

Sunday school lesson: Charity, Lent week 3

For this lesson you will need your Easter tree and plastic resurrection egg #3 with a small piece of cloth inside.

Welcome! Today is Sunday #3 in our Lent series. Today we will open our third resurrection egg, but first we are going to talk about CHARITY.

Let's think a bit about charity. The word charity is also often translated as love in the Bible, particularly in the King James Version and in what we often call the "love chapter," chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians.

The last verse of that chapter is "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Usually, when we think about the word charity, what do we mean? We're thinking about charity in the sense of giving to others.

I wonder why the words charity and love are the same word? In the Bible, the word translated as charity has to do with kindness toward our fellow human beings. "Charity means participating in tangible acts of loving-kindness toward all others (friend or enemy) in unconditional and self-sacrificial ways."

So to practice charity means doing, not just speaking, acts of love. In fact, isn't that true love? In today's culture we tend to think of love as only a feeling. But real love is stronger than a feeling.

Real love is a choice. It's an action. Feelings come and go and we can't really choose the way we feel. But we can choose the way we act.

So if practicing charity means doing, not just feeling or speaking acts of love, including giving to others, what kinds of things can we give to others?

Money; time; attention; care; food; shelter; employment

What about our nation? Can we as a country practice charity to other countries? What can we as a country give to others? Shared resources, technology, expertise

How do you feel when you give something to someone else?

Is giving easy? hard? What sometimes makes giving hard? Worried about not having enough ourselves; worried the money might not go to "good use"

I wonder if anyone has a good story about giving to others...maybe a time when someone was very generous to you or a time when you gave sacrificially to someone?

How can we make charity a habit? Do it regularly, cheerfully
2 Corinthians 9:7 says Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

You might think that because you live in a care home you have nothing you can give. But remember, charity need not always be in the form of money or what we would consider a typically “charitable” act.

When Peter and John met a crippled beggar, rather than give the man coins, Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk” (Acts 3:6). Charity is giving of whatever resources we have in order to meet the need of another.

So what are some ways you can practice charity right here?

Hebrews 13:16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

What about God? He is the ultimate Giver. What has He given us? We are children of the King – God has given us life, everything

Do you think we have enough to give to others? Let's read what the apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:11 “You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.”

Why does God “enrich” us, provide abundantly? So that we can be generous. So that we have thankful hearts, giving glory to God.

We are blessed to be a blessing!

When we remember that everything we have belongs to God anyway, we give in response to His great love for us.

Now let's open our third resurrection egg. What was in our first two eggs?

Open egg #3.-- piece of cloth

John 19 **38** Now after these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, requested of Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. **39** Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred litras weight. **40** So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

So our piece of cloth in today's egg is to remind us of Jesus' burial.

Let's close our time together by praying the Lord's Prayer together.

Taken from <https://spiritualeldercare.files.wordpress.com/2020/01/lent-3-charity-worship-service.pdf>

Faithful Friends

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