that just as Jesus can turn a few fish and loaves into more than enough to feed thousands, God can multiply a small bit of money into overflowing blessings for His church.

God's Children Are Free to Be Generous Because We Will Inherit the Kingdom

Point out that some people are reluctant to give generously for fear of not having enough for the future. Review Luke 12:32-34. Why doesn't Jesus want His people to be afraid of giving generously? What is our future inheritance? How can this free us to be more generous in our giving?

Optional Activities

1. Designated Offering

Choose a ministry need within your church. Tell the students about this ministry need and why it is important. Give an **Offering Card** sheet and an envelope to each student, and have them glue the verse card to the envelope. Encourage them to take the envelope home and talk about the ministry need with their parents. (You might even consider contacting the parents directly about this.) Have them consider and pray about how they could give toward this need from their own money or earnings from doing chores (in other words, not simply asking their parents for money). Have them seal their offerings in the envelope and bring it to class the following week.

2. Memory Verse

Choose a game or activity from the Appendix.

Send Home

- Growing in Faith Together Page for Lesson 30 (for each student)
- Optional: Offering Card (OA-30, 1 page for 3 students)

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER REFERENCE LESSON