Preschool–Grade 6

The Widow's Offering

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: Jesus sees what we give, and He measures a gift by how much of our heart is in it, not by its size.
Bible passage: Mark 12:41–44 (and Luke 21:1–4). Read them before class.
Memory verse: "And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:" *Mark 12:43 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, paper and pencils, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Draw two tall empty bars side by side on the board for the opening game.

1. Opening game: How Much Is Left? (5–10 minutes)

Tell about two kids. Sam has 100 stickers and gives away 20. Mia has 2 stickers and gives away both. Ask: *Who gave more stickers?* (Sam.) Now fill in the bars on the board. Sam's bar: shade 20 of 100, a small part at the bottom. Mia's bar: shade the whole thing. Ask: *Who has stickers left? Who gave away everything?* Say: "Today Jesus looks at two kinds of gifts, and He tells His disciples which one was more."

2. Bible story: She Gave All (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Mark 12. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

In the temple. Jesus was teaching in the temple in Jerusalem (Mark 12:35). Just before this, He warned the people about the scribes, teachers of the law who wanted to look important and who "devour widows' houses," which means they took what poor widows had (12:38–40).

Watching the gifts. Look up Mark 12:41. Jesus sat **over against** the treasury, which means across from it, facing it. He **beheld**, which means He watched, how the people **cast**, or put, money into the treasury. Many that were rich cast in much.

Two mites. Look up Mark 12:42. A poor **widow**, a woman whose husband had died, threw in two **mites**. A mite was one of the smallest coins. Two mites made a **farthing**, which was also a very small coin. Luke tells the same story and says Jesus "looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury," and saw the poor widow too (Luke 21:1–2).

Jesus' surprise. Look up Mark 12:43. Jesus called His disciples and said, "Verily," which means truly, "this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury." Two tiny coins were more than all the big gifts!

Why it was more. Look up Mark 12:44. The others gave of their **abundance**, out of what they had left over. She gave of her **want**, out of what she needed. She gave "all that she had, even all her living," everything she had to live on. Luke says "of her penury," which means out of her poverty (Luke 21:4).

What Jesus saw. Two tiny coins were easy to miss, but Jesus saw them. Earlier in this same chapter, Jesus said the first commandment is to love the Lord thy God "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (12:30). The widow gave God *all*.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Jesus said the widow gave more, even though her coins were tiny. How can that be true?
2. Why do you think Jesus called His disciples over to see this (12:43)?
3. Why is it hard to give something when you don't have much of it?
4. What are some things besides money that you can give to God?
5. Jesus saw the widow when nobody else noticed. How does it feel to know Jesus sees you too?

Recall questions

1. Where did Jesus sit? *(Over against the treasury, Mark 12:41)*
2. What did the widow throw in? *(Two mites, which make a farthing, 12:42)*
3. How much did she give? *(All that she had, even all her living, 12:44)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **verily** means truly, **saith** means says, **cast** means put or threw, and the **treasury** is where people gave money to God. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The widow gave God all she had. Jesus gave even more for us: 'though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor' (2 Corinthians 8:9, KJV). God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: give God something that costs you: give up some screen time to pray or read your Bible, or share something you really like.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Mark 12:35: Where was Jesus teaching? *(In the temple)*
2. Mark 12:41: Who cast in much? *(Many that were rich)*
3. Mark 12:42: What do two mites make? *(A farthing)*
4. Mark 12:43: Whom did Jesus call unto Him? *(His disciples)*
5. Mark 12:44: What did the rich give out of? *(Their abundance)*
6. Luke 21:1: What did Jesus see the rich men doing? *(Casting their gifts into the treasury)*
7. Luke 21:4: What word does Luke use for the widow being poor? *(Penury)*
8. Mark 12:30: With what four things should we love God? *(All thy heart, soul, mind and strength)*

For more, use the **word search, crossword, maze or worksheet** (vbshq.com/bible-stories/widows-offering).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You see everything, even two tiny coins. Help us love You with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and give You our best. Thank You for giving Yourself for us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks whether God wants all their money: God wants our whole heart most of all (Mark 12:30). Kids can talk with their parents about giving at church. Never pressure a child about money.

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