

FIND LOVE

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE GIVE COMMAND FOLLOW KEEP

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Mark 12:38-44

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students know that, as followers of Jesus, they can give what they have because of their love of God and not for other people to see them

MEMORY VERSE

“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me” (John 14:21a, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Many children today live in a world that teaches them to try to be the best in everything. As they grow, they learn that success is often measured by what others think of them and by the amount of money and possessions they have in life.

This lesson will give you the opportunity to show them that there is a different and better way: the way God wants it to be. They need to know that God’s opinion is what really counts. And that He likes it when they show love to him and others. They should know that God is not as much concerned about how much money they have or how much they have earned as he is about how their hearts and relationships are with him and with others. Help your students discover ways to demonstrate their love for God. Then they can make a promise to love and honor the Lord above all things.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

How do you feel when you are near a person who thinks they are very important? Do you know what I mean? I’m talking about those people in smart clothes who say, “look at me!” And what about that other one who makes you notice the expensive watch

they're wearing? Or the one who drives a late model car and lives in a mansion?

I know how you feel: very uncomfortable! Personally I feel even embarrassed when I'm around people who show off their fortune. This reminds me of a successful businessman who wanted to show off his wealth to his colleagues. So he went and bought a new car, which he paid for ... in cash. The next morning he drove his car to work. He parked in front of his office. The moment he opened the door, a truck hit him on his side, tearing off the car door and amputating the owner's arm. The police arrived immediately and the injured man began to shout, "Find the driver of the truck! He ruined my new car and embarrassed me in front of my colleagues! This is terrible!"

The police officer replied, "Sir, we'll try to find the other driver! But first, we need to assist you! Do not you realize that with the impact you lost your arm?" The rich man looked at his bloody body and exclaimed, "Oh no! Where is my expensive watch?" That was a man with messed up priorities!

On the contrary, there are many people who help and give their money and time for others to be happy. There are people who invest in schools, churches, hospitals, or scientific research so that other people can have improved health or are healed of previously incurable diseases. They are modern examples, as was the widow whom Jesus named. She gave everything she had. She did not give a percentage, nor what she had left over. She gave everything. The widow gave all her coins and was in complete dependence upon divine care. She gave because she loved her God. She was not the kind of person who expected to be seen and admired for what she owned or had done.

Paul wrote: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:6-7). Giving with the heart is the result of the love we feel for God and for our neighbor.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

A gift of love puzzle

Ask the children to cut out the circles from Student Activity Sheet #238-A and #238-B. Then stick them on cardboard or poster board. Tell them to cut out the figures and color them. On Student Activity Sheet #238-B, instruct the students to draw a way in which they can show their love to God. Provide a bag or envelope for the students to take home the pieces to share the lesson with their families and friends.

TEACH THE LESSON

A great gift of love

"They believe that they dress very well with their expensive clothes," Jesus said. "They believe that it is very good to make everyone else look at them. They like to draw attention when they sit at the front during times of worship. They also wait and look for the best places at parties. They try to show that they love God and that they obey him, but the truth is different. They only show love for themselves. Their prayers out loud are only to be heard by others, but not for God to hear them."

"That does make sense to me," said a woman. "If I pray to God and hurt others, that is not showing them that I love them."

Then Jesus sat down. Nearby, he could see the container for the offerings. He looked around, and saw that people were passing by and putting in their offerings. A rich man, who seemed very important, came to give his offering. He made sure that people noticed him. He put in a large quantity of coins and looked around with great pride. He wanted people to see how important and generous he was. Jesus continued to observe other rich people who did the same putting on a great show. They felt very proud. No doubt, none of them thought of God.

Then, Jesus saw a very poor widow who approached silently. The woman did not look at anyone. She walked with her head bowed down. She looked ragged, with patched and torn clothes. Her husband had died. All she had were only two coins! Jesus smiled when he saw her approach and give God everything she had.

"Look," Jesus said to the people who were with him. "Look at that quiet woman." "But she had almost nothing to give to God," said the apostles. But, Jesus answered them, "I want you to remember this important truth: that poor woman gave God much more than all those rich people gave, because she gave all she had. They gave from their excess, from what they had left over, but this poor woman put in everything she had to live on." God does not want us to give for other people to think we are good. He wants us to give everything we can because we love him, not because it makes us feel important.

In the end, the followers of Jesus understood what he was teaching them. Now they understood that God is interested in us loving him and loving our neighbor, and not in being seen. This was an important lesson at the temple.

Today we can learn something very special. We must give the best we have because we love God, not because we want others to see us and think we are good and important.

This is a good opportunity to pass the offering if you did not earlier. You can say, "Jesus taught very important things. Today's Bible story teaches us that the important thing is not how much we give to God. What is important to him is why we give it. He wants us to give our best because we love him.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Practical task: "Gifts of love"

If your students to buy $\frac{1}{4}$ kilo, $\frac{1}{2}$ kilo or 1 kilo of any non-perishable food to give to others, be sure to prepare the large box and other boxes/ bags. You can cover the boxes with wrapping paper and put a large label that says: "Our gift of love."

Clarify that those who could not bring a gift should not feel bad. Those who brought more than 1 kilo should not have to feel proud (or more important). Emphasize that we will bring those gifts because we love God and the people.

Children can make two large cards of 30 cm. x 25 cm. Each one that says: "Our gift of love for you, God bless you! From: _____ (the name of your group, e.g. the Elementary Sunday School discipleship group)." Ask them to decorate the cards with stickers and colors. Everyone, even the teacher, can sign the cards. The gifts can be sent, or the teacher and 2 or 3 students can take them personally to the family/ families in need.

Ask the children how they felt about giving their love gifts. Ask if any of them used their own money to buy the food products.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Copy or draw the front of different coins of your country's money. Make them on cardboard or poster board of about 10 cm. diameter in size. Paint them gold, silver or copper. On the back of the coins, write one of the words of the memory verse. Hide them all over the room. Before beginning the search for them, write the verse on the board and practice it several times. Ask the students to look for the 14 coins, including the Biblical reference: "Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me" (John 14:21a). When the children find the coins, they should run and place them on the table in the right order to form the memory verse. Those who did not find any coins can help to arrange the words on the table. Save the coins for memorization and review in the next session.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Place the group in a circle. Ask the children to start praying for their partner on their left. Everyone prays for the next child. When it comes to the teacher, you will pray for the child on your left and for the whole group, so that they will be loving children who do the Word of God, eager to love the Lord and their neighbor without being seen by others. Thank God for the love the children showed when they gave their savings and brought food for people in need.

Encourage

Encourage the children to find ways to show love to their family and neighbors during the next week.

Invite

Be sure to say something interesting about the next session to encourage the students to attend.