God Tells Us to Be Generous

**BIBLE BASIS**

Before the events in today’s Scripture, Abram had generously allowed Lot to choose and inhabit the fertile Jordan Valley. Abram was Lot’s elder, the more powerful and wealthier. By rights and custom, he should have had the first choice. Abram set custom aside and replaced it with generosity. As a result, God richly blessed him. Use this session to help kids discover that generosity has many rewards and the greatest reward is knowing that they’ve done the right thing.

**Bible Focus:** Genesis 13:14-18

**Discovery Point:** God tells us to be generous.

**Worship Response:** Kids will praise God for his generosity.

**Key Verse:** “Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others” (1 Timothy 6:18).

**A Look at the Session**

Mix and match to meet your needs. For more ideas, see “For-Extra-Time Activities” on page 127.

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<td>Welcome! (up to 15 minutes)</td>
<td>Be generous with each other as they play a game.</td>
<td>Putting God First: Serving CD or DVD, paper, CD player or TV/DVD player</td>
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<td>Let’s Explore! (up to 20 minutes)</td>
<td>Assemble a Compass Puzzle as they dig into their Bibles.</td>
<td>Hands-On Bibles, “Compass Puzzle” handouts (p. 128) on card stock, scissors, snack-sized bags of M&amp;M’s candies, paper cups, paper plates, fun-size candy bars</td>
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<td>Let’s Praise! (up to 15 minutes)</td>
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<td>Let’s Pray! (up to 10 minutes)</td>
<td>Use cups and cotton balls to visualize overflowing generosity.</td>
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Before This Session

- Copy onto card stock and cut out the pieces of one “Compass Puzzle” (p. 128) for each Bible Crew.

- Assemble Bible Exploration Kits (one per four kids): one Hands-On Bible; one “Compass Puzzle” prepared above; one snack-size bag of plain M&M’s candies; one paper plate; and one piece of paper, one 2-ounce paper cup, and one fun-size candy bar per child.


- Cue the Putting God First: Serving CD (1) or DVD (1).

- Huddle briefly with volunteers before the session. Answer questions they have. Encourage them, and pray for the session, the volunteers, and the kids.

Abraham deserved the nicer land, and he could have just taken it. Instead, he chose to give it to his nephew. We can all make choices like that.

Here’s a way!
• Find a treat.
• Find a friend.
• Cut the treat into two pieces, one a little bigger than the other.
• Take the smaller piece for yourself and give the bigger piece to your friend.


A lotta land…

TEACHER TIP
Bible Exploration Kits are an easy way to give each group supplies. The Jabber Mat from Group Publishing is a great tool that can be used as a Bible Exploration Kit and as a space for a Bible Crew to gather. Check it out at group.com/jabbermat.
Welcome!

**Supplies:** assembled Bible Exploration Kits
(see page 119) | CD player or TV/DVD player

1. Play “Into the Bible” (1) as kids arrive.

2. Have kids form Bible Crews of four, and give each crew a Bible Exploration Kit. SAY: **Today we’re going to begin our lesson with a game called Lifeboat Lifesavers.**

   Take the paper from your kit, and give one piece to each person on your crew. Place your papers on the floor anywhere in the room. These will be our lifeboats. I’ll play some music as you pretend to swim around the room in the water. When I pause the music, hurry to one of the lifeboats. If someone is left in the water, squeeze together to give that person a place on your lifeboat.

   After each round, remove several sheets of paper, and start the music again. The kids will end up squeezing together on only a few sheets of paper. Encourage them to allow one another space to fit onto the papers, even if it’s only a toehold or the edge of their shoes. End the game at any point or when it becomes impossible to fit any more kids on the papers.
3. **ASK:**
   - What was easy or hard about being generous in this game?
   - When has it been difficult to be generous in your life?

**SAY:** Thanks for being so generous with your lifeboats and squeezing together so that no one was left to drown. **GOD TELLS US TO BE GENEROUS** whether we have a lot or a little. Generosity is rewarded with the feeling that we’ve done the right thing and served God. One man in the Bible learned an important lesson about generosity. Let’s find out more.

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### Let’s Explore!

**Supplies:** assembled Bible Exploration Kits (see page 119)

1. Before the kids dig into their Bibles, briefly review the story of Abram and Lot that precedes today’s passage.

**SAY:** There came a time when Abram and his nephew Lot decided to separate and move their families to different places in the land God had given them. Both men had huge herds and needed more space. Maybe they felt a little bit like you did when you were squeezed together on the papers in our Lifeboat Lifesavers game. The Bible tells us that when it came time to decide which direction they would each go, Abram did something extremely generous. He let Lot choose first. Lot chose the best land for himself. Our story today begins after Lot moved away into the rich, fertile land of the Jordan Valley and left Abram with the rocky, dry land of Canaan. Let’s open our Bibles and find out what happened after that.

Have Bible Crews sit in circles and take the *Hands-On Bibles* out of their kits. Help them find Genesis 13:14-18. Ask if they can point to the north from where they are sitting. Show everyone which way is south, west, and east.

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**EXTRA IMPACT**

Bring a compass to class and let the kids use it to mark the north, south, east, and west corners of your room.
2. **SAY:** Abram was told to look to the north, south, east, and west. To find out why, you’ll need to take the Compass Puzzle out of your Bible Exploration Kit and find the piece marked “North.”

Remind younger kids that a compass helps us know what direction we’re going. Ask the kids to read and follow the directions on each puzzle piece as they dig into their Bibles and assemble the puzzle.

3. **ASK:**

- What does this example have to do with being generous?
- God gave Abram a lot of material rewards, but what are some invisible ways God rewards those who are generous?

**SAY:** God rewarded Abram—so much that counting his blessings was like counting the dust of the earth. That’s a lot of blessing! Read Genesis 13:18 to find out what Abram did after he settled in the new land.
4. **ASK:**
   - What do you think Abram praised God for when he built the altar?
   - What happens as a result of our generosity?

   **SAY:** Being generous gives us a good feeling inside. But more important, we show generosity because GOD TELLS US TO BE GENEROUS. The best reward we can receive is in knowing that we are pleasing God.

5. Have kids take the snack bags of M&M’s candies, the paper plates, and the small paper cups from their kits. Ask them to set the paper plate on top of the Compass Puzzle and pour out the M&M’s carefully so none go on the floor. Let each child take a cup. As the kids are seated in a circle around the compass, have the person who is closest to north take all the candy of one color and place it in his or her cup. No one should eat candy yet. Continue around the compass until everyone has chosen a color. Some will have more M&M’s than others, but that’s OK.

   When everyone has some candy, have kids close their eyes for a minute and picture themselves in places they’ll be this week, such as a classroom, a sporting event, their bedroom, and so on. Invite them to look north, south, east, and west in their mind’s eye for things they have that can be generously shared in those places.

   **ASK:**
   - Look at the candy each of your crew members has. What opportunities for generosity do you see?

   Let crews show generosity in some of the ways they come up with. For example, one crew might know that it’s someone’s birthday and choose to give all its M&M’s to that person. Another crew may choose to take its extra M&M’s to another class.

   **SAY:** It doesn’t matter if we have a lot or little, GOD TELLS US TO BE GENEROUS with what we have. There are lots of ways we can be generous. And God will reward our generosity.

   However, we shouldn’t be generous because we think we will receive something in return. Remember, God’s best blessings are not always in ways we can see.
6. Have the kids find “The Better Way!” activity in their Hands-On Bibles. Ask them to read the activity and use the candy bars in their Bible Exploration Kits to prepare a treat to share with a friend.

Then ASK:
- Why is being generous a “better way” to live?
- What is special about doing something generous and keeping it between you and God?
- How will you share with someone this week?

SAY: Generosity means giving more than we keep. Sometimes it means giving the whole thing. As you ask God’s help this week to be generous, he will give you opportunities to share what you have.

Let’s Praise!

Supplies: CD player or TV/DVD player

1. Designate four corners of the room as north, south, east, and west. Have kids form four groups, and ask groups to stand in one of the four corners.

SAY: God instructed Abram to look to the north, south, east, and west. Everything he saw in every direction, God was giving to him. That was very generous of God! GOD TELLS US TO BE GENEROUS. That means that he wants us to follow his example. Giving a little is good. Giving a lot is great. Sometimes we can give everything, and that’s even better. Let’s do that now by giving God all of our best praise as we worship our generous God from all four corners of the room.

2. PLAY: CD/DVD
- “Go and Make Disciples” (Matthew 28:19) (6)
- “Servant of All” (Mark 9:35b) (7)
- “Fairest Lord Jesus” (5)
Let’s Pray!

_Supplies:_ 2-ounce paper cups used during Let’s Explore! | cotton balls | CD player

1. Invite kids to share a prayer experience using cups and cotton balls. Have Bible Crews take their empty paper cups and sit together in a circle. Place piles of cotton balls within reach of all the kids.

   **SAY:** Imagine your cup overflowing with water. That’s how generous God is. He often gives much more than we need. His generosity is poured out on us every single day. We can never give as much as God gives, but our generosity can overflow to those around us when we share our possessions, our time, our talents, and even our prayers. Your cups are empty right now, so let’s fill them with generosity. Let’s use these cups and cotton balls to help us think about ways our generosity can overflow toward others the way God’s overflows to us.

2. Explain that you will name a place, such as school or home, and that you would like each person to think of some way to be generous in that place. When kids think of a way, they may quietly take a cotton ball and add it to their cup. Offer suggestions if needed, such as sharing toys at home or giving a classmate their turn during a game. Explain that kids can use some of the ideas they thought of earlier, as well.

   **SAY:** Your cups are no longer empty. They’re overflowing! You thought of so many ways to be generous. Now we need to ask God’s help to do the generous things you thought of. Overflowing generosity isn’t easy, but we know that GOD TELLS US TO BE GENEROUS, and he will help us.

3. Ask kids to be quiet and pray for God’s help to follow through on their ideas for being generous this week. Have everyone pray as you play quiet music. Tell the kids that when they hear the music stop, they should finish praying. Invite them to pour their cotton balls back on the pile to show that they are done and ready to pour out generosity to others.
Play the instrumental version of “Fairest Lord Jesus” (13) as kids pray. When most kids have poured out their cotton balls, stop the music.

4. When everyone has finished praying, ask crews to turn the cups upside down and use them to form an altar in the center of the circle.

SAY: Abram built an altar and worshipped God in the land God had given him. We worship God when we’re generous with what we have.

**High Fives**

**Supplies:** none

Before kids leave, have them give a north (high), south (low), east (right), and west (left) high five to someone in another Bible Crew.
For-Extra-Time Activities

### SAND COUNTING

**Supplies:** 1 teaspoon of coarse sand | magnifying glass

Let the kids spread out a spoonful of coarse sand and use a magnifying glass to see if they can count the individual grains of sand. As they count each grain, kids should suggest a way God has been generous to them or how they can show generosity. Remind the kids that God showed generosity to Abram by giving him a huge area of land and a family so large that counting them would be like counting dust or grains of sand.

### GENEROSI-TREE

**Supplies:** green and red construction paper | scissors | pens | paper bag

Remind the kids that generosity is often rewarded by knowing we have made someone happy—especially God. Have kids cut leaf shapes from the green paper and write acts of generosity on them. For example, someone might write “Give my friend the largest snack.” Have kids cut circles from the red construction paper and write rewards that can come from being generous, such as making someone smile. Twist the paper sack to form a tree trunk. Attach the leaves and fruit to make a Generosi-Tree.

### HIDDING IT IN YOUR HEART

**Supplies:** pencils | sticky notes

Have kids read the Key Verse, 1 Timothy 6:18, out loud several times. Ask the kids to divide the verse into four to five sections or phrases and write each on a sticky note. Have kids attach the sticky notes to their arms. Play a game of Key Verse Giveaway by having the kids attempt to give away all of their sticky notes. Remind them that GOD TELLS US TO BE GENEROUS, and giving things to others is one way we do that.

### CREATE A BIBLE DICTIONARY

**Supplies:** paper | markers | dictionary

Ask kids to create one or more new pages, each with a new word, for the Bible Dictionary. Ask for ideas of new words from today’s session—generosity and reward are two suggestions. Have them write the word on a sheet of paper in fun letters, add a definition, list Scripture references, and make illustrations. Add each page to a three-ring binder, and watch the dictionary grow!
Read Genesis 13:14 out loud, and then stand and look in every direction. Then find the piece marked “South,” and add it to the puzzle.

Read Genesis 13:16 out loud, and then count to 100 by tens—10, 20, 30, and so on. Find the piece marked “West,” and add it to the puzzle.

Read Genesis 13:15 out loud, and then jump up and down with excitement. Find the piece marked “East,” and add it to the puzzle.

Read Genesis 13:17 out loud, and then move in every direction while keeping your left foot in one spot.
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Genosity Wreath

Work together to make a generosity wreath, and challenge one another to be generous.

1. Read 1 Timothy 6:18 together.

2. Discuss some ways you can put the commands of 1 Timothy 6:18 into action this week by using your money to do good and sharing with others.

3. Have each family member trace his or her hand several times onto different colors of construction paper.

4. Cut the center out of a paper plate to make a ring.

5. When a family member does something generous, write it on his or her handprint and glue it onto the wreath.

6. When the wreath is full, reward your family with a favorite dessert and call it a “generositreat.”

FAMILY CHALLENGE

Play a weeklong game of Generosity Tag. Write “Tag—you’re it!” on a piece of paper, and place it inside a clear, empty CD case. Give it to the person with the closest birthday. The person with the CD case must do a random act of generosity, such as making a family member’s bed. He or she then leaves the CD case at the scene. Whoever has the CD case is tagged and must do something generous for someone else.