

Gratitude of the Heart
October 31, 2021
Youth and Adult Bible Study – Teaching Plan
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Step 1 – Create Interest

Begin the session by asking learners to reflect back over the past twenty months as to how their lives have changed during COVID. Allow a few minutes of silent reflection. Next ask learners to reflect on how our church has changed since the arson attack on September 30, 2021. Again, allow for a few moments of silent reflection.

Ask: During these daunting days, is there a better time for us to be grateful? Is gratitude of the heart being expressed as we thank God for what didn't happen? How?

State: Today's lesson reminds us of just how grateful we should be for all the Lord has done for us. This lesson is written specifically for our Stewardship Emphasis. Direct attention to the Theme Poster you have placed **IN ADVANCE** on the focal wall. Read the theme title aloud "For His Glory!" and the theme verse 1 Peter 4:10.

Say: It is for God's glory that we enter this season of stewardship, and it is with gratitude of the heart that we seek to commit to Him our time, our talents, and our treasure. In today's study, we will be looking at Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth. Our focal passage is taken from 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.

Step 2 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 2**) which you have displayed on the focal wall **IN ADVANCE**. Read aloud the outline poster.

Once more, direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 2**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral I**), "Are We Planting?" Invite learners to turn in their Bibles to 2 Corinthians 9:6. Call on a learner to read the verse aloud. Ask: How would you paraphrase this verse? Allow learners to respond. Stress that Paul is stating a simple law of the harvest. If you sow little, you reap little. If you sow much, you will reap much.

Display the empty flowerpot which you have brought to class. Draw from the Bible background material and share the illustration of attempting to grow flowers. Say, just as it is impossible to grow flowers in a flowerpot without first planting, it

is impossible to nurture children without investing in their lives. Use Pastor Mark's illustration of his son, Micah found in the background materials. In addition, relate Mark's story of his precious mother and how she understood this biblical principal in her own battle against pancreatic cancer.

Relate: Not only must we plant, but we must also ask "What are we planting?" Display (**KIT, Item 3**), What Are You Planting poster on the focal wall. Allow learners to look at their own lives and answer the question in their hearts. Remind learners of Paul's words, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap" – Galatians 6:7. Stress once more to learners the importance of sowing good seeds from a grateful heart.

Step 3 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 2**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral II**), "Giving Reveals and Refines Our Hearts." Call on a learner to read aloud 2 Corinthians 9:7. Ask, how does our giving relate to the attitude of our heart? Stress to learners that as followers of Jesus Christ we should have a decided heart and seek to give as He has given to each of us. Ask: How do the phrases "not reluctantly or under compulsion" differ from the phrase, "cheerful giver"? Which type of giver does God desire? Remind learners that the word "cheerful" literally means "hilarious". God loves a hilarious giver! In today's world we may say, "God loves a LOL giver"!

Allow learners to once again reflect inwardly. Say, take a few moments and complete these statements silently, "God, You have blessed me in this way..." "And here is how I will respond.."

Step 4 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 2**) on the focal wall. Read Aloud (**Roman Numeral III**), "God is the Source." Call on a learner to read aloud 2 Corinthians 9:8. Stress to learners that this thought is a central reality in the passage, "God is the Source". He is the giver of all good gifts. James said it this way, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights," – James 1:17a. God is promising those that seek to follow Him, everything they will need. Ask: Since we have been given much, how should we respond? (by giving) Since we have plenty, how should we respond? (by giving) Since we have been blessed, how should we respond? (by blessing others)

State: All that we have is God's already. He has simply allowed us to be a steward of those things and to use them for His Kingdom efforts. God is our source!

Step 5 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 2**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral IV**). Call on a learner to read aloud 2 Corinthians 9:9-11. Say, as we recognize where our gifts come from, it should lead us toward generosity. Remind learners that if there is a time when they do not want to practice generosity, it is also a time when they are not grateful for what God has done for them. Relate the parable of the forgiven debt found in the Bible background materials and taken from Matthew 18:21-25. Ask, how can we allow a spirit of thanksgiving and gratefulness to invade our hearts?

Step 6 – Application

Display a commitment card and privacy envelope before the group (you should have received this in the mail). State: This year our commitment card looks somewhat different. “For His Glory,” we are asking that you prayerfully consider how God would have you respond. Notice that in addition to making a commitment to the budget, we are asking that you also prayerfully consider your time and your talent as well. In the coming days will you prayerfully consider how you will respond?

Distribute copies of “A Prayer of Reflection for His Glory” which you have photocopied **IN ADVANCE** to each learner. Allow time for learners to pray and meditate on their answers silently.

Close the session with a time of prayer asking for God’s strength to assist learners in committing their time, talents, and treasure to Him.