



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 57

GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER

Everything we do, including our giving, should spring from grace.



MONDAY

THE STORY: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:1-9

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

TALK ABOUT IT:

God has provided all that we need. How does that help us to be generous in our giving? (If God could supply all that we have, He can also re-supply all that we give away.)

What does Paul mean when he talks about sowing and reaping? (If we only sow a few seeds, we will only harvest a few plants and a small crop. If we sow generously, we will get many plants and a large crop. If we give a little, we will only reap a small blessing. But if we give generously, we will reap a large blessing.)

What do we reap when we give? (Some might see this as a way to get more money. If you give money away, they conclude, you will get a lot of money in return. While God often rewards generosity by providing more to give away, the greatest harvest we receive is a spiritual harvest. People give glory to God through our generosity, and we receive treasure in heaven for our sacrifice.)

Who might you bless as a family? (Parents, work with your children to think of an individual or family you might bless with a gift.)

PRAY:

Thank God for all he has blessed your family with and for the grace of giving.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:10-12

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

TALK ABOUT IT:

Who gives us everything we have? (God gives us everything we have.)

Does what we have belong to us or to God? (Everything we have still belongs to God. We are stewards of the things God gives us. We are to use them faithfully. Sometimes that means we give them away to others. Other times we enjoy them ourselves.)

Why is it a sin to refuse to share or be reluctant to give? (God doesn't give us what we have just so we can keep it selfishly for our own use alone. God desires to bless others through what He gives us. When we are selfish, we are actually trying to take for ourselves what does not really belong to us.)

PRAY:

Ask God to help you be a cheerful, generous giver.



WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:13

Paul was excited about the cheerful giving of the Corinthians. He was not excited because it was an empty work, but because it flowed out of their “confession of the gospel of Christ” (2 Corinthians 9:13).

Our giving will not get us to heaven. Rather, our giving should be out of thanksgiving for our salvation and in confidence that our heavenly Father will provide. The giving of the Corinthians resulted in thanksgiving to God from Paul and from the recipients of the gift. Because of the cross, God is able to make “all grace abound” (2 Corinthians 9:8) to us so that the treasures of this world no longer have a grip on us.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why should we ultimately give to others? (Our joy for giving should flow out of our thankfulness for what God did in sending Jesus to die for our sin on the cross.)

What sins stand in the way of our being generous? How do you see those sins at work in your own life? (Parents: We all struggle with greed, selfishness, unbelief,

and coveting. All of these sins rob us of our generosity. Confess how they affect your life, then draw out your children.)

PRAY:

Confess your weakness and love of material things and ask God to help you be a generous, cheerful giver.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:14,15

Grace-motivated giving results in praise to God. When we give to others, it results in their hearts going out to us. They will be grateful and thankful for us. When we give to others, it also results in praise and thanks to God. Paul knew that the Christians in Jerusalem would also offer prayers of thanks to God for the Corinthians.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How has God provided for you through the generosity of others? (Parents, help your children see just how little they contribute to their own daily needs and how much is given to them by others.)

How can remembering God's faithfulness to you in the past help you to be generous in the future? (We know that if we give something away, God will be faithful to provide our future need. When we doubt God's faithfulness, we can be reluctant to give something away. We think we may need it later for ourselves. For example, the person with extra money today might not be willing to give it any of it away because he doesn't trust God's faithfulness for tomorrow.)

PRAY:

Give thanks to God for the many ways He has provided for you through others. Ask God to help you be generous.



**FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

THE STORY: ISAIAH 53:9

In Matthew 27:57 we are told that Jesus was buried in the tomb of a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph. Jesus was crucified among thieves, died among thieves, and was assigned a grave among sinners. Isaiah 53 paints the picture of the passion and suffering of our Lord. It is interesting to note here that a rich man became a disciple of Jesus. His transformed heart is evident in the generous giving of his own tomb, which had never been used. Joseph also displayed great courage to go before Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. Where as others deserted Christ, Joseph, a converted rich man, cared for our Savior's body. Our money, placed under the submission of the King, can be used to advance the kingdom.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How does the second half of Isaiah 53:9 also speak of our Savior? (Jesus never lied or was violent.)

Why didn't Jesus fight back when they crucified Him? (Jesus willingly died that He might be crucified and was cursed to take the punishment that we deserved. He did this with joy, in spite of the great suffering, out of love for us.)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for sacrificing His life on the cross for your sins.