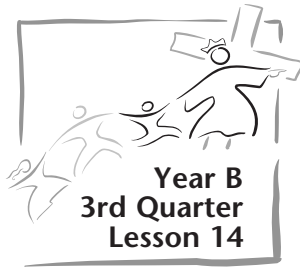


LESSON



The Poor Widow's Offering

WORSHIP

We worship God by what we do.

References

Luke 21:1-4; Mark 12:41-44; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 614-616.

Memory Verse

"God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that giving is an act of worship.

Feel joy when giving.

Respond by giving willingly and cheerfully.

The Message



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

In the Temple one day Jesus watches different people putting their offerings in the treasury. Rich people throw in large amounts of money, but one widow slips in two very small copper coins. Jesus calls His disciples to Him and declares that the poor widow has given more than all the others.

This is a lesson about worship.

Jesus recognized the widow's gift

of two small coins of very little material value as an amazing act of worship. She gave the last that she had out of her devotion to God. We too worship God by what we do and give.

Teacher Enrichment

"Not the great things which every eye sees and every tongue praises does God account most precious. The little duties cheerfully done, the little gifts which make no show, and which to human eyes

FOURTEEN

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Coin Rubbings</i> B. <i>Heads/Tails Flip</i> C. <i>Hidden Treasure</i>	coins of different denominations, crayons or colored pencils, paper, scissors (optional) coins two bags of coins
* Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	See page 146. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	Bible-times costumes, small denomination coins or pebbles, collection box
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible, two coins, song on page 145
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Showing Our Love</i>	large bag or box, dish towel, toy, child-sized article of clothing, spoon, watering can, songbook, picture of children, nonperishable food item
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Cheerfully Loving God</i>	two coins for each child or coin rubbings from Readiness Activity A

may appear worthless, often stand highest in His sight. A heart of faith and love is dearer to God than the most costly gift. The poor widow gave her living to do the little that she did. She deprived herself of food in order to give those two mites to the cause she loved. And she did it in faith, believing that her heavenly Father would not overlook her great need. It was this unselfish spirit and childlike faith that won the Savior's commendation" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 615).

Can your students tell that you cheerfully give of yourself to them? Have you ever denied yourself to give as the widow did? Ask God to give you the courage to do so.

Room Decorations

Create an area to look like the outer court of the temple with columns, a gold covering for the wall, and a box for the offering. This area can be used during Experiencing the Story.

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. Coin Rubbings

Show children how to make an image of the face of a coin by placing a piece of paper over the coin and gently rubbing a crayon or colored pencil over the surface. If you wish, you may allow the children to cut out their rubbings and use them during Experiencing the Story.

You Need:

- coins of various denominations
- crayons or colored pencils
- paper
- scissors (optional)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What are some things shown on your coin? (face or building, date, etc.) Is your tracing a real coin? Could you take it to the store and use it to buy something? No, the storekeeper would tell you your coin is worthless. Our Bible story today is about a woman who gave an offering that was so small, some people thought it was worthless. But Jesus said her gift was of great value. Our story for today will tell us why. Our message for today is:**



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Say that with me.

B. Heads/Tails Flip

You Need:

- coin for each child

Give each child a small denomination coin and keep one for yourself. Flip your coin and note heads or tails (“heads” is when the coin’s top lands faceup; “tails” is when the opposite side lands faceup). Instruct the children to flip their coins and note heads or tails. For this game their coins are worth something only if they match yours. Those whose coin matches yours are still in the game. The others must sit down. Continue until only one child is left.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **In this game what made your coin valuable or worth something? (When the teacher’s heads or tails matched mine.) How did you feel when your coin was no longer valuable for**

the game? (sad, embarrassed, didn't care, etc.) **Our Bible story today is about a woman who was embarrassed to bring an offering because she didn't think it was worth enough. She felt like those of you who were out of the game right away. But Jesus said this woman's gift was very valuable. What made the difference is that she gave her gift cheerfully. And that leads me to today's message:**



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Say that with me.

C. Hidden Treasure

In advance: Hide the two bags of coins (treasures) somewhere in your classroom, the church, or outside on the grounds.

Divide the class into two teams. Give each team instructions to find the treasure and bring it to you. Assign an adult helper to each group. (Large class option: hide more than two treasures; have more than two groups looking for them.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How did you feel about going on a treasure hunt? How did you feel when you found your treasure?** (For one team, excited or happy. For another, perhaps disappointed with how small the treasure was.) **Was one treasure better than the other? Why?** Hold up the sack with two coins in it. **Jesus said this treasure was worth more than this treasure.** Hold up the sack with a lot of coins in it. **How can that be? The difference was in how willingly and happily it was given. That makes me think of today's message:**

You Need:

- bag full of coins
- bag with two coins



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Say that with me.



NOTE: Prayer and Praise appears on page 146.

2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- small denomination coins or pebbles
- collection box

Characters

- several rich people
- widow
- Jesus (adult)
- several disciples

Dress the children in Bible-times costumes. Wrap a scarf or towel around the head of the child who will play the widow. Give each of the children who are to play rich people a handful of coins. Give the widow two small coins. Position your offering box so it is visible to all.

Prompt the children to act out their parts at the appropriate time.

Read or tell the story.

One day Jesus was sitting with His disciples in the Temple, watching the people who were bringing their offerings. Back then people took their offerings to the Temple court and dropped them into the collection boxes.

Many rich people lived in Jerusalem. They lived in nice houses. They wore fancy clothes. They had plenty to eat. After they had paid for their nice houses and fancy clothes and good food, they would take some of the money left over and give it as an offering at the Temple. Dressed in their finest clothes, they went to the Temple when they knew a lot of people would be there. They would look around to be sure people were watching. Then they would pour their money into the collection box. *[Prompt the children who play the rich people to drop in their money, making as big a show as possible.]*

The rich people liked it when people turned to see who had brought so much money. They hoped people were whispering about them behind their backs.

“See how much offering so-and-so brought? Why, he certainly is a rich man, and so generous too.”

Jesus saw those people who brought such large offerings to the Temple. And He knew that they brought only what was left over after they bought all the things they wanted. He knew they hadn’t given up a single thing in order to bring a big offering.

Then Jesus noticed one more person at the collection box—a woman. She wasn’t dressed in fancy clothes. Her husband had died, so she was a widow. Many times she might have gone without food. She might have gone without new clothes also.

The widow waited until all the people with big offerings were gone. Then she too looked around to see if anyone was watching. When she felt sure no one would see her, she slipped two tiny coins into the collection box and hurried away. *[Prompt the child playing the widow to drop in the two coins and then walk past the person playing Jesus.]*

But Jesus had seen her. He had seen her slip those two coins into the offering box. And she had seen Him watching her. As she walked away He said to His disciples *[have your adult playing Jesus say this part]*: “This poor widow has given more than all the others. They gave gifts knowing that they have everything they need. But poor as she is, she gave all she has.”

She might not have had money to buy bread for supper that night. But she didn’t care. As she heard Jesus’ words, “tears of joy filled her eyes as she felt that her act was understood and appreciated.”* And even though everything she owned was just a tiny, tiny bit—less than one *[name your smallest coin]*—Jesus said

she gave more than all the others, because she gave out of her love for God.

** The Desire of Ages, p. 615.*

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Who brought offerings to the Temple that day when Jesus was watching? Why do you think Jesus said the widow put in more than all the others? How do you think the widow felt when she heard Jesus say she had given more than others? Why do you think the widow put all her money into the offering box? How do you think we should feel about giving our offerings? Remember our message? Let's say it together:**

Debriefing

Ask: **What did the rich people put in the offering box? What did the widow give as an offering? What did Jesus say about her offering? How much did you give in Sabbath School today?**

Memory Verse

Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 9:7 and say: **This is where we find our memory verse.** Point to each word as you read the text aloud. **"God loves a cheerful giver."** Then proceed to teach the memory verse as outlined below.

Sing the memory verse to the tune at the bottom of this page. Or use no. 29 of *Little Voices Praise Him*.

You Need:

- Bible
- two coins
- music for "Cheerful Giver" (see below)



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Bible Study

Open your Bible to Luke 21:1-4.

You Need:
 Bible

Point to the text and say, **This is where today's story is found in God's**

Word, the Bible. Point to each verse as you read the text aloud.

*God loves a cheerful giver,
Cheerful giver,
Cheerful giver;
God loves a cheerful giver,
Cheerful givers God loves.*

When the children have learned the song, ask them to sit in a circle. Pass the two coins from child to child while the music plays and everyone sings the song. When the music stops, note who is holding the coins. Continue until every child has had a chance to hold the coins. Then have everyone say the verse together.

God loves a cheer-ful giv - er, cheer-ful giv - er, cheer-ful giv - er;

God loves a cheer-ful giv - er, cheer-ful giv - ers God loves.

PRAYER AND PRAISE



Fellowship

Report the children's joys and sorrows (as appropriate). Greet visitors and introduce each. Acknowledge birthdays or special events. Review last week's memory verse.

Suggested Songs

- "God Loves a Cheerful Giver" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 29)
- "Here Is My Money" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 32)
- "A Boat Goes Sailing" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 35)
- "My God Is So Great" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 112)

Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

Offering

Ask: **Did you know that God gives us everything? When we bring our offerings, we give back to Jesus a little of what He gives us.**

Prayer

Say: **There are many ways to worship God. We worship when we pray, and when we tell God we love Him and how thankful we are for all He does for us.** Ask the children for specific prayer requests or praises.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- large bag or box
- dish towel
- toy
- clothing
- spoon
- watering can
- songbook
- picture of children
- food item

Showing Our Love

Say: **The widow gave her very last money as an offering to God. But money isn't the only thing we can give to show God that we love Him. We can show our love by what we do and by the way we treat others. When I call on you, come and reach into my bag. Pull out something and show it to the class. Then tell how you can use it to show others that you love God.**

- dish towel (Help with dishes and other chores.)
- toy (Share toys or pick up.)
- clothing (Give clothing to people in need.)
- spoon (Help set table, clear table.)
- watering can (Care for flowers.)
- songbook (Sing songs of praise to God.)
- picture of children (Play nicely, share, take turns, etc.)
- food item (Give food to hungry.)

Debriefing

Ask: **What kinds of gifts can we give besides money?** (obedience, kindness, helpfulness, unselfishness, etc.) **How does God feel when we give Him those kinds of gifts? How does He want us to give them?** (cheerfully and without complaining) **Would you like it if I gave you a present like this** (speak roughly and shove a songbook at the

child), **“Here, take your present!”?** (Repeat to other children.) **How would that make you feel?** (sad, mad, like you really didn’t want to give it) **That’s not how Jesus gives us gifts! So let’s remember:**



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Say that with me.

4

Sharing the Lesson**Cheerfully Loving God**

If you made coin rubbings in Readiness Activity A, you can use them here. If not, you can make coin rubbings now if you choose not to use real coins.

Give each child two of your smallest denomination coins or two coin-rubbing coins. Say: **I want you to think of two things you can do this week to show God how much you love Him. When you do that thing, I want you to give one of these coins to someone else and tell them about the widow and the two tiny coins she gave for an offering. Then tell that person how you are giving an offering to God with what you do.**

Do that twice this week—once for each coin. And remember to do it cheerfully!

Debriefing

Ask: **How do we show God we love Him?** (by what we do) **Is an offering just money?** (No, an offering can be anything we give to God.) **How does God want us to give our offerings?** (cheerfully and willingly) **Let’s say our message again:**



We worship God when we give cheerfully.

You Need:

- two coins of same amount for each child or coin rubbings from Readiness Activity A

Closing

Remind the children that an offering is something we give to God. It can be money, but it can also be helpfulness, kindness, etc. Pray that they will give their offerings of kindness, helpfulness, or money cheerfully and because they love Jesus.

STUDENT LESSON

The Poor Widow's Offering

References

Luke 21:1-4;
 Mark 12:41-44;
The Desire of Ages,
 pp. 614-616

Memory Verse

"God loves a cheerful giver"
 (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV).

The Message

We worship God when we give cheerfully.

Have you ever watched how people give their offerings in church? The money may be placed, dropped, plopped, or tossed in the collection plate. How did it happen in Jesus' time?

Jesus was sitting with His disciples in the Temple, watching people bringing their offerings. In those days people took their offerings to the Temple court and dropped them into collection boxes.

Many rich people lived in Jerusalem. They lived in nice houses. They wore fancy clothes. They had plenty to eat. And after they had paid for their nice houses and fancy clothes and good food, they would take some of the money they had left to the Temple for an offering. Dressed in their finest

clothes, they would go to the Temple when they knew a lot of people would be there. After looking around to make sure people were watching, they would pour their money into the collection boxes.

Clatter,

tinkle, jingle, jangle. They liked it when their money made a lot of noise. They

liked it when people turned to see who had put so much money into the collection box. They hoped people were whispering, "See how much offering that person brought? He certainly is generous."

Jesus knew that those rich people brought only what was left over after they had purchased all the things they wanted.

Then Jesus noticed a woman at the collection box. Jesus knew that her husband had died and that she was a widow. Many times she might have gone without food.

The woman looked around to see if anyone was watching. She was embarrassed because she could bring only a tiny little offering. When she thought no one would see her, she slipped two tiny coins into the collection box and hurried away.

But Jesus had seen her. He had seen the two tiny coins she slipped into the offering box. Jesus said to His disciples, "This poor widow has put in more than all the others."

As she heard Jesus' words, "tears of joy filled her eyes."^{*}

She may have had no money to buy bread for dinner, but she was happy to give an offering to God. Even though her offering was tiny, she gave more than all the others because she gave it cheerfully and out of love for God.



^{*} *The Desire of Ages*, p. 615.

Do and Say

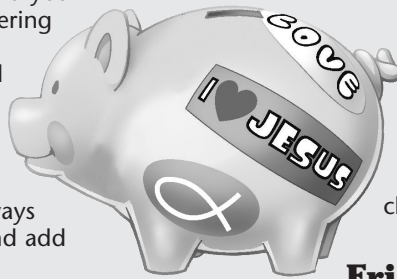
Sabbath

Each day this week, read the Bible story together and sing the memory verse song. (See page 69 in the Bible study guide.) Talk about what it means to be a cheerful giver.

Sunday

Together, find and read Luke 21:1-4. Ask: What is most important to you? Would you be willing to give it as an offering to God?

Help your child make and decorate a “self-denial bank” (a container decorated with stickers, etc.). Explain what self-denial means. This week, look for ways to demonstrate self-denial and add money to the bank.



Monday

Ask: What did the widow give as an offering? What other things can we give as an offering? (kindness, obedience, etc.) Ask your child to name something—not money—they can give to God.

Role-play helping someone cheerfully versus grumpily. Ask: How does Jesus ask us to act? Why?

Tuesday

Together, read aloud Mark 12:41-44. With other family members, act out the story. Who does your child want to be? Why?

Help your child give the two coin rubbings or coins from Sabbath School to someone and tell the

Bible story to show that person God’s love.

Wednesday

Gather coins of various denominations. Explain how much each is worth. Is a large coin always worth more? Let your child drop coins into your self-denial bank. How does it sound?

Thank Jesus for money.

Thursday

Talk about how offerings are collected today compared to Jesus’ day. Count the money in your self-denial bank. When will you take it to church?

Friday

During worship tonight, read about the widow’s offering in *The Desire of Ages*, pages 614 and 615. How did the widow feel before giving? after giving?

Make plans to do three things your family can do together to worship God.

Prepare to take the money in your self-denial bank to church tomorrow. Let your child put it in the offering plate.

