

Junior Soldiers

Unit 2 : Lesson 3

Sharing is Caring!



PURPOSE : For children to explore and understand God's views on giving and what he requires of us in relation to money, time, talents, abilities, creativity, etc.

'Each of you must make up your own mind about how much to give. But don't feel sorry that you must give and don't feel that you are forced to give. God loves people who love to give. God can bless you with everything you need, and you will always have more than enough to do all kinds of good things for others.'

2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Consider & Prepare

Read:

2 Corinthians 8: 1 - 15

2 Corinthians 9: 6 - 8

Luke 12: 12 - 21

It is important to teach kids that there is more to giving than just giving God our money (e.g. time, abilities, energy, passion, etc.) but we need them to understand that if they give other parts of their life to God, that doesn't mean they don't also give their money.

Emphasis should also be made of the truth that all we have is due to God's goodness to begin with. Our focus is not so much on 'giving' to God but on 'giving back' to God out of all he's given us.

When it comes to monetary giving, children need to understand the obligation on Christians to tithe but - more importantly - they need to know that our giving starts with our tithe, it doesn't end there. (Many adult Christians also need to learn this lesson!) So, by all means, mention tithing, but it should be presented as the minimum obligation we have when it comes to the giving of our wealth.

If, in your preparation, you want to get a sense of how important giving to God is in the Bible, read Malachi 3:6 - 12 where the prophet Malachi says that those who aren't at least tithing are, in fact, 'robbing God' of what is rightly his. This is too strong a lesson to be shared with the kids at their age, but it should help to inform you of the priority that we need to place on our giving to God.

Above all, we want the children to understand that working with God to achieve his aims in the world is a partnership. God needs us to do our bit; we need God to do what only he can do. By giving of ourselves to God, we make ourselves partners with God in extending his Kingdom.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Game equipment for 'Trash and Treasure': tables, music, CD player/iPod, one object per child in the group (e.g. hats, scarves, toys, pencils, books etc)

For 'The Main Thing'

- Bibles, textas, large paper
- Movie clips from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005 version): Charlie's birthday scene; Veruca Salt's request for a golden ticket and her father looking for a ticket.

For 'Tying In'

- Stingy and generous egg-carton gardens: cotton wool, empty egg-cartons, alfalfa seeds

For 'Home & Beyond'

- a sheet of large paper and some textas
- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.



Connecting In

Trash & Treasure...

Needed: Music, tables, as many objects as people (e.g. hats, scarves, toys, pencils, books etc)

- Pile the objects on the table at the far end of the room.
- Play some music. When the music stops, the children grab as much as they can from the table before the leader calls 'Freeze'.
- The children with the smallest amounts are out. (*You can make it the child with the smallest amount or the last 2 or 3 children with the smallest amounts depending on how many children are playing and how long you want to play the game for.*)
- Remove some of the items (*like musical chairs, so that it makes it harder for the children*).
- Continue the game until there is only one person left holding the remaining item.
- Ensure the children's safety by having rules like 'pushing people out of the way is an instant out'.
- **Link:** Questions to ask the Junior Soldiers
 - Ask the winner to explain how they feel.
 - Ask the first person out how they felt. Why do you think you felt that way?
 - 'I wonder how we could have made this game fairer.'
 - Ask them to imagine how it must feel to be a person who sees others who always seem to get there first and grab everything without sharing.
 - 'Today we are going to explore about giving and especially our attitude towards giving to others, and how sharing what we have with a positive attitude is what God is looking for.'



The Main Thing

What the Bible says:

As a group discuss together what the word generous means. **GENEROUS:** Liberal in giving or sharing; unselfish - free from meanness or smallness of mind or character.

Create your own definition of what 'generous' means.

Give each of the children a sheet of large paper for them to write and draw on for the next part of the activity and ask them to divide it into three sections.



- Write or draw a list of items that you share, e.g. toys, bedroom, car, DVD collection, pets, Wii games, etc.
- Make another list of items that you like to keep to yourself, e.g. lollies, books, toys, jewellery, iPod and other special items.
- Put a number from 1 - 10 beside these items that show how happy you are when you have to share these items with others, 1 for 'grumpy', 10 for 'happy'.
- Apart from the things you have already listed, what are some other things that God has given us that we can share? e.g. spiritual gifts, special talents, money, relationships, creativity.
- Think of some examples as to how these are used to worship God or how they are used in everyday living. Share.

There are three key passages below that show something of what God thinks about giving and being generous. You might like to choose one to focus on or divide into groups and look at all three.

2 Corinthians 8:1 - 15, 9:6 - 8, Luke 12:1 - 21

As a group or small group, read the scripture together.

- What do you think God is saying about giving or being generous in this passage?
- How would you tell others about God's message about giving?

The children might like to re-write in their own words or paraphrase some verses using key statements.

- **or** they might like to create a storyboard (especially for Luke 12:12-21).
- **or** they might like to represent the key message by doing a sign or diagram.
- **or** you might have some other suggestions or ideas.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory...

There are two clips to use from this movie, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* to help reinforce the attitude that God wants us to have towards giving.

The first clip is the scene where it is Charlie's birthday and he receives a small chocolate bar. His family has all put in money and gone without so that they could give generously to Charlie. Even though it was his birthday present - something that Charlie only gets once a year - he wants to share it with his family.

The second clip contrasts with the previous scene showing Veruca Salt being greedy and not thinking about anyone but herself. Show the clip where Veruca requests a golden ticket and her father searches for one with all the resources that he can muster.

- What do Charlie and Veruca teach us about giving?
- Do you find it easy to share or give to others generously? Why/why not?
- I wonder if there has been a time when you behaved a little like Veruca and thought only about yourself. Share some examples together.
- I wonder if you have seen someone giving generously. Share.

Tying In

What does God require of us when it comes to giving?

He loves those that are cheerful when giving whether it be giving money, time, our talents/gifts, our creativity or other resources.

Stingy and generous egg-carton gardens

Get the children to make egg-carton gardens.

You will need:

- The bottom of egg-cartons cut in half
- Cotton wool
- Alfalfa seeds
- Eye stickers or textas to draw faces
- Water

Fill the egg-cartons with cotton wool so they are all even; moisten the surface with some water.

The children might like to add eye stickers or draw a face on the outside of the egg cartons so that when the seeds grow it looks like hair. In some (about half), sow a LOT of alfalfa seeds and then in the others sow the seeds sparingly (only a couple of seeds). Place in a sunny position and water appropriately (do not drown the seeds).

I wonder when the seeds grow what the faces will look like.

- Will they all end up with a full head of hair?
- How can this remind us of the attitude that God wants us to have towards giving?
- (As the plants grow the children will notice some have a 'full head of hair' others are quite bald looking.)
- Discuss with the children the differences between being stingy and being generous.
- Remind them again that God likes it when we are generous and share what God has given us.

Home & Beyond

What can I do?

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week. To help set up the challenge for Home & Beyond this week you might like to get the children to think about the questions together. If you have enough children it would be good to divide into six groups (or even three groups) and give each group two of the dot points below. Give each of the groups a sheet of large paper and some textas to add their suggestions.

- How can I be generous in the classroom?
- How can I be generous at home?
- How can I be generous in the playground?
- How can I be generous in my neighborhood?
- How can I be generous at church?
- How can I be generous with my friends?

When finished, it would be good to share these with the other groups. Maybe there are some things from these lists that you might like to do this week at home or school or when hanging out with your friends to show that you can be generous with your time, talents, skills and belongings. Record these on your 'Home & Beyond' card.

Prayer

Spend some time thanking God for the things He's given us and also asking Him to help us be generous with our money and our gifts and abilities.






Home & Beyond

What can I do...

Write down some ideas about how you might be generous with your time, talents, skills and belongings this week at home or school or when hanging out with your friends to show that you can be generous.






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