

JESUS HONORS A WIDOW

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE GIVE GIFT SERVICE

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Mark 12:38-44

MEMORY VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37b, NIV*).

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To teach children that love and service are the best gifts they can give to God.

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

During His ministry, Jesus emphasized on many occasions the grandeur of humble people and outcasts. Throughout the New Testament we find many passages that remind us that he honored humble people and used them for His service. For example, when he chose the lunch of a young boy to feed five thousand people, He used a young boy as the example to show his disciples who was the greatest, and also at the moment in which he compares the generosity of a poor widow with the arrogance and conceit of the Pharisees.

The very life of Jesus is an example of humility. He came to this world humbly, never expecting to be honored, and on the contrary, demonstrated a constant spirit of humility.

One day, Jesus was sitting in front of the ark of the offering and watched the townspeople place their money in it, as the rich men and the Pharisees boasted about how much they offered to God. He knew that there was no sincerity in the hearts of these men, and the only thing they wanted was to draw attention to themselves from those around them.

A very poor widow approached the ark of the offering and deposited two small coins of little value. Nevertheless, Jesus compared her offering with that of the religious leaders. They had offered large quantities of money, and had calculated their offerings according to the laws for offerings and tithes. Nevertheless, this woman gave everything she had, and all she had left.

Jesus knew the sincerity of this woman's offering and her confidence in God's provision for her needs. This served as a lesson for his disciples, and affirmed once more that the Kingdom of Heaven is not won by works, but by faith and love.

ADAPTATION

Children of this age do not have difficulty in accepting the love and mercy of God in their life. Indeed, they have doubts and questions, but their faith is sincere and selfless. They are aware of his love and divine care.

They like to please God; for example by singing, praying, and worshiping together in the church. But sometimes, they feel limited by their age in what they can do. They do not have much money to offer, cannot contribute much to church projects, or work as ministers or missionaries.

This lesson will help your children understand that God cares more about sincere and selfless love than material offerings. It is likely that the children will identify with the poor widow that did not have many resources to offer to God. Nevertheless, Jesus viewed this action as a sincere and loving gift. Through this lesson, they will learn different ways to show their love to God.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Give each child a sheet of paper and colored pencils, and ask them to draw the best gift they can give to God. When they are finished, hang up the drawings and allow the children to come up and explain their pictures to their classmates. When all the drawings have been explained, tell them that today's lesson will be about a person who truly loved God and gave him a beautiful gift.

TEACH THE LESSON

Prior to the session carefully study Mark 12:38-44 and be prepared to tell it in your own words.

Show your children two coins of little value in your right hand, and in the left hand, a large quantity bill. Ask them, "Which of these two offerings is more pleasing to God?" (Give them time to respond and clarify the questions or doubts that emerge as you relate the Bible story.)

Ask your children to think of the historical context in which the story is set. Explain that Jews would gather in synagogues (churches) to worship God the same way we do in church today. Inside the synagogue was a chest where money was collected; people would deposit their tithes and offerings there.

In that time, some very studious men, called Pharisees or teachers of the Law, did not act according to the will of God. They also went to the synagogue and deposited their offerings, but they did not do this sincerely.

It is important that you make clear to your children that the quantity or value of our offering does not concern God, only the sincerity and love with which we give it. The Pharisees gave valuable offerings, not out of love for God, but so that people would admire them. In contrast, the poor widow wanted to show God her love and faith so she gave all she had, two small coins.

CONNECT THE LESSON

She gave everything she had!

Give each of your children Student Activity Sheet #149, scissors, and an envelope or plastic bag. (You can write in large letters on the back of the activity sheet Mark 12:43: "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.")

Ask your children what the illustration is referring to. After reviewing the Bible story, help them cut along the black lines to make a puzzle.

As the children work on the activity, emphasize the biblical truth of this lesson by asking the following questions:

1. How much did the teachers of the Law give? (A lot of money because they were wealthy.) Explain that they wanted to be noticed as they gave their offerings so they put lots of coins in the offering box so that it would make a lot of noise. They wanted people to say, "Look at all that they gave; they must really love God."
2. How much did the widow offer? (Two small coins, everything she had.)

3. Why do you think the widow gave everything she had? (Because she really loved God.)

4. How could she live if she had no money? (She trusted that God would provide for her.)

Ask the children to place their puzzle pieces on the table and to solve the puzzle to discover the text on the back of the drawing (Mark 12:43).

After reading the verse, put the puzzle pieces into the envelopes so that they can take them home and share the story with their family.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Today is the last lesson in the unit, and surely most of the children will have learned the memory verse.

If possible, ask your pastor if the children can recite the verse and share the basic lessons they've learned from this unit with the congregation during the service.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Ask for prayer requests. Then pray for the needs of your children.

Encourage

Contact their families to encourage them to be applying at home what they are learning in the group.

Invite

Briefly review what has been taught over the sequence of the unit. Allow time for your children to remember the Bible stories and lessons. Invite them to the next class, and introduce the next unit. Tell them that their friends are also welcome.