



**Educate
+ Engage**



THE
GENEROUS
LIFE:



A
Full House

OVERVIEW

The Lord desires that His house be full. Through our generosity, we have the privilege of playing a great part in accomplishing that mission!

Scripture Passage

Exodus 30:11–16, NLT

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Whenever you take a census of the people of Israel, each man who is counted must pay a ransom for himself to the Lord. Then no plague will strike the people as you count them. Each person who is counted must give a small piece of silver as a sacred offering to the Lord. (This payment is half a shekel, based on the sanctuary shekel, which equals twenty gerahs.) All who have reached their twentieth birthday must give this sacred offering to the LORD. When this offering is given to the LORD to purify your lives, making you right with him, the rich must not give more than the specified amount, and the poor must not give less. Receive this ransom money from the Israelites, and use it for the care of the Tabernacle. It will bring the Israelites to the LORD’s attention, and it will purify your lives.”

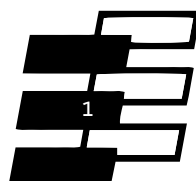
EDUCATE

Wallet. Keys. Phone. Many people consult a mental checklist each time they leave the house. No one wants the uneasy feeling you get when you think you lost something.

Luke 15 is the Lost and Found chapter in the Bible. Jesus taught about the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. The shepherd was unsettled and left his ninety-nine remaining sheep to go find the one sheep that was missing. A woman lost a coin in her house. She swept and searched until she found it and secured it again. A father was unsettled and watched for his lost son to return home.

But in none of these situations was everything lost. The shepherd still had ninety-nine other sheep, the woman still had nine more coins, and the father still had another son. Was losing just one thing really that big of a deal? Yes!

These stories remind us that Jesus cares so deeply for people that He’s not content if even one is lost. He’s not comfortable with only ninety-nine being safe; He’s concerned about the one who is missing. When one is lost, He’s determined to rescue the one. Jesus desires that His house be full.



Lesson 3

Discussion Question: What do you have that's valuable enough to stop everything you're doing and search for it?

In Luke 14 Jesus shared another story. He told of a man who had scheduled a great feast. He sent out multiple invitations that were rejected because of excuses people made. Twice more, he sent his servant out. He gave generous invitations, but this time to the blind, lame, halt, and maimed. The man hosting the supper had gone to great lengths to prepare it. Much sacrifice was involved, and he did not want his generosity to go to waste. He wanted his house to be full (Luke 14:23).

Even though not everyone will accept the invitation to the great feast Jesus is preparing—the Marriage Supper of the Lamb—we must spread the word so no one is unaware that Jesus wants them there and how they get there. The grandeur of the occasion will be like nothing anyone has ever seen before!

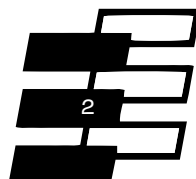
Discussion Question: What can you do to compel people to be ready for Heaven?

Our Scripture passage in the Book of Exodus speaks of a half-shekel offering that was required of every person over the age of twenty. It was to be a ransom for their souls. This offering belonged to the Lord, but the Israelites couldn't give it directly to Him. Instead, they gave it to Moses who was to use it for the upkeep of the Tabernacle where Israel brought their sacrifices to worship and the ministry ministered before the Lord. This half-shekel offering financially provided for the care of the Tabernacle, and it was God's half shekel.

If you were rich, you brought a half shekel; if you were poor, you brought a half shekel. It was a reminder that each Israelite was responsible to help take care of the house of God. Everyone in Israel could prioritize worship and contribute so their generation and the next generations would have a place of worship. In other words no one was valued more if they could give more than someone else, and no one was off the hook or exempt from giving. Everyone gave equally.

Our generosity is not only about money. It's about our desire to be connected to the kingdom of God and His plan for our lives, which involves trusting Him with all our resources. We have what we have because our God has generously given it all to us. We do our part to help take care of God's house and make sure there is a place for future generations to worship God together.

This half shekel was known as Israel's offering, and it was to provide for the house of God. But there was another call from God to His people, and it was a test of their faith and trust in Him; it was called the tithe. When they harvested one hundred sheaves of wheat, they brought the first ten sheaves they harvested to God as their tithe. It was a simple reminder that God gave



them their bountiful harvest. Without Him sending the sunshine and rain, they would not have harvested one sheaf, much less one hundred. Further it was given to help ensure a man of God such as a priest would always have enough to be able to give himself full time to doing God's work. Otherwise, the priests would have had to divide their time between ministering in the Tabernacle and providing for their family.

And their tithe was a silent sign that they trusted God would provide for them when they put Him first. Tithing was not a sacrifice; it was a privilege. Malachi wrote in his book that the tithe belonged to the Lord, so when we tithe from money we make in our job, we return the first tenth of it to the Lord for much the same reasons Israel returned their tithe. We prioritize God, we tithe to help provide for the ministry, and we show God we trust Him to provide for us when we return to Him what is already His. We are stewarding (managing) His resources, not ours.

This lesson isn't about giving people our all; it's about God receiving all. Many people believe we aren't tied to Old Testament laws requiring offerings for the ransom of souls or tithes for the ministry. Jesus paid it all on Calvary. But when we generously give our offerings and return our tithes, we are expanding efforts to help others find redemption and a church family who will welcome them. We may not be giving to people, but we are giving for people. Our generosity extends the same opportunity for salvation that was given to us, providing a place for worship, a place for praise, a place to discover Jesus.

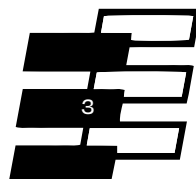
When we generously share the talents and finances God has given us, we begin to recognize God's mission is about more than just us; it's about others as well. Because God been generous to us, we can give generously to Him, so in turn His house will be filled with whosoever will heed His call.

Closing

God encourages us to prove He is exactly who He said He is, so give generously and watch Him fulfill His word. (See Malachi 3:8–12.) Be faithful in using your time, talent, and treasure to share the gospel so God's house may be full.

ENGAGE

Maybe our outreach efforts are lacking. Are we compelling people to give themselves to God and accept His invitation to make Heaven their eternal home? Perhaps our worship has grown cold. Are we intimidated to worship? Do we hold anything back? What about our financial giving? Do we trust God enough to be who His Word says—a generous God who will give back to us generously?



Lesson 3

As we close, let us ask the Lord to show us any areas where we have yet to trust Him enough to give Him all and then reflect on how to serve Him better.

Discussion Question: If you are not yet generous with your finances, why don't you start by trusting God today?

Consider sharing opportunities for students to give locally and globally and help them know the methods whereby they can give.

