

LESSON 31

The Widow's Offering

LUKE 20:45 – 21:9



BIBLE TRUTH

THE LORD LOOKS INTO THE HEART OF OUR OFFERING

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Luke 20:45—21:9 from the Scriptures or read story 109, "The Widow's Offering," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

What Would You Pick Up?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ twenty-dollar bill
- ✓ one penny

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Two Pennies

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pennies—two for each student

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Remember the Widow

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored card stock cut into 1½- by 6-inch (bookmark sized) strips—one for each student
- ✓ pennies—two for each student
- ✓ white glue
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Compare the Prophecy

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles for the class

TOTAL 65 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Beware of the scribes—While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he warned the people about the teachers of the law. Jesus exposed their hypocrisy by showing how they took money from widows and then prayed long prayers to show off. This would have been a most serious charge. No wonder the Jewish rulers wanted to kill him; Jesus was exposing their hidden sin. Is it any wonder that the widow only had two small copper coins to her name?

Be like the widow—Jesus was sitting next to the offering box. He drew attention to a widow's offering of two small copper coins. One would think her offering was inconsequential and insignificant, but when we discover those two coins were all she had to live on, we see her great faith in giving it to God. The widow may not have had very much money, but she gave all she had, thereby revealing that she trusted God's provision. While the Pharisees were poised to kill Jesus, receiving his rebukes, the widow placed her life upon the mercy of God, receiving his commendation.

Even the temple will be destroyed—While Jesus looked at the heart of the widow, the disciples marveled at the outer beauty of the temple building. They failed to realize that the temple building was but a shadow designed to point to Christ. Christ stood as the presence of God in the midst of his people. The temple building would be destroyed but Christ is eternal.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Not One Stone Will Be Left on Another

Jesus' prophecy that the temple would be destroyed was fulfilled in 70 AD when the Romans burned and sacked the temple. It is said that the gold leaf from the various parts of the temple melted and ran into the cracks in the rocks, which were pried apart to retrieve it. This fulfilled Jesus' words that not one stone would be left on top another (Luke 21:6).

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Mark's description of the widow's offering (Mark 12:41–44) contains an additional detail: Jesus purposefully "sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box." Having spoken against the hypocrisy of the teachers of the law who devour widows, now Jesus used a widow as an example of sincere faith.

Each of us has a choice to make. Will we be like the widow who entrusted her life to God or like the rich who trusted in their riches? Are we willing to entrust everything we have to God, or is our faith limited to that which does not cost us? Jesus knows what is in our hearts. He can see by our actions who or what we really worship. Jesus died on the cross to set us free from the love of money and replace it with love for him. When our hearts are changed by his grace, it is easy to give back to him because we trust him with our lives.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Luke 20:45—21:9 from the Scriptures or read story 109, "The Widow's Offering," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

What Would You Pick Up?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ twenty-dollar bill
- ✓ one penny

The object of this lesson is to show how we are impressed with amounts. Here the class will be drawn to the twenty-dollar bill, even though it has no value for them. That is, it does not belong to them. In fact, the penny in its raw form, scrap metal, is worth more than the paper that the paper money is printed on.

Place both the penny and the twenty-dollar bill on the floor along with a sign that says, “Look, but do NOT touch.” Place them just inside the door where the kids are sure to notice. Monitor their behavior and comments regarding both the bill and the coin. Once all the children have arrived, have them take their seats and ask the following questions before reading the story of the widow’s offering.

- **What did you notice as you came in today?**
(They are likely to immediately talk about the twenty-dollar bill on the floor and say very little about the penny.)
- **How many of you wanted to pick up the twenty-dollar bill?**
(Watch the enthusiasm.)
- **How many of you wanted to pick up the penny?**
- **Who would like to take the penny around and show the class up close?**
- **Who would like to take the twenty-dollar bill around and show the class up close?**
(Note the difference in their enthusiasm.)

Read the story of the widow’s offering and ask the class how the exercise helps them to see how we are prone to focus on outward appearances. Remind them that the true value of an offering comes not from the amount of the offering, but the spirit and sacrifice with which it is given.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 **10 MIN**

Two Pennies

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pennies—two for each student

Distribute two pennies to each student, and ask the following questions:

- **Name some things you can buy with two pennies.**
(They will likely tell you nothing.)
- **If all you had to live on were two pennies, how poor would you be?**
(They would be very poor, destitute even.)
- **What did the widow buy with her pennies?**
(The widow didn't buy anything but invested her money, entrusting it to Jesus.)

Explain that the Bible tells us to store up for ourselves treasure in heaven. Jesus told the rich young ruler if he gave away all that he had to the poor and trusted God, he would have treasure in heaven (Luke 18:22). By trusting God with her life and giving all that she had, the widow was storing up treasure in heaven. Jesus' commendation of the widow indicates that we will see her in heaven one day if we put our faith and trust in Jesus with our lives.

We can't buy heaven with money, but we can acquire heaven by trusting in Jesus. So the question for each one of us is "Will we trust our whole lives, all our money and all our heart, to Jesus?"

Have the class use the pennies in the Activity Time project.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Remember the Widow

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored card stock cut into 1½- by 6-inch (bookmark sized) strips—one for each student
- ✓ pennies—two for each student
- ✓ white glue
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Distribute the bookmarks and have the class write the words “Be Like the Widow” at the top and their first name at the bottom. Then have them glue their two pennies onto the bookmark and set it off to the side. Next week use the bookmarks to review this lesson. They can keep the bookmark to remind them of the story.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Compare the Prophecy

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles for the class

Read aloud the prophecy in Isaiah 29:13–14 with the story in Luke 20:45–47 and Matthew 15:1–9. Draw the class out about how these verses can apply to our lives. Consider the following questions:

- How is hypocrisy similar in children, teens, and grownups? How is it different?
- How should we relate to our parents when we see something that might be hypocrisy?
(The children need to remember that parents struggle as much as anyone with sin. This should not surprise nor anger them. They should consider praying for their parents’ weaknesses and then, lovingly and respectfully, talk to them.)
- How can you open up your life to your parents to enlist their help in your fight against hypocrisy?
(Our young people need to humble themselves and talk about their temptations and sins to their parents so that they might be helped. Remember, God gives grace to the humble, but he opposes the proud [James 4:6].)