

Give Cheerfully

by Caroline Ferdinandsen

for use as

STEP 1 **Lesson 7****Focus:**

Give with all your heart.

Lesson 7**Bible Basis:**

Acts 4:32-37; 5:1-11

Lesson 7**Memory Verse:**

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. —2 Corinthians 9:7

Your students will discuss ways young people can be generous—even without money.

Materials:

Internet access

The year 2020 has created a new level of financial anxiety around the world and all of us can feel the stress in our communities. Some of you may have a family member who is out of work, or a relative with extraordinary medical bills.

Share the following article with your students. As they read through the list, encourage them to take notes on ideas that resonate with them.

“Ways to Be Kind Without Spending Money”

<https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/ways-to-be-kind-without-spending-money>

➤ **This list isn’t just for kids—it’s a good reminder for everyone. What are three ideas that are particularly suited to someone your age?** (Answers will vary, but babysitting, prayer, letters, eye contact, and apologies are all ways that your students can show generosity and kindness.)

➤ **What are some stories you’ve heard in the past month that illustrated generosity?** (The 2020 pandemic has sparked much anxiety, but it’s also sparked a lot of goodness. Be ready to share not only national or global stories, but also local philanthropy.)

➤ **A believer in Jesus has different motivation for helping others. It’s not just about “the human spirit” or feeling good about ourselves. What is the difference?** (Christians are not only commanded to give generously, but they are reflecting the grace and character of their Savior.)

➤ **Most people will give something if there’s a promise of reward or recognition. For example, someone might try to sell the most tickets to a charity event in order to earn first place in a contest. Why should we give even if there’s no payback?** (The quiet, anonymous giver is best positioned to throw the glory back to God rather than take it for himself.)

Giving generously is an unnatural act in a selfish, pleasure-seeking world. It's important to study God's perspective on money and possessions instead of following the crowd.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

middle school



Lesson 7 / May 3, 2020

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STEP 4 

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Materials:

- Paper
- Pens, pencils, markers, etc.

Did you know that you don't need a lot of money to bless someone? You have everything you need to be a generous giver, even without the help of your mom or dad. The early church shared what they had with other believers, and you can model that same spirit of love today.

Encourage students to think of three family members, neighbors, organizations, or ministries that could be blessed by their talents or treasures. Next, help them identify some skills they have, perhaps using the article from Step 1 for inspiration. Some additional suggestions: Families are walking together to get out of the house—suggest they wear gloves and take a trash bag to pick up litter along their route. Have them consider making a sign for their front door thanking delivery people for being our heroes when we can't get out ourselves. Send postcards and letters to nurses and doctors thanking them for their service.

➤ **Which items on your list would be excellent to do with another family member's help?** (During a quarantine, family members may have extra time to collaborate on ministry projects.)

➤ **Are there some items that can be repeated on a more consistent basis? How can we get into a habit of cheerful giving?** (One-and-done acts of kindness are great, but it's even better to build a natural habit of giving through repetition.)

➤ **Can any of your ideas be "secret" blessings? Why is it sometimes good to *not* be recognized for our deeds?** (It is better to let God have the glory for an act of kindness instead of posting it in a self-seeking online post or signaling in any way that you want people to "look-at-me.")

➤ **Moms and dads are great resources, but can you do something on your list without their help?** (Let students share their ideas.)

As you close, remind your students that even though they are still young, they can follow Jesus' commands to give generously. Their three ideas are ready to go! Encourage them to follow through this week.

Pray with each student over the phone this week or text or e-mail them a written prayer.

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