

Unit 2: The Seven Virtues

Lesson 2.4: Charity

Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

For the Lesson: Orthodox Study Bible or Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition

Recommended Orthodox Study Bible [HERE](#).

Recommended Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition [HERE](#).

Scripture Reference:

1Corinthians 13:1-13

Activities:

Implement based on available time. Detailed instructions and materials lists are provided in the lesson.

Activity: My Charity in Action Cards

Words of the week:

սէր - ser -love

համբերաստար - ham-per-a-dar - patient

ազնիւ - az-neev - kind

Objective:

Students will understand that charity is active, self-giving love that reflects the heart of Christ. They will learn that true love is shown through actions, not just words or feelings, and that practicing charity in daily life helps keep their faith alive and Christ-centered.

Moral Character Focus:

Knowledge: Students will learn that charity means loving others through patience, kindness, forgiveness, and service, even when it is difficult or inconvenient.

Understanding: Students will understand that charity goes beyond being nice or polite. It requires sacrifice and a willingness to put others before themselves, following the example of Jesus.

Application: Students will practice showing charity through small, intentional actions at home, at school, with friends, and online, choosing love in moments when it is not easy.

Values: Students will grow to value compassion, humility, mercy, and self-giving love, recognizing that charity is essential to living out their faith and becoming more like Christ.

Memory Verse:

*“Love is patient, love is kind; love does not envy,
love does not boast, it is not proud.”*

- 1 Corinthians 13:4

Lesson

**Wisdom Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տու՛ր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քն՝ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց եւ ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քն արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos yev paneets yen kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

Lesson Body: Charity

Today we are talking about charity, one of the greatest virtues in the Christian life. Charity is not just being nice. It is not just having good feelings toward people. Charity is love that acts. Love that gives. Love that sacrifices. Lets ask ourselves a question.

Q: *Are you kind?*

If you asked people your age, “Are you a kind person?” almost everyone would say yes. Most people think they are loving. Most people think they are good. But is it always the case? Maybe we must ask a different question.

Q: *Are we loving when it is easy or when it costs us something?*

When we are safe and comfortable it is easy to be kind to your friends, it is easy to be nice when you are in a good mood, it is easy to love people who love you back.

What Is Charity?

Charity is love that seeks the good of another person, even when it costs you something.

In Armenian, the word is սէր (ser), but in the life of the Church it means more than affection. It means self-giving love. Love that moves outward. Charity is not just how you feel. Charity is what you choose to do.

Let’s be clear about what charity is not.

- Charity is not being polite while secretly being selfish.
- Charity is not liking someone’s post and calling that love.
- Charity is not only helping when it is convenient.
- Charity is choosing patience when you are annoyed.
- Charity is giving your time when you would rather keep it.
- Charity is forgiving when you would rather hold a grudge.

Q: *Can you think of a time when loving someone felt hard or inconvenient? What made it difficult?*

Charity matters because love is the heart of everything we believe and practice. A person can know the Bible well, follow every rule, fast regularly, pray faithfully, and even serve others, yet still miss the very purpose of the Christian life if love is absent. Without charity, faith becomes hollow and actions lose their meaning. Love is what gives life to our obedience, warmth to our discipline, and purpose to our service. Charity is what turns beliefs into relationships and actions into genuine care. It is how our faith becomes visible and real to others, reflecting the love of Christ not just in words, but in the way we live and treat those around us.

Saint Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 that without love, even the greatest actions are empty. Charity is not an extra part of Christianity. It is the heart of it.

How Does Charity Makes You Christlike?

Jesus did not love people only when it was easy. He loved the sick, the rejected, the sinners, and even His enemies. He continued to love those who misunderstood Him, those who betrayed Him, and even those who nailed Him to the Cross. This kind of love is the model for true charity. Charity is how we begin to look like Christ, not only in what we believe, but in how we treat others when love is inconvenient or costly. Without charity, faith slowly becomes cold and rigid. It turns into rule-following without compassion, judging others instead of understanding them, and quietly believing we are better than someone else. Charity keeps faith alive, warm, and real by shaping our hearts to reflect Christ rather than just our knowledge.

When charity is missing, faith can become:

- Focused on rules instead of relationships
- More about being right than being loving
- Quick to judge and slow to forgive

When charity is present, faith becomes:

- Compassionate, patient, and humble
- Rooted in mercy rather than pride
- A living witness of Christ's love in everyday life

Charity reminds us that the goal of faith is not perfection, but transformation into the likeness of Christ.

Q: Why do you think it is easier to talk about love than to actually practice it?

Words of the Week:

սէր - ser -love

համբերատար - ham-per-a-dar - patient

ազնիւ - az-neev - kind

Memory Verse:

“Love is patient, love is kind; love does not envy, love does not boast, it is not proud.”

- 1 Corinthians 13:4

Biblical Examples

The Good Samaritan: Love in Action (Luke 10)

A man is beaten and left on the road. Religious people see him and walk away. They have reasons. They are busy. They are careful. They do not want to get involved.

But a Samaritan stops. He gives time. He gives money. He risks inconvenience.

Jesus ends the story by saying, “Go and do likewise.”

Charity does not ask, “Is this my responsibility?”

Charity asks, “How can I help?”

Jesus Washing the Disciples' Feet (John 13)

Jesus, the Son of God, kneels and washes dirty feet.

This was a servant's job.

A humiliating job.

Jesus shows that love is not about being above others. It is about serving them.

Charity is not something abstract. It may show up in most ordinary moments and places.

At home:

- Lack of charity looks like snapping at siblings, ignoring parents, refusing to help unless asked, or doing the bare minimum.
- Charity looks like helping without being asked, speaking respectfully even when frustrated, and choosing patience instead of sarcasm.

At school:

- Lack of charity looks like joining in gossip, laughing when someone is embarrassed, or ignoring someone who feels invisible.
- Charity looks like standing up for someone, including the quiet kid, and refusing to make someone else the joke.

With friends:

- Lack of charity looks like only caring about your own plans, getting jealous easily, or holding grudges.
- Charity looks like listening instead of interrupting, forgiving instead of keeping score, and being loyal even when it costs popularity.

Online:

- Lack of charity looks like mean comments, oversharing, seeking attention, or being cruel behind a screen.
- Charity looks like using words carefully, refusing to pile on negativity, and remembering there is a real person on the other side.

Q: *Where do you think charity is hardest for people your age? Why?*

Commonly Asked Questions about Charity

“Is charity just about being nice?”

No. Being nice is easy. Charity is loving even when it is uncomfortable.

“What if someone does not deserve my kindness?”

None of us deserve God’s mercy. Charity is not about what others deserve. It is about who you are becoming.

“What if I keep failing at loving others?”

You will. Everyone does. Charity is learned through repentance and practice. God’s grace meets you every time you try again.

“How do I know if I am loving or just pretending?”

Ask yourself:

- Am I willing to sacrifice anything?
- Do I love only when it benefits me?
- Would I act the same way if no one noticed?

What Does Charity Cost You?

Jesus did not love only when it was easy or comfortable. He chose to love the sick, the rejected, the misunderstood, the betrayer, and even those who nailed Him to the Cross. This kind of love forces us to rethink what we mean by faith. Charity is not an optional virtue or a personality trait. It is the way faith stays alive. When charity is missing, faith slowly hardens into rule-keeping without mercy, truth without compassion, and confidence without humility. We begin measuring ourselves against others instead of measuring our lives against Christ. Charity keeps faith warm and human. It pushes us beyond knowing the right things and challenges us to become the kind of people whose lives quietly reflect the self-giving love of Jesus, especially when loving costs us something.

Reflection question: *Reflect on past few days. Did you choose yourself over love at any point? Where could charity have changed your response?*

Activity: My Charity in Action Cards

Materials: Index cards or half sheets of paper, markers, stickers

Create three simple plans to practice charity this week.

1. On one side of each card, write:

MY CHARITY ACTION

2. Choose one specific act of love you will practice this week.

Examples:

- "I will help at home without complaining."
- "I will include someone who is usually left out."
- "I will forgive someone I am holding a grudge against."
- "I will speak kindly even when I am annoyed."

3. On the other side, write:

WHY THIS MATTERS

Examples:

- "Because love is how I follow Christ."
- "Because people remember how we treat them."
- "Because I want my faith to be real."

4. Decorate if you want. Keep it somewhere visible.

5. If preferred, do this on two more cards, to have one for each day of the week.



Review

Memory Verse Review:

“Love is patient, love is kind; love does not envy, love does not boast, it is not proud.” (1 Corinthians 13:4)

Words of the Week:

սէր - ser -love

համբերատար - ham-per-a-dar - patient

ազնիւ - az-neeuv - kind

Life Application

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

This week, charity will not usually show up in big, dramatic moments. It will show up in the small, everyday situations that are easy to overlook. It will be there when you want to snap back at someone who annoys you, when you feel tempted to ignore someone who needs attention, or when putting yourself first seems easier than being kind. Those moments may feel small, but they matter deeply. Charity is not about doing something impressive once in a while. It is about making daily choices to love like Christ in ordinary moments, one decision at a time.

Lesson Review Questions:

1. What is charity? How is it different from just being nice? (*Charity is self-giving love that seeks the good of others, even when it costs something. Being nice is easy. Charity requires sacrifice*)
2. Why does Saint Paul say love is more important than anything else? (*Without love, faith and good actions are empty*)
3. Where does charity show up in everyday life? (*At home, at school, with friends, and online*)
4. Why does real charity always cost something? (*Because it requires giving time, comfort, pride, or forgiveness*)
5. What is one act of charity you want to practice this week? (*Answers will vary*)

* *Departing Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesher-ee, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sa-sanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.