

# Lent 2021

## Cultivating the Fruits of the Spirit

### Discussion Questions

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Developed by the Pastors and the Adult Deepening Team



Lepta coins from 1st century Judea (<https://coinquest.com/cgi-bin/cq/coins.pl?coin=8934>)

## Week Four: Generosity

(Week of March 14)



**UNITED PARISH IN BROOKLINE**

American Baptist • United Church of Christ • United Methodist

### **Purpose of this Lenten study**

To expand our individual understanding of the gifts - or fruits - of the Spirit  
To explore how we can cultivate and embody these gifts to feel more in alignment with and authentic with God  
To appreciate that each of us has particular gifts to contribute to the fruitfulness of our community aspirations and efforts

Based on Galatians 5:22-23:

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

### **Purpose of this session**

To introduce and examine generosity as a Christian virtue

## **Week Four: Gratitude**

### **Opening Prayer**

Dear God,  
Giver of all the fruits of the Holy Spirit, be with us as we explore the virtue of generosity in this third week of Lent. We thank you for guiding all of us in the United Parish community who are joining us in this Lenten journey. May we explore generosity with honesty and sincerity, and may we learn to be truly generous with ourselves and others.

*Amen.*

### **Scripture**

#### **GOSPELS**

**Luke 21:1-4 (The Inclusive Bible):** Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting their offerings into the Temple treasury, and then he noticed an impoverished woman, a widow, putting in two copper coins. At that he said, "The truth is, this woman has put in more than all the rest. They made contributions out of their surplus, but she from her want has given what she couldn't afford--every penny she had to live on."

## EPISTLES

**Romans 12:6-9 (The Inclusive Bible):** We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophecy, use it in proportion to your faith. If your gift is ministry, use it for service. If you are a teacher, use your gift for teaching. If you are good at preaching, then preach boldly. If you give to charity, then give generously; if you are a leader, exercise your authority with care; if you help others, do so cheerfully. Your love must be sincere. Hate what is evil and cling to what is good.

### **2 CORINTHIANS 8:12–15, Giving Shouldn't Be A Burden**

<sup>12</sup> For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. <sup>13</sup> I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between <sup>14</sup> your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. <sup>15</sup> As it is written,

“The one who had much did not have too much,  
and the one who had little did not have too little.”

### **Discussion Questions**

Do you think of yourself as a generous person?

In what ways are you generous? Are you generous out of your own abundance, your own need, or some combination of these?

Who has been unexpectedly generous to you? In what way (time, money, depth of concern and connection)?

How could you incorporate more generosity into your daily life? How could you incorporate more genuine, healthy generosity into your daily life?

How does the idea of generosity differ between the gospels and the epistles?

### **Closing Prayer**

Dear God,

Thank you for your great love and care, your goodness and mercy, and your true generosity toward all Creation, in this Lenten journey and always. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to explore generosity together, as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit and our own spirits. Guide as we embark upon this week- that we may be truly generous, grateful, humble, and gentle in the ways you would choose for us. May we support each other as we grow these fruits in our communal Spirit.

In your many names we pray,

*Amen.*