



# A Generous Sharing

Goal: To practice generosity.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Paul worked with others to establish the church in Corinth, in the Roman province of Achaia, around 51 CE. First and Second Corinthians are letters that Paul wrote to the church after he left to pursue other mission tasks.

The letters tell us a lot about Paul, the church at Corinth, and Paul's often troubled relationship with the church. Some Christians in Corinth were heavily influenced by various conflicting teachings that were common in their city. Others challenged Paul's role in the new Christian community. Paul addressed these and many other concerns in these letters. Through them, we see evidence of Paul's background as a devout Jew who was converted to Christianity after having a dramatic vision of the Messiah.

Scholars think that 2 Corinthians may contain several of Paul's letters written at different times. This week's passage comes from chapter 9, in which Paul thanks the congregation in Corinth for agreeing to support the struggling church in Jerusalem. The passage suggests that Paul had sent an earlier letter pleading for donations for this congregation. It is likely that Titus, Paul's loyal companion, delivered both letters, although in today's passage, two unidentified "brothers" accompany him in this task.

### . . . In Your Children's Experiences

The children in your group are likely growing up with the experience of a generous family. Food, clothes, toys, and many kinds of activities are all provided for them by a loving parent or caregiver. Children also grow up noticing what others consider to be wealth and what it means to be rich. Having money and lots of stuff is a mark of wealth.

Though they might not think of themselves as being rich, they also will be able to understand an alternative perspective on being wealthy. You can help them understand this teaching from Paul that will help them remember that God wants and expects us to be generous, to share what we have. It is in this sharing that we say thank you to God.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Children of all ages will be able to respond to questions such as "What do you think it means to be wealthy?" "In what ways is your family rich?" It will be interesting to hear their responses. Use this introduction as you also help them connect with the ways that richness is connected with being generous and being a cheerful giver. They also will be able to share stories about the ways they have observed or participated in sharing with others.

The story for today will invite children to consider the balance God expects in our living—living thankfully by sharing with others.

*Generous God, all that I have is from you. Help me to let go of possessions and focus on your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.*



## Supplies

Music & Melodies  
(MM) 2023-2024

Stories, Colors & More  
(SCM) i-iv, 8, 19

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

story audio (see p. vii)

candle

green cloth

items that relate to  
church offerings/  
donations

copies of **Grace Notes**  
(GN) 1

## Responding

### Claiming

copies of **GN 2**

### Praying

offering plate or  
basket and “dollars”  
from “Welcoming and  
Preparing”

### Extra

copies of **GN 3**

## GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Post **SCM i-ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

### Welcoming and Preparing

**LG** **A** **B** **M** **MS**

Play “A Child of God”—**MM 21**.

Welcome each child by saying, “Grace and peace be with you, (*Name*).” Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.” Invite the children to place a green cloth, a candle, and a Bible on the worship table, as well as place items that relate to church offerings/donations on the table (such as offering baskets, donation envelopes, church budget, stewardship fliers, mission magazines). Have one or two children to cut out the “dollars” from copies of **GN 1**, enough for each child in the group. Wonder together how the items on the table are used, how and on what the church’s money is spent, and what things besides money people give to the church and community.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Invite a volunteer to practice the Scripture reading for today.

Invite each child to take a “dollar” from the worship table. Ask them to imagine that these dollars represent \$1,000. Encourage them to consider how they would use their dollars to do something to help their community or world. Ask each child to write or draw on the dollar what he or she would do with it. Have the children place their dollars back on the worship table. Explain that today’s Bible story is about money and the church.

### Singing

Sing “With My Hands Open Wide”—**MM 20**; **SCM 19**. Invite the children to come up with motions as they sing the song.

### Praying

Turn on the candle, reminding the children that the light represents Jesus the Christ and the light he brings into the world. Invite everyone to say an echo prayer:

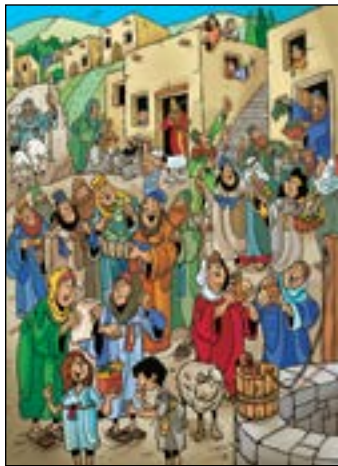
God, help us /  
to hear your voice. /  
God, help us /  
to do your words. /  
God, help us /  
to show your love. /  
Amen.



### Preparing to Hear the Story C

Explain that you are going to read a story about Paul, one of Jesus' followers, after Jesus died and was risen. Paul learned about Jesus from the people who had first followed Jesus. Ask the children to share any information they know about Paul.

Explain that Paul traveled from place to place, helping to set up new churches. Sometimes he asked churches that had more money to help churches that had less money.



### Hearing the Story C L

Invite a volunteer to open the Bible to 2 Corinthians. Have a volunteer read 2 Corinthians 9:6–15. Conclude the reading by saying, “Word of wisdom, Word of grace,” and prompt the children to say, “Thanks be to God.” Place the open Bible on the table.

Have one or two children take the dollars off the worship table and invite them to pass as much as they'd like to another person when they hear the word *share* or *sharing*. As children get dollars, have them do the same, giving them to others. Read the story again using **SCM 8** or listen to the story audio.

**LG** *Listening to a story can be a challenge for children who struggle with attention and who get easily distracted. Consider giving them a task such as note taking or asking them to listen for a specific word or phrase. Creating a focus can aid these children in their attention to the person speaking.*

### Reflecting on God's Grace F LG

When the story is over, notice how many children have dollars. Ask:

- ▼ Did everyone receive dollars? Why or why not?
- ▼ How did it feel to get dollars if you didn't have any?
- ▼ How did it feel to give dollars away?
- ▼ Were you more likely to give away if you had a lot of dollars or if you had only a few? Why?

Have the children place their dollars back on the worship table.

**LG** *Generosity is an attitude and an action. Children may have few material resources but can still develop a generous attitude toward others.*

### Singing

Give God an offering of music. Play and sing “With My Hands Open Wide”—**MM 20; SCM 19**.

Turn off the candle.



## RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and the time available.

### Claiming God's Grace LB

Explain that the believers in Jesus in the early church were called a generous people. Wonder aloud what *generous* means.

A simple definition is “showing kindness and concern for others.” In the Bible story, Paul encouraged the people to share what they had to help others.

Wonder together how the children can be generous today.

Help them identify ways they can practice generosity. Read one of the stories from **GN 2** and invite the children to brainstorm possible endings. Have the children form pairs or small groups and ask each one to act out one ending. Continue in this way until you've read all the stories.

Option: Cut apart the stories and give each pair or small group a story to read. Assist with reading as needed. Have them plan an ending and act it out for the entire group.

Affirm the children's good ideas of ways to be generous. Emphasize that the Spirit helps Christians of all ages reach out to people who need love and care.

### Celebrating God's Grace MS

Use masking tape to make a long line on the floor. With a marker, print *less* and *more* on separate sheets of construction paper. Hang one sheet on the wall near one end of the line and the other on the wall at the other end. Tell the children that you are going to name different things. If they think we need more of the thing you name, they are to stand on the line near the “more” end. If they think we need less of the thing you name, they are to stand near the “less” end of the line. If they are not sure, they can place themselves in the middle of the line or more toward one end or the other, depending on their opinion.

Name items, such as cars, food, homes, toys, guns, trees, books, computers, music, and so on. Pause after each one to give the children time to choose their spots on the line. After each word, invite a few volunteers to say why they chose to stand where they did on the line.

After the activity is over, wonder together about the kind of things that make people generous. Discuss:

- If you had a lot of money and things, how much would you give away to people in need? Would it be hard to give it away? Why?
- If you didn't have very much money or things, how much would you give away to people in need? Would it be hard to give it away? Why?



### Praying God's Grace

LG

This activity invites the children to think about the offerings they share with others. To move the focus away from only gifts of money, it may be helpful to mention that we all can share our time and talents and help others. Have the children take their dollar from the worship table. Ask the children to name things they give, then write or draw these things on the back of their dollars and fold them.

Gather around the worship table with the offering plate or basket on it. Ask the children to recall in silence the gifts that are named on their dollars. Have each person quietly place his or her folded dollar in the offering plate or basket. When done, pray:

Generous God,  
Help us to reach out to others who need our help.  
Help us to give from the heart.  
Thank you for the love and care you have given each of us.  
Amen.

### Offering God's Grace

LG

Tell the children that most churches gather money each week during the offering time. Ask the children how they think the money is spent. Record their responses on newsprint.

Create a mural that shows the ways your congregation spends money from the offering. For example, staff and programs (draw pictures of your congregation's paid staff doing what they do); building maintenance and mortgage (draw your church building); local and global outreach (cut from magazines pictures of food or people from other countries and cultures). Brainstorm other ways the congregation might use the offering to further Christ's mission in the world. Accept all responses and add to the mural. Brainstorm together a title for the mural and add it to the mural.

Display the mural so others may see it and celebrate how your congregation shares with others.

### Extra Activity

LG

We all have gifts to offer. Generosity and giving is not just about money! Help the children think of ways to practice being generous every day. Distribute copies of **GN 3** and have volunteers read each of the suggestions. As each is read, have the children color the corresponding icon at the bottom of the page while they brainstorm ways to give that gift. Challenge the children to choose one way to give each day then cut the icon from the bottom of the page and tape or glue it to the chart once they have given that gift.



## LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads). Remind the parents and caregivers about the story audio (see p. vii).

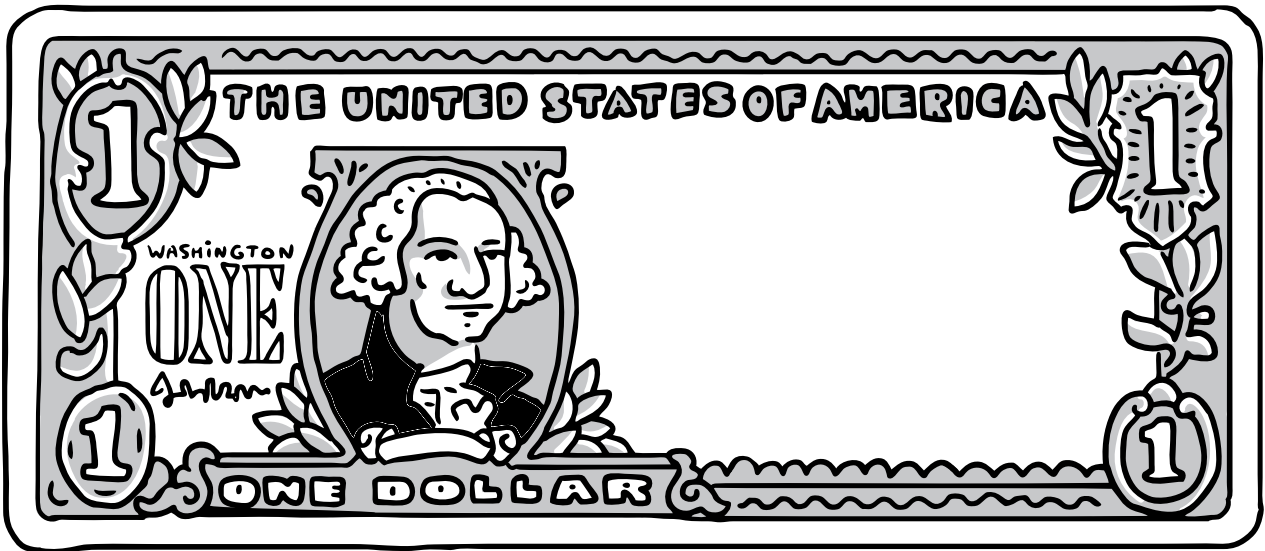
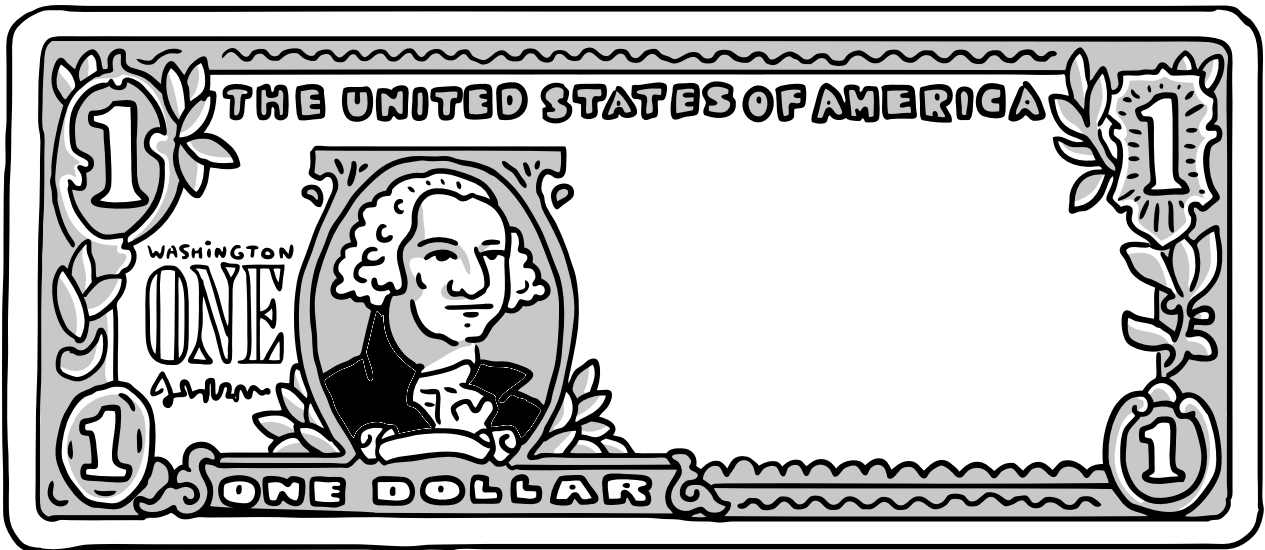
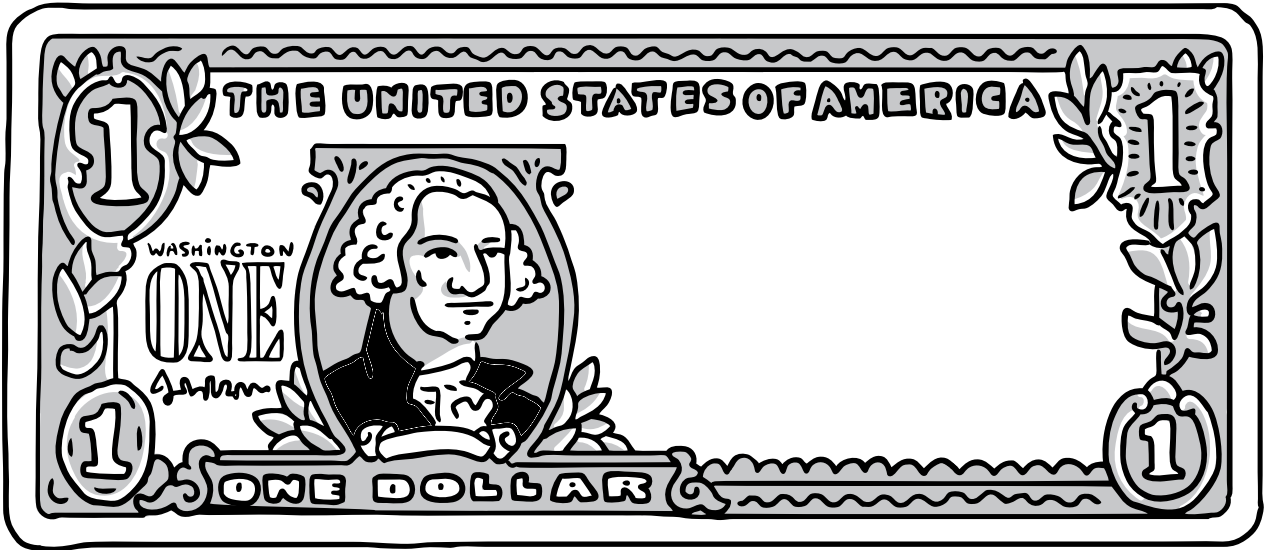
Ask the children to help clean the space.

Tell the children that Paul's letter reminds us that we should be generous and caring toward others. Ask the children to think about things they can do this week to show care and generosity toward their family and friends. Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to trace around their own hands and then cut out the hand shapes. Invite them to draw or write on the hands the things they thought about. If time allows, let them be more elaborate with their decorations. Have them take home their handprints to remind them what they can do to be generous.

Close with prayer, asking God to help the group act with generosity and care in the ways they have mentioned. Remind them to pray for one another during the week.

As each child leaves, bless them, saying, "*(Name)*, go in peace to love and serve the Lord."











You like to play soccer with your friends at recess. One day you see Becca standing off to the side. She is watching you and your friends choose teams for soccer. What might you do next?



A rental truck is parked in the driveway of a house down the street. A family is carrying their things into the house. Your dad says, "Looks like there might be a boy your age moving in!" What might you and your dad do next?



A fire burned an apartment building in your neighborhood. The families who live in the building will have to move. Their clothes and toys were burned. Their sheets and towels and blankets were burned. How might your group help?



Your friend Marissa had surgery to fix her heart. She is home now, but she cannot come back to school for a month. What can you and your friends do to care for Marissa?



	<p>Give the gift of time. Offer to spend time with a sibling or a parent. Do something that they like to do.</p>
	<p>Give the gift of play. Look through your toys. Give away something that will make another child smile.</p>
	<p>Give the gift of words. Use words that are kind, caring, and generous! You can talk with someone, call them, or send them a note.</p>
	<p>Give the gift of service. Help without being asked!</p>
	<p>Give the gift of hospitality. Invite someone to go on a walk or play a game. Offer a snack or drink to make them feel welcome.</p>
	<p>Give the gift of food. Bring extra food to share with someone at school or surprise a neighbor with some homemade treats.</p>
	<p>Give the gift of attention. Don't get distracted by games or TV, just listen to the person who is wanting to talk to you. Really listen to show you care.</p>



