LIFE GROUP LEADERS GUIDE

A Generous Heart: The Foundation of Generosity

2 Corinthians 8:1

Series:	Generosity
Date:	October 25, 2026
Text Reference:	2 Corinthians 8:1

Purpose of This Guide

This week's sermon launched a five-week series on generosity rooted in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. The pastor introduced the foundational truth that everything we have belongs to God and that we are managers, not owners, of what He has entrusted to us. Rather than framing generosity as a financial obligation, the sermon presented it as a spiritual journey toward joy, transformation, and a deeper relationship with Christ.

Key Text — 2 Corinthians 8:1 (ESV)

"We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,"

Leader's Big Idea to Keep in Front of You:

Generosity begins with God's work in the heart.

Part 1: Opening Questions

Getting the Group Thinking

Leader Note

These questions are designed as warm-up questions. They are not meant to be deeply theological — they're meant to lower the guard, get people talking, and naturally lead the group toward the key themes of the text.

Spend no more than 10–12 minutes here.

1. When you were growing up, what was your household's general attitude toward money and giving? How has that shaped the way you think about generosity today?

Leader Note

Help the group recognize how their upbringing shaped their attitudes toward money, saving, and giving. Encourage them to consider how those early influences affect their generosity today, while recognizing that God's Word can reshape those attitudes.

2. What can make it difficult to be open with others about how we use our money?

Leader Note

Explore why money can feel personal, including fear of judgment, financial insecurity, and a desire for independence. Help the group consider how these sensitivities may reveal the importance money holds in their hearts without pressuring anyone to share private financial details.

Part 2: Study Questions (Engaging the Text)

Engaging the Text

SECTION A: OWNERSHIP AND STEWARDSHIP

3. Read Haggai 2:8 and Deuteronomy 8:18. How does it change the way you think about your finances when you consider that both your resources and your ability to earn them come from God?

Leader Note

Emphasize that God owns everything, including our resources and our ability to earn them. Help the group see that we are stewards of what God entrusts to us and should consider His priorities in how we spend, save, and give.

4. If your boss handed you $10,000 of company money and asked you to use it wisely, you would likely handle it carefully, knowing you would have to give an account for how you used it. How consistently do you approach your own finances with that same sense of responsibility before God? What makes it harder to view money you've earned yourself in the same way?

Leader Note

Help the group recognize how earning money can make us feel entitled to use it however we want. Encourage honest reflection on whether their financial decisions demonstrate the same care and accountability they would show when managing someone else's resources.

5. Jesus said in Matthew 6:21 that where your treasure is, your heart will be also. What do you think your current financial habits reveal about where your heart is?

> **Leader Note**
>
> *Explain that our financial habits can reveal what we value and where we look for security. Encourage honest self-examination without turning the discussion into a comparison of incomes or giving amounts.*

SECTION B: GENEROSITY AND JOY

6. Have you ever experienced genuine joy as a result of giving generously? What were the circumstances, and what did that experience teach you?

> **Leader Note**
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> *Personal experiences of giving can reveal how generosity brings joy through serving others and participating in God's work. Keep in mind that this joy doesn't always mean giving feels easy or produces an immediate emotional reward.*

7. Where would you place yourself on the spectrum of giving as religious obligation vs. as an expression of grace in the heart? What do you think it would take to move toward the latter?

Leader Note

Giving as an obligation focuses on what we feel required to do, while giving as an expression of grace flows from gratitude for what God has already done. The key distinction is that we don't give to earn God's favor; we give in response to the grace we've received through Christ.

SECTION C: THE LOCAL CHURCH

8. The New Testament describes two primary purposes for giving: supporting those who minister the gospel and advancing the ministry of the church while caring for those in need. How have you seen both of those purposes play out in your own church experience?

Leader Note

New Testament giving supports those who proclaim the gospel and enables the church to minister to others and care for those in need. Examples from participants' own experiences can help demonstrate how financial generosity contributes to these purposes.

9. How do you currently think about the balance between giving to your local church and giving to other organizations or causes? Has this sermon prompted any reconsideration?

Leader Note

The local church is an important priority because it carries out gospel ministry and cares for its people, though generosity can also extend to other worthwhile causes. The aim is thoughtful stewardship of all our resources, not establishing a rigid formula for dividing our giving.

SECTION D: SURRENDER AND THE HEART

10. Read 2 Corinthians 8:5. What does it look like practically to give yourself to the Lord before you give your money? How does that sequence change the act of giving?

> **Leader Note**
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> *In 2 Corinthians 8:5, the Macedonians gave themselves first to the Lord, and their generosity followed from that surrender. This shifts giving from simply deciding how much to contribute to considering how our entire lives and resources can honor Christ.*

11. Consider the prayer, "Lord, make me a truly generous person before you." What would need to change in your life for that prayer to become a genuine desire rather than just a polite request?

> **Leader Note**
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> *Fear, attachment to comfort, and a desire for control can make genuine generosity difficult. Lasting change begins as God's grace reshapes our desires and teaches us to trust Him rather than relying on our own efforts to become more generous.*

Part 3: Application Questions

Living It Out

Leader Note

These questions are meant to help your group move from understanding to action. The goal is specific and personal — not just general agreement that perseverance is important.

Spend 15–20 minutes here by picking 2-3 of the questions. Close with prayer.

12. On a scale of one to ten, how would you honestly rate the generosity of your heart right now, not just your giving habits but your actual posture toward money and resources?

Leader Note

The rating should reflect the person's heart toward generosity, not merely the amount they give. The purpose is to identify areas for spiritual growth, not to measure spiritual worth or compare participants.

13. Is there a specific area where you sense God may be calling you to grow in generosity during this series?

Leader Note

Growth in generosity might involve financial giving, sharing possessions or time, or confronting attitudes that hinder a willingness to give. Look for specific areas where participants can depend on God's grace to change both their actions and their hearts.

14. What is one concrete step you could take this week to begin aligning your finances more closely with the truth that everything you have belongs to God?

> **Leader Note**
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> *A practical next step might be reviewing spending, creating a giving plan, or using resources to meet a particular need. Whatever the action, connect it to the larger goal of managing God's resources faithfully rather than simply completing a financial task.*

Closing Prayer Guide

> **Leader Note**
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> *Center the prayer on gratitude for God's grace in Jesus Christ, confession of attitudes that hinder generosity, and dependence on Him to change our hearts. Ask that the series produces deeper trust in God's provision and joyful generosity flowing from lives surrendered to Christ.*

- **You are God whose grace develops true generosity in Your people, just as You stirred the hearts of the Macedonians in their affliction.**
- **I confess that my heart often clings to comfort, security, and self-reliance rather than resting in Your sufficiency.**
- **Thank You that Your grace not only saves but also shapes my desires, freeing me from the grip of fear and scarcity.**
- **By Your Spirit, work in me a deeper trust in Your provision. Teach me to give as one who has first received abundantly from Christ, whose generosity toward me never runs dry.**