

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Generosity” the High School Sunday school lesson for January 22, 2017. The lesson is found on page 49 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



When pop music star George Michael recently passed away, many news outlets gave a brief bio of his life. People talked about his hit songs and his career as a performer, and of his struggles with the tabloid press. But in story after story, what was revealed about this British icon was something that didn't make the headlines when he was alive. In fact, he didn't want these stories to be talked about at all.

George Michael was by all accounts one of the most secretly generous celebrities of recent times. From donating hundreds of thousands of dollars, to giving free concerts, to working as a volunteer, to giving up the royalties from mega-hit recordings, Michael regularly supported many charitable organizations, including ones working to fight cancer, help children, and raise awareness about HIV.

Beyond these stories of planned giving, he was also seen to be spontaneously generous—dropping a student nurse working as a waitress a tip of five thousand British pounds and calling in to a game show he was watching because he saw a contestant who needed fifteen thousand to pay for fertility treatments (he gave her the whole amount).

And in each of these stories, the people involved reported that Michael asked them to keep his acts of generosity quiet and not to tell the press. He didn't want attention—in one interview he expressed the view that the general public was annoyed with “celebrities patting each other on the back saying how generous they are being.” Perhaps he felt it was easy for celebrities with wealthy bank accounts to be generous and that their giving should just be a normal thing. But his giving was apparently above the norm.

*As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:*

**What do you think drives people to be generous?**

**George Michael enjoyed a lot of fame as a singing star. Why do you think he didn't want to be known for his generous acts as well?**

**If you had a lot of money, what would you do with it? Do you find it hard to be generous? Why or why not?**

**Obviously, it is better to be generous than selfish. But let's look in the Bible to learn three ways generosity leaves a lasting impact.**