



## Children Sermon - Generosity and Sharing

This Children's Sermon on Generosity and Sharing is provided by Rev. Stacy Emerson, ABCUSA Stewardship Facilitator.

### **Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8: 1 – 15**

Materials Needed: Small paper cups, 100 pieces of candy.

During this children's sermon, you'll want to divide your participants into three groups. One group should contain 15% of total participants; the next, 12%, the third, 73%.

Total Group Size	Group One	Group Two	Group Three
100	15	12	73
50	8	6	36
20	3	2	15
10	2	1	7

Every participant should have a paper cup. The next step is to divide the candy among the three groups.

Group One will receive 60 pieces of the candy. Every member of Group One will have many pieces of candy in their cups.

Group Two will receive 38 pieces of the candy. Every member of Group Two will have several pieces of candy in their cups. If you have 20 or fewer participants, make sure you use big paper cups.

Group Three will receive 2 pieces of the candy. This is not nearly enough candy for every member of Group Three to receive a piece of candy.

At this point, it is time to ask the children some questions. How do the children who have the most candy feel when they see that the majority of their friends have less candy than they do – or no candy at all? How do the children who have no candy feel when they see the other children with candy? How about the children in the middle group?

Do any of the children feel that the candy distribution has been fair? The way the candy has been distributed reflects how the world's wealth is distributed among various nations. Group One represents the wealthiest nations, including the United States. Group Two represents the nations that aren't as wealthy but aren't destitute. Group Three represents the world's poorest nations, where most people live on less than \$2.50 a day.

Income inequality is not new. When Paul wrote the letter to the Corinthians that we're reading today, some communities were wealthy, and some didn't have nearly so much. The Corinthian people were like the children in Group One: they had lots of resources. The Macedonians were like the children in Group Three: they didn't have nearly enough.

Ask the children what they would do to make the candy distribution more fair. It is very likely that their natural instinct will lead the children to share the candy more equitably. Some children may want to hold onto the candy they have; in those instances, it can help to ask them if there was a time they didn't have something and someone shared with them? Talking through the emotional experience of having a need recognized and met by someone who cares for you can prompt the generous instinct. It also leads into the next portion of the children's sermon: we care for one another because God cares for us.

This is the point Paul is making in his letter to the Corinthians. Even though the Macedonians were quite poor, they generously and actively invited Paul to be part of their community. They did this out of their belief that God loved and cared for them. We are no different today. God loves and cares for us, so we should love and care for other people. God's plan for us is one of balanced, equal sharing. That's what the last verse, "The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little." means.

Help the children distribute the candy more fairly. They will be able to see at this point that no one has too much or too little, and will understand that is what God means to have happen.