



- Use Matthew 6:24-34 for a family devotion. Jesus encourages us to trust God to take care of our needs — just as God cares for the trees, flowers and animals in creation.
- Let your children participate as you do the monthly bills. Older children might organize the checks by number before filing them. Seek to help them nurture a sense of financial responsibility and accountability.

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*In God we trust.*

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- When you are involved in outdoor activities, bring along a bag or two to pick up the trash in the area.
- Plant saplings and seedlings in the spring to increase the beauty of the earth and to replenish the soil and the air.
- On a birthday or baptism day, join in prayers thanking God for the gifts that person brings to the family.
- Gift wrap “words” or visual symbols that represent the gifts, talents and abilities that God has given the birthday person. Present this package along with the other gifts you give.

**R E S O U R C E S**

- *Smart Choices.* Rochelle Melander and Harold Eppley.
  - *Six Weeks to a Simpler Lifestyle.* Barbara DeGrote-Sorensen and David Allen Sorensen.
- Both are available from Augsburg Fortress Publishers. 800/328-4648.
- Your pastor or church leader has access to number of catalogs that provide information on additional resources. You might also browse local Christian bookstores for other resources.




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*“Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

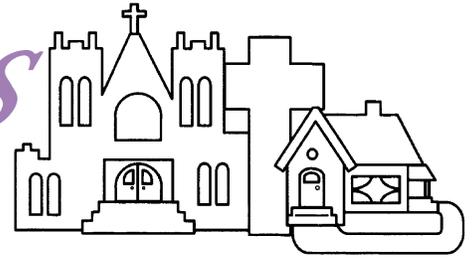
*—2 Corinthians 9:7*

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- L** As disciples, we are called to do those things that enrich our journey with Jesus. A generous heart seeks to serve the needs of God’s people. We have been blessed to be a blessing. How shall we respond?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** In Corinthians, Paul tells us that God will make us rich enough to be generous at all times so that we can bring many to thank God for the gifts they receive. How shall we respond?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** When Timothy outlined the disciple’s responsibilities toward others, he instructed that they be carried out without prejudice or special favor. How shall we respond?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** Jesus advised his disciples to use money wisely by giving to Caesar or the government, what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s. How shall we respond?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** Jesus called a rich man in search of eternal life to give up his trust in things and place his trust in God. How shall we respond?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** Leaders of homes and families, will you use your time, talents and resources in ways that honor God and serve others?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** Children, will you share the many talents and gifts God has given you?
- C** Lord, teach us to give as you have freely given.
- L** Then, join me in asking God to give us generous hearts as we seek to live out our call to discipleship.
- C** Thank you Lord, for so richly blessing us that we may be a blessing to others. Amen.

# *nurturing lifestyles*

that are Christ's style



## GIVE

These pages will help people in whatever family relationships they live to honor their call to discipleship as they nurture generous hearts and the healthy stewardship of time, talents and resources.

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*"God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work."*  
— 2 Corinthians 9:8.

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## BRINGING IT HOME

Dollar or cent signs are everywhere. We see them in advertisements, in store windows and outside gas stations. Money is a pretty big deal to us. It is one of many of life's necessities.

Did you know that, aside from the many New Testament references to the Kingdom of God, the Bible spends more time talking about money related issues than any other subject?

Look at a dollar bill and find the phrase "In God We Trust." The words remind us that every time we use money to buy or to invest we affirm our trust in God.

## WE ARE BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

*Share the words to a prayer we often use in worship and discuss its meaning.*

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*Dear Lord, We offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us, our selves, our time and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

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Look over these ideas for nurturing a generous heart. Choose one, two or more. Feel free to adapt them to fit your situation.

- Identify your gifts. Plan ways to use them to help others. Then help your loved ones do the same.
- Scan your own cupboards for canned and dry goods you can share with a local food pantry.

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*6% of the world uses over 40% of the world's resources and creates over 70% of it's waste.*

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- Help children identify clothes they've outgrown and invite them to share them with younger children in need. As a family, deliver your contributions to a local clothes distribution center.
- Add up the wealth you have accumulated. Is it more than enough, just enough, or not enough? Based on your response, decide what you can do to help others in your local and global community who have "not enough."

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*There is enough in this world for everyone's need, but not for anyone's greed.* — Mahatma Gandhi

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- Make a contribution to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal or Disaster Relief.
- Model regular giving to your church. Help your children fill their church school offering envelopes when you fill yours. Explain to them why people give.
- Set aside funds for charitable gifts and church offerings off the top of your monthly net income. Giving first inspires a different feeling than waiting to see if there is anything left over.

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*"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*  
— Luke 12:34

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