

LESSON 31

The Widow's Offering

LUKE 21:1-4



BIBLE TRUTH

THE LORD LOOKS INTO THE HEART OF OUR OFFERING

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: two sandwich bags; two handfuls of loose change; large metal bowl

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 109)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 31—one for each child; markers or crayons

The Rich and the Poor

SUPPLIES: a jar of loose change

Give Two Small Copper Coins

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ shiny new pennies—two per child
- ✓ resealable sandwich bags—one per child
- ✓ full-size candy bar
- ✓ one paper plate
- ✓ knife

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children are going to learn about giving to the Lord.

Gather two sandwich bags, two handfuls of loose change, and a large metal bowl. To prepare this introduction, fill one of the bags with loose change; place two pennies into the other.

Have two helpers or volunteers stand in front of the class and show the bags with the money to the class. Ask the class to point out which helper has the most money. (They should tell you the helper with the bag full of money.)

Then show the large metal bowl to the class and tell them that you are going to pretend you are collecting money for church, and you are going to ask your helpers to give money to the offering. Pass the bowl to the "rich" helper, who should open the bag and put in about ten coins, counting them as they go in. Then pass the bowl to the second helper, who should open up the bag and dump both pennies in and show the class that their bag is empty.

Now ask the class, which helper gave away *more* of their money? Make sure to emphasize the word *more*. (The class should say the helper who gave away everything in their bag. But they might guess incorrectly.) In either case teach them the difference by pointing to the rich helper and saying, "This helper gave away *some* of his money." Then point to the poor helper and say, "But this helper gave away *all* that she had." Repeat this exercise until the class understands the difference between giving away some and giving away all.

Then tell the class your Bible story today is about a woman who gave away all that she had to God. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 109, "The Widow's Offering," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION **5 MIN**

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **Who are the different characters in this story?**
(The different characters in the story are the poor widow, the rich people, Jesus, and the disciples.)

- **How much did the widow put into the offering?**
(two small copper coins)

- **Why did Jesus draw attention to the widow's offering?**
(Jesus wanted to show the crowd the woman's great worship. She gave all that she had. The others who were wealthy gave more, but they still had plenty left.)

SNACK QUESTIONS **10 MIN**

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

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.

■ **Why do we have money?**

(We have money to help us trade with others for what we need. Not everyone uses money. Some people trade for what they want directly. Grownups trade work for money. They use the money to trade for the things they want, such as food or clothes or houses.)

■ **Why is giving up our money hard for us?**

(We work hard to earn money. Money can buy the things that we want. When we give up our money we are giving up the chance to get things that we want.)

■ **In today’s story which person’s offering cost them more, the widow or the rich people?**

(The widow’s offering cost her more. She gave up the only money she had to buy food. She trusted that God would give her what she needed to survive. The rich people gave some of their extra money, but still had a lot left over. They only made a little sacrifice.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5–10 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.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS **20–30 MIN**

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 31—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

■ **What is the widow putting into the offering?**

(two small copper coins)

■ **What is the man putting into the offering?**

(a whole bag of money)

■ **Who did Jesus say put in the greater offering?**

(Jesus said the widow’s offering was greater because she put in all that she had.)

- How can we tell the widow was trusting God by what she placed in the offering?

(Since she placed all that she had in the offering we can tell she was trusting God. She would have no money left to even buy food.)

The Rich and the Poor

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a jar of loose change

Divide the class into two teams, “rich” and “poor.” Give each person on the poor team two small coins. Give a handful of change to each person on the rich team. Place the jar in the center of the room and have them act out the parts of the widow and the rich people. Watch what happens. See how much the rich people have left over.

Draw them out about how they feel and why. Some of the poor might feel like they did not want to give away the coins. Some of the rich may have wanted to, or actually did give all they had. Help them connect behavior with our hearts. Point out to them that following God and trusting Christ gives you faith to give. Trusting money makes you want to hold on to what you have.

Give Two Small Copper Coins

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ shiny new pennies—two per child
- ✓ resealable sandwich bags—one per child
- ✓ full-size candy bar
- ✓ one paper plate
- ✓ knife

Before class place two pennies in a plastic resealable bag for each child. Also before class, estimate what percentage of the candy bar can be purchased for two pennies. In class you will cut off that much to show the children.

Give each child a bag with two pennies inside. Tell them the pennies are theirs to keep. Ask them what they would like to do with their coins.

Show the children the whole candy bar. Tell them how much it cost. Then unwrap it so that they can see how big it is. Set it on the plate and cut off the amount you estimated could be purchased for two cents. Use this tiny piece of candy to demonstrate just how worthless two pennies are. Close by saying that, in the case of the widow, Jesus said she gave more than all the rich people.

PRAY **5 MIN**

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

LESSON 31 - THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

