



OCTOBER 10, 2021

Generosity Campaign ~ Week 2

RAISING CHEERFUL GIVERS

by Katy Giroux

Do your children struggle with sharing even the smallest of items? This is a natural part of our sinful nature as human beings. As parents, it is our responsibility to partner with Jesus in raising our children to become cheerful givers. This task of teaching generosity to our children, especially at the young age of those in preschool, can seem like a daunting task, so I encourage you to partner with God's Word to receive guidance to help you along the way.

The bible provides simple wisdom on how to approach and teach the idea of generosity that can be applied across generations, even to the youngest generation, our preschoolers! Here are some simple steps you can take as a family to study and teach the idea of generosity and cheerful giving as it aligns with God's Word and biblical truth.

1. Define the idea of generosity in a developmentally appropriate way.

The word generosity will most likely mean nothing to your preschooler, so it is important to take the time to redefine it in a way they can understand. Break down the idea that generosity is giving more than expected or necessary. What does this mean to preschoolers? If a friend asks for a goldfish snack, try giving them a handful rather than just one. Or, maybe it looks like helping a younger sibling with something to help out mom and dad.

Next, ask your child if they know anyone who is "generous" or a "cheerful giver". If they are younger, point out someone that your family knows well whom you would consider to be generous. After this, you can talk about Jesus and how He is the most generous person we know. Explain that He gave up His life for ours. Explain that Jesus was always looking for opportunities to give to those in need and help those who were sick.

Example lesson on generosity: Grab a bag of snacks you have in stock, such as goldfish. Give your child one goldfish and say, "Sharing is hard but Jesus calls us to share. We may want to keep all of our things to ourselves but it is not generous of us to have a lot, while others have little." Next, pour a lot of goldfish into a bowl and watch it as it overflows. Explain that this is a representation of God's generosity to us and that He asks us

to also give more than enough and to give it cheerfully. As you explain this, begin giving your child more goldfish from your pile and have them reflect on how they felt when you shared from your overflowing pile.

2. Read what God's Word says about generosity.

Read together: Mark 12:41-44, "The Widow's Offering." Discuss what Jesus sees as important when it comes to generosity: not who gives the most but giving to the point of sacrifice. The story from Mark shows that generosity is about loving God and His people are more important than the things of this world. Make note that when we give, we are asked to do it with a joyful heart.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:7, "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." [NIV] Remind your child that God gave His son Jesus for our lives, out of love, so we must also learn to give out of love, and when we do, we are giving back to God.

It is important that we keep God's word in our heart, and we can do this through scripture memorization. This habit can begin at a very young age. For young babies, you can repeat scripture verses in a sing-song melody. As they begin to get older, you can teach them hand motions that go along with a short verse for them to do as you say the verse. Once they begin talking, you can have them repeat shortened versions of bible verses after you while adding in the hand motions. Eventually, around the age of 3, your preschooler will be ready to memorize short scripture verses that they can recall from day to day! Here are a few scripture verses that mention generosity and cheerful giving:

- Proverbs 11:25 "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."
- 2 Corinthians 9:7 "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."
- Acts 20:35 "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak,...

"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

ACTS 20:35

Scan this QR Code to access our daily devotionals!



RAISING CHEERFUL GIVERS continued

remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

3. Practical Ways to Give Generously

Discuss practical ways to give generously as a family. The Lord calls us to be generous with money but that is not all with which He asks us to be generous. Talk with your preschooler about other ways we can be generous in a practical way. Here are some examples:

- Are you blessed with a home that provides an abundance of clothes and toys? Donate to a local shelter so that others can benefit from your generosity.
- Are you given birthday money? Donate to your local church or a charity your family is involved in.
- Do you have a vacation coming up and are blessed with more time at home? Donate your time helping around the house.

As parents, share with your child ways you have been generous to others. And share with them times others have been generous to you or your family unit; maybe this was through someone’s hospitality when you welcomed a baby into your family. As you see your child doing something generous, point it out! Engrain biblical language into their everyday lives. “I like how you shared your toy with your brother - that was very generous of you! Just like Jesus!”

4. Respond to God through prayer.

Depending on the age of your child, give them the opportunity to start this prayer or pray this with them consistently if they’re on the younger side: Dear God, Thank you for your generous spirit. Thank you for giving your son, Jesus, so that we live with You forever. God, please use us to bless others just as you bless us daily. I pray that you help us grow cheerful hearts that are willing to share and give to others. We ask that you open our eyes to opportunities where we can bless others and give to those in need.

If your preschooler is talking, have them repeat a short prayer, “God, help me be a cheerful giver.” Or, if they are an older preschooler, open up the prayer for others to respond aloud to thank God for what He has blessed them with.

Children are never too young to begin learning biblical truths. As parents, you have the privilege of influencing your child’s faith and you can do that through simple steps listed above about any topic found in God’s Word. But, as always, the most impactful way to teach our children is through modeling. We must model a generous spirit and a home life of hospitality, and we must trust that the Lord is using us (parents) first and foremost to be the most influential spiritual leader in our child’s life.

IN GOD WE TRUST
by Richard Rogers

“In God We Trust” - a slogan with deep and rich meaning. It found its way onto our currency in the 20th century. It, more recently, can be seen on bumper stickers throughout the mid-western and southern parts of the United States. The saying makes us feel proud, delivers nostalgia, and promotes patriotism as we dream of a country dedicated to depending on God and not man.

The treasury department traces the origin of the appeals for some recognition of God on our currency as far back as 1837. Usually the appeals rested on the hopes that the U.S. would always be known as a God-fearing nation. These sentiments were both sincere and hopeful. It was in 1867 that the actual phrase was penned by the secretary of the treasury. Yet, few stop to think of the ironic placement of the slogan.

Having our money display the phrase, “In God We Trust,” should bring great and thoughtful conviction on Christians. In Job 31, Job declares that “If I had placed my trust in gold or riches... I would rightfully deserve judgement.” His defense of himself before his friends includes a simple, yet, fundamental truth: Money cannot be trusted to bring security, satisfaction or contentment in life. Don’t trust the dollar, the ten dollar note, hundred dollar note. Instead, trust God.

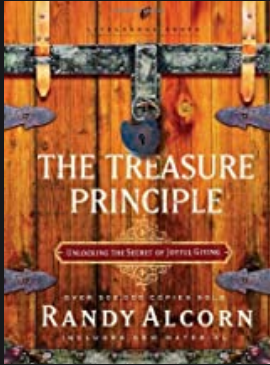
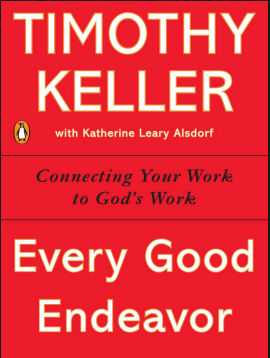
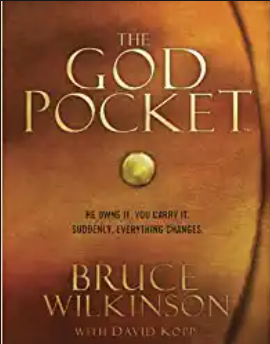
It begs the question, why trust God and not money? Biblically, everything that we possess has been given to us by God. Listen to Paul as he writes to a young pastor, “But godliness with contentment

is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world and we can take nothing out. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation, a trap, and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil...” (1 Timothy 6:6-10) That middle truth is key to our trust: we brought nothing into the world and we will take nothing out. Literally nothing is ours and nothing came from us!

Hold on there, preacher-man! “Everything I have, I have worked for!” Who provided you the body and brain with which you have worked? Who provided you opportunity to breathe, think and work? Who provided you an earth to live on, a sun to warm the earth, and laws of nature to govern them all? Come on, man! If everything comes from God and depends on God, then your hopes, dreams and trust only have a sure footing on Him.

The next time you hold a coin or dollar bill, look carefully at the words, “In God We Trust” and ask yourself, “Do I really trust God or have I placed my trust in money?”

Looking for
more
resources
about
Generosity?



Scan this
QR Code to
order or
download
your copy:

