

Generosity

*Making someone's day
by giving something away*

Be Rich Principle

1 Timothy 6:18

MEMORY VERSE | 1 Timothy 6:18

Andy Short was the tallest kid in his class.

In fact, he tried to be the most or best at everything he did.

Fastest in the 100-meter dash.

Reddest, spikiest hair in school.

Biggest grin in the class photo.

And at Christmas time, Andy was determined to be the best gift giver ever. He carefully thought through his list. "Okay, gotta get something for the class gift exchange," he remembered. "And Mom and Dad. Oh, and Kirsten, I guess."

Kirsten, Andy's little sister, was only annoying about half the time. So he figured he should get her a present, too.

Andy picked up the piggy bank he'd used for saving money ever since he was a little kid. "Let's see how much I got..."

He shook out coins and dug around for the bills, but when he counted up the total, it only came to eight dollars and sixty-two cents.

"I had way more than that!" he exclaimed. But then he remembered that the previous month, he'd nearly emptied out the piggy bank to buy the newest, fastest PSPgo for himself.

"Ooops," he sighed.

Andy examined his limited funds and wracked his brain. "How do I get three of the best gifts ever with this?" he wondered. "I could just get candy. Um... giant candy canes?"

Andy looked up giant candy canes online. “Twenty-seven dollars each?!” he groaned. “Okay, I guess I’m just getting chocolate bars for everyone. I’ll make it peppermint chocolate.”

Discouraged, Andy wandered into the kitchen to get a snack. He discovered his Aunt Mischa hard at work. She wore a sweater with dinosaurs decorating a Christmas tree and was stirring a massive bowl of batter loaded down with fruit and nuts.

“What’s that?” Andy asked.

“Fruitcake!” his aunt announced. “We forgot the cranberries, so your mom ran out to get some.”

Andy took a look at the dozen cake tins sitting on the counter; there would be enough fruitcake to feed an army. “What are you doing with all those?” he wondered.

Andy examined his limited funds and wracked his brain.

“Gifts!” Aunt Mischa exclaimed.

“Oh.” Andy wasn’t a fan of cake with prunes in it, but apparently some people were.

“You doing any Christmas shopping this year?” Aunt Mischa asked, shaking some more walnuts into the batter.

Andy sighed. “Yeah. Well, kinda. I don’t really have money for gifts.”

His aunt expertly whipped in the nuts. “Since when is that a problem?”

“Since stores expect you to *pay* for the stuff you buy,” Andy pointed out, thumping down onto one of the kitchen chairs.

“True.” His aunt grinned. “I had something different in mind.”

“Different than money is good.”

Aunt Mischa held up batter-covered hands. “My hands are a mess. Grab my phone, will you? And pull up the Bible app.”

Andy picked up his aunt’s phone off the table. The case was covered in bright green rhinestones.

His aunt frowned, thinking. “Search for, um . . . it’s in First Timothy. Chapter 6, maybe?”

She took a look as Andy scrolled. “Down . . . down . . . there it is.”

“Verse 18?” asked Andy.

“You read it,” Aunt Mischa told him.

Andy cleared his throat and read, “*Command the rich to do what is good. Tell them to be rich in doing good things. They must give freely. They must be willing to share.*” (NirV)

Aunt Mischa returned to beating the batter. “There you go.”

Andy frowned. “But I’m not rich. That’s the whole point!”

“No, the second part,” his aunt reminded him. “*Rich in doing good things.*”

“So . . .” Andy thought for a moment. “Like, do stuff for people as gifts?”

“Fun stuff,” Aunt Mischa agreed. “Creative stuff. Use your imagination.”

Andy stood up. “Yeah, maybe,” he said. “Thanks.”

He grabbed a fresh-baked Christmas cookie and headed for the door—then glanced back at Aunt Mischa and her brightly colored sweater. The lights on the Christmas tree actually flashed on and off.

“Dinosaurs decorating a Christmas tree?” he couldn’t help asking.

“Who says dinosaurs can’t love Baby Jesus?” Aunt Mischa replied.

Shaking his head, Andy returned to his room. Even though his piggy bank was nearly empty, his head was full of new ideas.

The following week, Andy proudly added a small gold envelope to the table for the class gift exchange. It was the tiniest gift there. All the other presents were picked first, and a kid named Carlos ended up with Andy’s gift. He looked pretty bummed out—until he opened the envelope and pulled out the certificate inside.

He read slowly, “Three awesome lessons in how to win at LEGO® Indiana Jones or your game of choice. Plus, unlimited homemade snacks.” After a moment of surprise, Carlos beamed. “Wow! That’s super cool! Can you show me how to beat the Chalice Challenge?”

“Totally!” Andy responded, excited his unusual gift had gone over so well.

On Christmas morning, Andy presented another small envelope to his parents. “Wash and detail both cars,” read his dad. “Whoa!”

Even though his piggy bank was nearly empty, Andy’s head was full of new ideas.

Mom laughed. “You know how many old waffle fries are under those minivan seats?”

“I’ll track down every single one,” Andy promised.

“Now that’s what I call a real gift!” Dad exclaimed.

Andy had another envelope ready for his sister. “Ten games of Chutes and Ladders,” Kirsten read, “And you get to pick the movie for family movie night three weeks in a row.” She shrieked with delight, “Any movie I want?!”

“Even if it’s the same one every time,” Andy told her.

“I pick *Frozen!*” Kristen announced.

Andy even had a bonus gift for Aunt Mischa when she came over for Christmas dinner. He’d cut a small branch from the pine tree in the backyard and decorated it with lights and plastic dinosaurs.

“It’s fantastic,” his aunt said, examining all the detail. “I can see you got creative with your gifts this year.”

“It was really fun, too!” Andy said. “Though I may not think so when we’re watching *Frozen* for the third time . . .”

“Or when you’re scraping crusty ketchup out from under the van seats,” Mom added.

Andy grinned and nodded. Things might get a little messy. But it was all worth it to find the best new way to give.



Let's Talk!

Generosity is about so much more than just buying something at the store and popping it in a gift bag.

What’s the most creative gift someone has ever given you? It might be something they made, an experience, or even time. Take a few minutes and share with each other. Now brainstorm a list of creative ways that your family could give this Christmas. Choose one and plan a time to do it. Pray for each other—ask God to help you use your imaginations to find creative ways to give.