



The Virtues and Character Development Project

The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.

I Thessalonians 5:24

Generosity – Composite of Activities Curriculum

Note – before reading the content in this module, it is important that the *Generosity Pre-Activity Curriculum* has been reviewed.

The following list provides examples of activities that leaders will be able to do with their students. They are divided into Primary School, Secondary School, and Higher Education.

Table of Contents

Primary School (Kindergarten through 5th grade).....	1
Cyndi Fannin	1
Sheri Nessmith.....	3
Secondary School (6th through 12th grades – Middle School and High School).....	7
Don Gipple – Middle School	7
Sarah Madtes – High School	7
Higher Education (College and Professional School).....	12
General	12

Primary School (Kindergarten through 5th grade)

Cyndi Fannin

Generosity Activities and definitions for elementary age children.

Activity 1 for Generosity: Read Scripture about Generosity:

1. Proverbs 11:24 – *Giving more results in receiving more. While being stingy makes a person poorer.*
2. Proverbs 11:25 – *A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*
3. Matthew 6:21 – *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*
4. Luke 6:38 – *Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.*
5. Acts 20:35 – *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*
6. II Corinthians 9:7 – *God loves a cheerful giver.*
7. I Timothy 6:18 – *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.*

Activity 2 for Generosity: Show Generosity video clip:

- Show the video clip about God being generous: [God's Story: Generosity](#)
- Have students come up with a definition for generosity. Example: Give what you have even when it is tough. It does not have to include money.

Activity 3 for Generosity: ideas for students to be generous now and then again after other activities have been completed:

- Have students create a list of ways in which they can be generous. (Here are a few examples: visit others who are lonely, pray for others, share what you have, be available to help others, offer to help in any way possible.

Activity 4 for Generosity: Generosity Jar

- Set up a jar and label it, *Generosity Jar*. In it will go coins.
- Allow children to come up with ideas of when money might go into the jar. (Examples might be part of allowance, part of birthday money, money for completing extra jobs, etc.)
- Allow children to decide ahead of time when to donate the money and who it would go to.

Activity 5 for Generosity: Generosity Treasure Hunt

- Beside the Generosity Jar set another jar with slips of paper.
- Label this jar, *Generosity in Action*.
- Establish the amount of time you will give students between one day and one week to find others being generous.
- When a child observes this action, have them write it on a slip of paper and put it into the jar with their initials on it.
- When it is time to meet back, read the slips of paper aloud.
- Hopefully children will hear their own actions observed. This helps those who are performing acts of generosity and those observing.

Activity 6 for Generosity: Teach through Scripture and children become Dear Abbigail

- Read together II Corinthians 8:1-15.
 - Discuss thoroughly what is going on in the passage. A church in Jerusalem was really having hard times. Paul had asked another church that was Gentile to bring together an offering for their relief. This giving church had many gifts. Now they are being asked to excel in giving.
 - Jesus has already given them a model for such acts.
 - This is a very special occasion because it could unify the Gentiles with the Jews.
- Explain about the Columnist "Dear Abbey". She received letters from different readers asking her opinion and then answered in a letter. Here is a letter that you need to answer as Abbigail using the Scripture.

Dear Abbigail,

I am from one of the Macedonia churches. Paul came to our church a few months ago and asked for us to collect money for the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. I'm just so confused. We already struggle here with poverty. How and why are we to collect money for some of those who do not even acknowledge us? We have

already proven ourselves in our speaking, love for each other, and enthusiasm for the Way. Please help me to understand.
Sincerely,
New Christian

Activity 7 for Generosity: Books to read about Generosity:

- *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein
- *Beatrice's Goat* by Page McBrier
- *Ronnie Wilson's Gift* by Francis Chan
- *The Gift That I Can Give* by Kathie Lee Gifford

Activity 8 for Generosity: Baking for Others

- Find and make a list of people who would appreciate baked cookies or bread, etc.
- Bake together in the kitchen thinking and praying for the people that the baked goods would go to.
- Have children write a card to the people telling of God's love for them.
- After baked goods are delivered, have children talk about how it felt to give with no expectation in return.

Activity 9 for Generosity: Generosity Bingo

- Using or making a list of generous acts of at least 25, have children fill in their own Bingo card in various boxes mixed up.
- When an act is completed, children mark off the box.
- There isn't a winner.
- When one person completes their Bingo, they help others complete their card.

Activity 10 for Generosity: Volunteer Together

- As other activities have demonstrated, being generous does not need to include money.
- Speak to others in the community and at church to see where children with you could volunteer to help others.
- Here are some examples but the possibilities are limitless: work in a food pantry, clean up someone's yard, work in the nursery at church, visit a nursing home, etc.
- Discuss afterwards feelings before and after the volunteering.
- Children will find that the anticipation creates anxiety that will probably be gone afterward.

Sheri Nessmith

Classroom Activities

1. **Generous Coupon Book:** Students create coupons (e.g., *Good for one extra chore*, *One free hug*) to give to family or classmates
2. **Kindness Rocks:** Decorate rocks with positive messages and place them around the school or community for others to find
3. **The Floating Egg:** Use salt to make an egg float in water, symbolizing how adding generosity (salt) lifts someone up (the egg), then discuss how to help a sad classmate
4. **Generosity Charades/Bingo:** Act out or identify acts of generosity (sharing, helping, complimenting) on bingo cards or in charades

One of the first lessons I did with our character-building class for kids was on generosity

1. In some ways, this is an easy lesson for kids to learn, as it is all about giving gifts and sharing toys. From that basic understanding, you can also stretch them to think in more abstract terms, like giving your time, sharing a smile, and so on. More to the point, that the best form of generosity is done sincerely, expecting nothing in return.

Teaching Kids about Generosity: Lesson Plan

1. Explanation

We talked about how generosity is giving to others without expecting anything back. We asked the kids to come up with ideas for what this might look like, such as giving a gift on someone's birthday (or just because), or sharing a toy or a snack. We also talked about how spending time with someone, reading a book together, or playing together, is a gift of time. And we can also share hugs and smiles with others.

2. Song

We then sang a song that I grew up with, *Magic Penny* by Malvina Reynolds. (Here is a [video](#) and the [full lyrics](#)). The song is terrific and easy for kids to relate to, about how love is like a magic penny – it only works if you give it away! The version I grew up singing was just the chorus (*It's just like a magic penny*) plus variations of the verse about love (*A smile/Time is something if you give it away*)

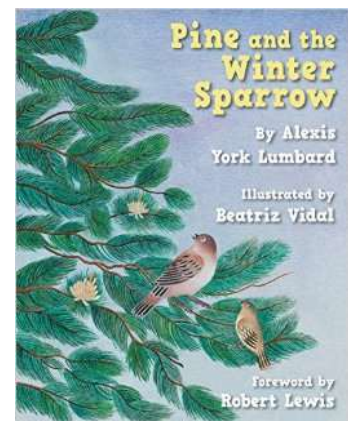
Ahead of time I cut out a heart, a smiley face, and a clock from craft foam, and as we sang each corresponding verse, we passed the objects around the circle like a hot potato. This is nice because it makes it hands on, since otherwise the song can get a little long for restless little ones!

3. Stories

A really beautiful book to share with kids about kindness and generosity is Wisdom Tales Press's *Pine and the Winter Sparrow* by Alexis York Lumbard.

And of course, you can't talk about children's books on generosity without mentioning *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein, a classic book about the selfless nature of giving.

Another great book on generosity is *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister, a beautifully illustrated book about a fish who learns that having something wonderful all to yourself is not nearly as fun as sharing it with others.



4. Activity

For our activity, we acted out the story of *Stone Soup*, a popular folk tale about how when everyone shares what they have – no matter how little it may be – we can create something wonderful for everyone. There are many versions of this tale (here is [one](#)), but the general idea is that times are tight, and no one feels like sharing, as they have so little to begin with. Finally, someone decides to make a *delicious* stone soup, and as he starts to cook, one by one people start to add the little food that they have – a cabbage, a carrot, a potato – until they have a wonderful, filling soup that they all can share.

Craft & Service Project

To drive the lesson home, I decided to tie our craft into a service project. We made these [beautiful rainbow vases using pour painting](#). (You can also do this [using regular garden pots](#)). I cannot stress how fun this craft is. But not only did the kids have fun, the vases really did turn out beautifully.

We visited a senior living home and delivered the vases to some of the residents. We had called ahead to make arrangements, and the activities director was kind enough to meet with us and lead us around to those residents that would most appreciate a visit. The kids took turns handing out the vases. Besides generosity, it was good practice for them to be courageous talking to new people and gracious in accepting thanks from them.



Generosity Scavenger Hunt

Go on a generosity scavenger hunt. How many ways can you spot someone being generous? You might see someone return a shopping cart or loaning someone a pen. Maybe you spot someone sharing their lunch or giving someone a much-needed hug. Keep track of the numerous ways you see generosity in your day-to-day life. Divide what you see into physical acts of generosity such as sharing a lunch or donating money and spiritual acts of generosity such as giving someone a compliment or the gift of their time. If you are teaching a class on generosity, brainstorm with the kids about ways they have seen people be generous in the last week.



As an alternative you can go on a scavenger hunt where you deliberately look for ways to BE generous. How many items can you check off in day. A simple list might include things like:

- Give someone a compliment
- Sharing something with someone else
- Donate money to a good cause or someone in need
- Spend time with someone who needs your company
- Send a card or nice note to someone
- Let someone go in front of you in line
- Do a chore for someone that you would not normally do such as set the table for your mom or put your sisters' toys away
- Donate something you no longer need to a local charity
- Spend time teaching someone something such as the rules to a game, how to use a computer program, or help with their homework
- Put a shopping cart away for someone
- Hold a door open for someone

Generosity Bags

Show your generosity by creating special bags to give away to those in need. You might make bags with fuzzy socks and small toys to bring to kids in a children's hospital; bags with

toiletries for a local women's rescue or bags with postcards and stamps to donate to nursing homes so they can write their loved ones.

Giving Jar

Giving money is one of the first things people think of when they think of generosity. Decorate a jar with a sign that says, *Giving Jar* and place it somewhere you will see it often. Have everyone drop loose change in the jar until it is full. Then vote on who to give the money to. You may choose to donate it to a local charity or spend it to purchase something for someone in need. Or you may choose to spend it to take someone special out for a meal to show them how much they are appreciated. If your children receive an allowance, asking them to set aside 10% to put in the giving jar is a great way to teach them to be generous consistently.

Video of 6 Ways to Teach Generosity and Encourage Hearts of Service with Kids at Any Age

Video link: <https://youtu.be/YqAdX4bNPaE?si=-OinlUrsz9TGEJs7>

8 Powerful Ways to Teach Children the Joy of Giving

- 1. Model Generosity**
 - Children learn best by observing the adults around them. Demonstrate acts of kindness, whether it's volunteering, donating items, or helping a neighbor. Talk to children about why you engage in these activities, emphasizing the joy you feel when giving to and supporting others.
- 2. Make Giving a Part of Everyday Life**
 - Incorporate giving into your daily routine. Encourage children to donate toys they no longer use or to participate in food drives. Frame these activities as opportunities to help others, making the experience relatable and meaningful.
- 3. Teach the Value of Sharing**
 - Utilize everyday moments, such as sharing snacks or toys, to teach generosity. Praise children when they share, reinforcing the idea that giving brings happiness to both the giver and the receiver.
- 4. Encourage Empathy Through Storytelling**
 - Books and stories are powerful tools for teaching empathy. Choose stories that highlight characters demonstrating generosity. After reading, discuss the characters' actions and feelings, prompting children to reflect on how they can act similarly.
- 5. Provide Opportunities to Give**
 - Engage children in activities that allow them to give, such as baking cookies for a friend or crafting cards for a local nursing home. These hands-on experiences make giving tangible and memorable.
- 6. Celebrate Acts of Kindness**
 - Recognize and celebrate instances when your child demonstrates generosity, no matter how small. This reinforcement helps them understand the impact of their actions and encourages them to continue being giving individuals.
- 7. Discuss Feelings Around Giving**
 - Talk about how giving makes both the giver and the receiver feel. Encourage children to express their thoughts and emotions about generosity, helping them connect emotionally to the concept.
- 8. Volunteer Together**

- Participating in community service as a group is one of the most impactful ways to teach the concept of giving. Find local opportunities that resonate with your values, such as volunteering at a food bank or participating in park clean-ups.

Secondary School (6th through 12th grades – Middle School and High School)

Don Gipple – Middle School

Have your group collect for the needy

- Students could organize a fund-raising event to help those in need.
- This could be especially successful if the recipient(s) were identified prior to the project.
- If the specific need were known, it might be more impactful.

Serve meals that the group prepared at a homeless shelter/help center (my small group did this)

- Volunteering time is a means to develop generosity.
- One avenue is through local homeless shelters or local help centers. Volunteering to serve will help the organization greatly.
- In addition, it will provide opportunities to interact with those in need and find out what other needs they have. Then, these could be addressed as well.

Have your sports team bring in equipment that they have outgrown to donate to organizations for athletes in need.

- Sports equipment is expensive. Many parts of the country and around the world are unable to obtain needed equipment to play. For example, there are some world areas that are not able to buy soccer (football) balls and are forced to use balls made of used clothing. Many players being playing with youth-sized equipment and outgrow that equipment. The items are still in excellent condition and could supply communities in some world areas that otherwise would not be able to have any equipment. (This situation occurred for one of the Little League teams representing Africa at a recent Little League World Series final.)

Sarah Madtes – High School

Relational Generosity Activities:

- Practice *Interruptible Love* at home
 - Encourage your teen to pause what they're doing to help a sibling or parent.
 - Do small, unseen acts: cleaning someone else's mess, leaving encouraging notes, making a snack for someone.
 - Have a weekly reflection: *Where did you choose people over convenience this week?*
 - **The focus of this is to build the habit of seeing people as more important than personal comfort.**
 - **Reminder that generosity starts with closest relationships, so practicing at home will begin to extend out past the home.**

- Adopt a *Hospitality Rhythm*
 - Let your teen invite a classmate who's often left out.
 - Host simple dinners, game nights, or study groups.
 - Ask your teen to take ownership: planning, welcoming, including others.
 - **The focus is to remember that Biblical hospitality isn't about impressing other people but including people. This will be about quality time, investing in others, and helping create a place of belonging.**
 - **Make your home a place of relational generosity.**
- Serve Together Consistently (Not Just Occasionally)
 - Volunteer monthly
 - Work together as a family for creative ways to get involved in volunteer spaces.
 - Some ideas might be a food bank, church event, nursing homes, etc.
 - Afterward, have some reflection time to discuss what was noticed about others and how they felt in connecting to people in different areas.
 - Volunteer regularly at church
 - Encourage your high school student to find a space in their home church where they can begin investing back into other people in the church.
 - **The goal is not just helping—but learning to see others deeply.**
 - **One-off service is good; repeated service shapes identity.**
- Encourage *Relational Awareness* at School
 - Challenge them to:
 - Sit with someone new once a week.
 - Learn the name of someone others overlook.
 - Check in on a struggling friend.
 - You can frame it by saying, *Look for the one person who might be invisible today.*
 - Help them become a student who notices others.
 - **It can be difficult for your high school student to think of this on their own. Make it part of the norm and conversations at home to encourage the student to pay attention to people around them.**
- Practice Generous Listening
 - Teach them to:
 - Ask follow-up questions.
 - Put their phone away when someone is talking.
 - Resist the urge to *fix* and instead understand.
 - You can even role-play conversations at home.
 - You will also need to have times of no screens, especially phones, at home when interacting to help the student learn how to have those interactions without relying on screens.
 - This will be a challenge for everyone in the home to be less dependent on screens.
 - **Many teens equate generosity with money or time—but attention is powerful.**
- Practice Encouragement as a Discipline
 - Create a habit of:
 - Writing notes of encouragement.
 - Affirming character, not just achievement.
 - Telling your student you're proud of them, not what they do.
 - Talking with your student as to why this is important and encourage them to do with friends and others.

- Try a weekly challenge:
 - Encourage 3 people this week in a meaningful way.
- Reflect Through a Faith Lens
 - Tie everything back to your beliefs so it's not just behavior—but formation.
 - Read and discuss passages like:
 - Philippians 2:3–4 (putting others first)
 - Luke 10 (Good Samaritan)
 - Hebrews 13:2 (hospitality)
 - Ask about what stands out in these passages to your student.
 - What are some ways the student can see these played out in their lives?
 - How do any of these scriptures tie into other activities the family has been practicing?
- Normalize Discomfort
 - Relational generosity often feels awkward at first.
 - Help them expect:
 - Social risk (talking to new people)
 - Misunderstandings
 - Moments of rejection
 - Public scrutiny
 - **Loving people well isn't always easy—but it's always worth it.**
- Creating a weekly family rhythm
 - One way to possibly put all this together as a family, with a structure could be:
 - One act together (serve, host, or help someone)
 - One personal challenge (your student chooses)
 - One reflection conversation (10–15 minutes)

Financial Generosity Activities

- Create a Simple *Give–Save–Spend* System
 - Every dollar they receive (allowance, job, gifts) gets divided:
 - Tithe
 - Give
 - Save
 - Spend
 - Let them decide where the giving goes.
 - **This builds the habit that generosity comes first, not last.**
 - **This structure reinforces values.**
- Give Them Ownership of Generosity and Let Them Experience the Joy of Giving
 - Give them a small monthly budget to give away.
 - Let them choose causes or people to bless.
 - Buying a friend lunch
 - Leaving a gift anonymously
 - Supporting a peer in need
 - Giving a special offering at church
 - Afterward, talk with your student about their experience and if any feelings, thoughts, or surprises that came up.
 - **Let it become their initiative, not just your instruction.**
- Match Their Giving
 - This reinforces and multiplies their generosity.

- For anything they choose to give, you match it.
- Celebrate the impact together.
- **It communicates: *This matters—and we're in it with you.***
- Support Mission or Service Opportunities
 - Help them:
 - Save toward a mission trip or service project.
 - Fundraise in creative ways (bake sales, small jobs, etc.).
 - Let them contribute personally, not just rely on others.
 - **This connects sacrifice with meaningful impact and ties finances to purpose.**
- Practice *Spontaneous Generosity*
 - Keep a small *generosity fund* they can access.
 - When a need arises, ask, *Is this an opportunity to give?*
 - A friend in need
 - A community situation
 - A church initiative
 - **Builds responsiveness and not just planning**
- Give Them Ownership Over a Portion of Family Giving
 - Invite them into real decisions.
 - Let them help decide where part of your family's giving goes.
 - Research causes or people together.
 - Teach them how to be responsible in regard to whom they give.
 - Discuss impact, stewardship, and alignment with your values.
 - **This builds discernment, and not just generosity.**
- Teach them contentment
 - Encourage them not to spend everything they have.
 - If they have a job, help them set a giving goal before spending.
 - Talk openly about contentment vs. consumerism.
 - You can connect this to teachings like:
 - Matthew 6:21 — *Where your treasure is...*
 - 2 Corinthians 9:7 — *...cheerful giving*
 - **Help them move from a mindset of *How much do I have to give?* to a mindset of *How much do I acts as a steward for God's purposes?***
- Make Generosity Visible and Celebrated (Not Prideful)
 - Normalize it in your family culture.
 - Share stories of giving (yours and others').
 - Celebrate decisions, not dollar amounts.
 - Emphasize heart posture over recognition.
- Reflect Regularly
 - Formation happens through reflection.
 - Have short, consistent conversations:
 - *Where did you feel prompted to give?*
 - *Was it hard to let go of money?*
 - *What did you learn about God or others?*
- Model Sacrificial Giving
 - This is the most powerful influence.
 - Let them see:
 - You giving when it costs something
 - Your choosing generosity over comfort or upgrades

- Honest conversations about financial decisions

Time Generosity Activities

- Establish a *First Hour for Others* Rhythm
 - Choose a consistent slot (e.g., one afternoon/evening per week).
 - Commit that time to serving or investing in others
 - Let them help decide how it's used.
 - **This builds the idea that generosity is planned, not accidental.**
 - **Helps them intentionally dedicate time—not just leftovers**
 - **Move from a mindset of *I'll help if I have time* to a mindset of *I'll make time because people matter*.**
- Encourage Consistent (Not Random) Commitments
 - Character forms through repetition.
 - Instead of occasional volunteering, aim for something like:
 - Tutoring the same younger student weekly
 - Helping in children's ministry at church
 - Visiting a nursing home regularly
 - **Relationships + consistency = deeper formation**
- Practice *Being Fully Present*
 - Time generosity isn't just quantity—it's quality.
 - Put their phone away during conversations.
 - Stay engaged when someone is talking.
 - Resist multitasking when someone needs attention.
 - **You can frame it: *Giving someone your full attention is one of the most generous things you can do.***
- Build Margin into Their Schedule
 - A packed schedule crowds out generosity.
 - Help them evaluate commitments (sports, clubs, etc.)
 - Ask, *Do you have space to respond when someone needs you?*
 - Consider intentionally leaving some unscheduled time
 - **If every minute is spoken for, generosity becomes impossible**
- Invest in People Who Can't Repay Them
 - Encourage time spent with younger kids, elderly individuals, or people who are lonely or overlooked.
 - Connect it to Scripture
 - Luke 14 (inviting those who can't repay)
 - Philippians 2 (valuing others above yourself)
 - **This shifts motivation from social benefit to genuine love.**
- Do Hidden Acts of Time Generosity
 - Helping someone without being asked
 - Taking care of responsibilities that aren't *theirs*
 - Supporting someone quietly behind the scenes
 - **This builds humility and the right motivation**
- Pair Time with Relationships, Not Just Tasks
 - Avoid making generosity feel like a checklist.
 - Instead of thinking *I'm completing 2 hours of service*, switch to a mindset of *In who am I investing in this week?*
 - Encourage them to follow up with people and/or build ongoing connections.

- Reflect on How They Spend Their Time
 - Sit down weekly to reflect
 - Where did your time go this week?
 - Who benefited from your time?
 - Was there a moment you chose convivence over people?
 - Keep it curious, not critical
 - **This is about bringing awareness to what they are doing because awareness can lead to change.**
- Tie Time to Calling and Purpose
 - Discuss how Jesus used His time:
 - Often interruptible
 - People-focused
 - Willing to slow down
 - Reflect on stories in the gospels of Jesus' interaction with others and how he spent his time.
 - **Help them see their time as part of something bigger.**
- Model It Clearly
 - Let them see you:
 - Making time for people when it's inconvenient
 - Choosing presence over productivity
 - Prioritizing relationships over efficiency
 - **Your example will shape them more than any structure.**

Higher Education (College and Professional School)

General

Raise money to support a needy child

- Several organizations (e.g., Samaritan's Purse, World Vision, Compassion International) have avenues through which child around the world who are in need for clothing, food, education
- One means through which someone could raise money would be to offer services to others (e.g., cutting grass, raking leaves) for a small fee
- The money raised could be used to support a child through one of these organizations
- People might be more willing to hire young people to do work around their house if they knew the money would be used to help others

Tutoring your who need assistance

- Being generous with one's time is important in generosity.
- Identify younger students who could benefit from tutoring. This may require talking with teachers and parents about your desire to invest in others through your understanding and willingness to help.
- Schedule regular times to help. This may be 1-2 times a week or 1-2 times a month, depending on the need.
- Avoid doing the work for a student. This may appear to be helping, but this hinders the student from learning, which is the goal.

The Virtues and Character Development Project © 2026 by The Virtues and Character Development Project is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International