

Share Resources

LUKE 10:25–37; ACTS 4:32–35

GOAL

Adults realize their call to generously share resources out of love for neighbor and God.

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



Visit our YouTube channel, bit.ly/FMYouTubeGFR, for conversation starter videos.

PRAYER

O Creator, Provider, and Sustainer, you have blessed us with abundant life. Help me reveal your generosity and inspire people to do likewise. Amen.

THIS SESSION

Sharing resources is one of the most recognizable aspects of the practice of generosity. We provide for the physical and material needs of others: food, shelter, water, clothing, medical care, and so forth. In these ways, we follow Jesus' ministry of generosity, in which he loved people by meeting their physical and material needs. Although we often think of possessions as our own, in reality, everything we have belongs to God. God has entrusted us to be stewards of the resources we have been given and to use these gifts to care for our neighbors' well-being, ensuring that they have clean water to drink, enough food to eat, and adequate shelter. When we do this, we fulfill the greatest commandment: to love God and to love neighbor.

THE BIBLE STORY

In **Luke 10:25–37**, a Samaritan provides many resources for an injured man who was left beaten and stripped on the road to Jericho. He tends his wounds, brings him to shelter, supplies food, and secures other resources. While some may see his acts as more than necessary, Jesus, through his telling of this story, recognizes them as being just right.

Acts 4:32–35 gives a glimpse into the sharing of resources among early Christ-followers who “held all things in common.” Everything that the Christian community possessed was held for the common good. When there were needs among individuals in the community, these were met from the proceeds and actions of the community. Their sharing was generous and equitable. The result of this sharing meant that everyone in the community was cared for and provided for.

SESSION PREPARATION

- “Giving and Receiving” (p. 5): Write the words to the second verse of the song “When We Are Living” (*Glory to God*, #822) on a piece of newsprint to be used in each session. Practice the American Sign Language signs so you may teach them. Use the following YouTube videos as visual aids: “ASL Signs for When We Are Living, Verse 2” (bit.ly/FMSignsForVerse, 0:50) and “ASL Signs with When We Are Living Verse 2” (bit.ly/FMSignsWithVerse, 0:29).
- “Closing Ritual” (p. 8): Prepare newsprint with the words and movements for the closing prayer. Reuse the newsprint in subsequent sessions.

GETTING STARTED

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome participants and allow time for gathering activities particular to your group (*introductions, offering, prayer concerns, and announcements*). Review the “Unit Overview” on page 4 of the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Explain that a more detailed discussion of the practice can be found in the foundational essay that begins on page 47 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Encourage participants to read the essay during the course of the next four sessions.

GIVING AND RECEIVING

Display newsprint with the words to verse 2 of the song “When We Are Living”¹ (below). Invite adults to repeat after you and follow your motions, using American Sign Language signs. Keywords that are signed are noted in bold font.

Through all our **living**, (*both hands in fists with thumbs up, move from waist up to shoulders*) /

we our fruits [**work**] must **give**. (*move both hands, palms down and slightly cupped, back and forth in front of you; thumb in palm facing up on right hand moving away from you to another*) /

Good works of **service** (*move right flat palm from chin to left palm facing up; both palms facing up and alternate hands moving in and out from chest*) /

are for **offering**. (*right finger hooked and move hand away from you to another*) /

When we are **giving**, (*thumb in palm facing up on right hand moving away from you to another*) /

or when **receiving**, (*right fist on top of left fist held out at arm’s length, pretend to grasp rope and move hands toward self*) /

we **belong to God**; (*interlock thumb and index finger of both hands as a chain; then move open right palm facing left from above head to center of face*) /

we **belong to God**. (*repeat above action*) /

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- This and all sessions require that the leader and participants have their copy of the *Adult Reflection Guide* with them.

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- Prepared newsprint

INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or more options.

CONVERSATION STARTER VIDEO

Show the “Practice Generosity Overview” video and the “Practice Generosity, Session 1” video from the Growing Faith YouTube channel ([bit.ly/FMYouTubeGFR](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFMYoutubeGFR)). Lead a brief conversation about participants’ thoughts and questions the videos prompt as you introduce the session.

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- Internet-connected device

EXAMPLES OF GENEROSITY

Give each participant an index card and pen. Invite them to write a definition of *generosity* on their card and to name or draw examples of generosity.

Invite volunteers to read what they wrote or drew, and have the group develop a common definition of generosity based on their responses. Write

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- Index cards
 - Pens
 - Newsprint and marker
 - Tape

1. Writer Credits: St. 1 anon., sts. 2, 3, 4 Roberto Escamilla, trans. by Deborah L. Alvarez; Copyright: © 1994 Abingdon Press (BMI) (Administered by Music Services). All Rights Reserved.

the group definition in the center of newsprint. Give each participant tape to attach their index cards to the newsprint, creating a word cloud. Explain that you will be looking at the practice of generosity and adding to the word cloud throughout this practice.

PRACTICING GENEROSITY

Refer participants to the “Unit Overview” on page 5 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Read aloud the callout text (bubble) and use the questions for group discussion. Ask:

- ➔ How do you define *generosity*?
- ➔ Who do you know who you would describe as generous? How are they generous?
- ➔ How do you practice generosity in your life?

FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

Choose one or both options.

Bibles



Instead of reading the text, consider showing the YouTube video “The Parable of the Good Samaritan Bible Animation (Luke 10:25–37)” (bit.ly/FMGoodSamaritan, 2:28).

Bibles

Pens

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Before reading Luke’s version of this familiar story (Luke 10:25–37), have participants read the relevant information from the bullets on page 8 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Notice examples of generosity as the Luke passage is read. Discuss:

- ➔ What examples of generosity are evident in this story?
- ➔ What makes this story appropriate as an answer to the question, “Who is my neighbor?” (v. 28)?

BELIEVERS SHARE THEIR POSSESSIONS

Refer participants to “Believers Share Their Possessions” on page 10 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Read aloud the first paragraph. Have participants close their eyes and imagine people of the first century sitting together in a house church, imagine the people sharing, eating, and worshiping together. The leader reads aloud Acts 4:32–35.

In their *Adult Reflection Guides*, have participants sketch or describe images from the scene and the verses that speak most to them. Invite volunteers to show and describe their images. Use questions from page 10 to continue discussion.

FINDING THE PRACTICE THEN AND NOW

Choose one or more options.

Pens

WHAT WE GIVE

In an open space in the *Adult Reflection Guide*, have participants list things they give or do for others (*smiling, holding the door, giving directions, welcoming a new neighbor, taking a meal to a friend*). If they give money to the church offering or other groups, write these down as well. After a few minutes, invite volunteers to call out a couple of things from their lists. Encourage participants to listen for unique ways of sharing resources that they can add to their lists to practice generosity.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Refer participants to “Finding the Practice Then and Now” and “Tithes and Offerings” on page 11 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Invite volunteers to read aloud the paragraphs under each heading.

- ➔ Identify ways people can generously share resources—both money and other items—in your congregation. How are these resources shared within and beyond your congregation?
- ➔ How is this sharing a loving response to God? A loving response to your neighbor?
- ➔ If you attend worship, where do you regularly hear the invitation to share your resources in the service? How are these resources received?
- ➔ What, if any, tithing or offerings do you participate in? Why?

SEEING GENEROSITY PRACTICED

Refer participants to “Feeding Hungry People” on page 12 and “Caring for People’s Physical Health” on page 13 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Explain that there are many church-connected programs through which people can share resources to care for others. Invite participants to scan the listed programs and select one of interest to them. They may use internet-connected devices (smartphones) to locate information about their selected program, learn about it, and share the information with the group about ways this program practices generosity by loving their neighbor.

After participants tell what they learned about the programs they researched, ask these questions for discussion:

- ➔ Why has feeding people who are hungry been an historically central part of the church’s mission?
- ➔ What efforts does your church or community take to feed people who are experiencing food insecurity?
- ➔ Why do you think caring for those who are sick has been central to the church’s mission throughout history?
- ➔ Being generous with resources can also serve the giver in spiritual and physical ways. In the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccines were often hoarded by wealthy countries with little generosity shown to poorer countries. This was partially responsible for more variants to emerge and spread everywhere. Where have you seen generosity shown in healthcare?

Internet-connected devices

PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or more options.

TAKING INVENTORY

Refer participants to “Practicing the Practice” and “Taking Inventory” on page 14 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Have participants read the first paragraph in this section. Review the directions for taking inventory using the grid on page 14. Have participants spend a few minutes reflecting on their resources and ways they share these with others.

Invite volunteers to name the one or two resources they might share more. Challenge participants to find a local organization where they can share their resources.

Pens

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- Pens

SHARING RESOURCES

Explain that activities in the *Adult Reflection Guide* are intended for individuals to use for personal reflection and commitment. Since they may be just receiving their guides, you are working through some of the personal activities in the group setting.

Have participants read “Share Resources” on page 15 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Ask the adults to circle one or more of the suggested practices that they can engage in during the coming week. Use the commitment statement in the middle of the page to record their intention. Tell them that you will pose the questions on the page at the beginning of the next session.

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- Paper and pens

OFFERINGS TO GOD

Refer participants to “Tithes and Offerings” on page 11 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Invite volunteers to read aloud the paragraph. Discuss various ways to give offerings to God through congregational worship: *words of praise, hymns of praise, prayers of adoration, tithing or pledging, prayers of dedication*.

Distribute paper and pens. Have participants work individually or in pairs to write a prayer of praise, adoration, or dedication to God, reflecting upon God’s generosity of love and resources.

Decide how to share these prayers within your group or with your congregation.

FOLLOWING JESUS ONE THING LEARNED

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- Generosity Word Cloud newsprint (from “Examples of Generosity” in “Introducing the Practice”)
 - Sticky notes and pens

Refer to “Following Jesus” on page 16 in the *Adult Reflection Guide*. Read aloud the first two paragraphs. Distribute sticky notes and pens. Invite each participant to write one thing they learned in today’s session about sharing resources. Attach the sticky notes to the Generosity Word Cloud newsprint. Save this newsprint for other sessions.



Use a different color of sticky note for each session to track the different ways of practicing generosity.

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- Prepared newsprint

CLOSING RITUAL

Display prepared newsprint of the closing prayer. In closing, line out the words and movement instructions:

O God, / (*Raise arms, hands outstretched, above head*)
you provide all there is on earth. / (*Circle arms downward, around body*)
Let us humbly receive / (*Pull arms toward chest*)
and graciously give / (*Extend arms in front of body*)
as we love you / (*Form hands into hearts and raise above head*)
and love our neighbors. / (*With hands still in a heart shape, circle arms in front of body*)
Amen. /