
The Widow's Gift

Sunday School Lesson from Mark 12:38-44

God wants more than just “leftovers”! As servants of the Lord, we want to give Him our best. Sometimes this means monetary tithing, but even more importantly, we offer God our time and talents, and give Him our love and the love we share with others. The Bible promises that when we offer what we have to God, we will be blessed richly in return.



Lesson focus: This lesson looks at the story of the widow's mite to emphasize the importance of being willing to give to God. God values anything and everything we have to offer Him and is always pleased with our efforts. The lesson also connects to the Old Testament story of Elijah and the widow, who was willing to give what she had and was blessed by God as a result.

Passage: Mark 12:38-44 (1 Kings 17:8-16 also referenced)

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper; glue; markers or crayons; tape; scissors; decorative supplies; yarn/string; aluminum foil; Bibles.

More Teaching Ideas

- Watch the video of this [children's sermon](#) and related [Bible craft ideas](#)
- Compare our full [Widow's Mite Sunday School Lesson](#)

Group Activities to Introduce the Lesson

Lesson Opening: This lesson discusses the offerings of widows. Consider some coin-based activities to open with, such as one of the following:

- How many pennies? Place several pennies (or varied coins) in a jar, and have students guess how many there are inside. Have a small prize for the closest guesses. Shake the jar to hear the coins jingle!
- Penny drop: Allow students to stand back from a small container and gently toss or drop coins from above to try landing them into the “offering plate.”
- Collect the offering: if the opportunity is appropriate, train older students to serve as ushers in church service, or have a “kids’ Sunday” where younger people take over duties during worship!
- Coin relay: have students race back and forth across the room, carefully holding one coin at a time to deposit in a basket or box. Bonus variation: have students carry several coins, but if any drop, they must return to the start!
- Money over the years...look at varied price tags and costs of items across decades. Discuss how monetary value of things might change, but God’s love and desire for us never do!

Explain to students that today’s lesson involves money. But it also deals with offerings of a different kind, and how God wants every part of us. We want to give back to God, not only out of gratitude to Him and to help serve Him, but because we recognize all we have comes from and belongs to Him!

Sunday School Lesson (Mark 12:38-44) The Widow's Gift

Bible Lesson:

There are two separate stories you could focus on with this lesson. The main emphasis here is on the story of the widow's offering in Mark 12. Added on is the tale of Elijah and the widow, to show that God provides in remarkable ways when we are willing to be used by Him. Either one of these could be used as the primary text for the lesson. Both of these stories lend themselves well to being acted out by kids or read dramatically. You might also simply read the stories out loud. Choose the preferred reading method for your group ages and size.

As he taught, Jesus said, "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, 39 and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. 40 They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely." -Mark 12:38-40

Jesus often warned His disciples about people who did not "practice what they preached". There were many leaders who were focused on making themselves look good, and would say a lot of fancy words to sound important. But their hearts were not truly set on God. They were more devoted to themselves than to the Lord.

Ask: Have you ever seen someone who liked to talk about themselves or make themselves look important? How does it feel when you encounter people like that?

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. -Mark 12:41-42

Jesus loved all people, even the ones He disagreed with. As he was watching people, He noticed the leaders who made a big show of things, and how they put a lot of money in the offering to sound grand and look important. But Jesus also noticed a poor woman who had very little. She didn't put much in the offering, but Jesus knew that what she did offer was precious. He was so impressed, He called the disciples to make a point.

Ask: Why do you think Jesus cared about this woman? Why should we care about this story?

Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.” -Mark 12:43-44

Jesus emphasized what this woman gave, because it was all she had. She was willing to give everything to the Lord. God loves a cheerful giver, and He wants us to give back to Him from what we have. All that we have comes from Him, and we are blessed when we can give back to Him. This doesn't always have to be money. We can contribute with money, but God wants more than that. We can serve Him with our talents, and our time, and just with our love! He doesn't want to be an after thought at the end of the day, but the first and always thought of our lives. He loves us enough to give us His son, Jesus! We can thank Him by offering our lives to Him.

Ask: How can we give to God? What can we give besides money?

Secondary Story: Explain that we are going to take a look at another story involving a poor widow. This one takes place in the Old Testament, with the prophet Elijah. God used Elijah to speak His word, and also used him to help people in need. He once was sent to a widow to help provide her with food.

Then the word of the Lord came to him: 9 “Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” 10 So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” 11 As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”

12 “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.”

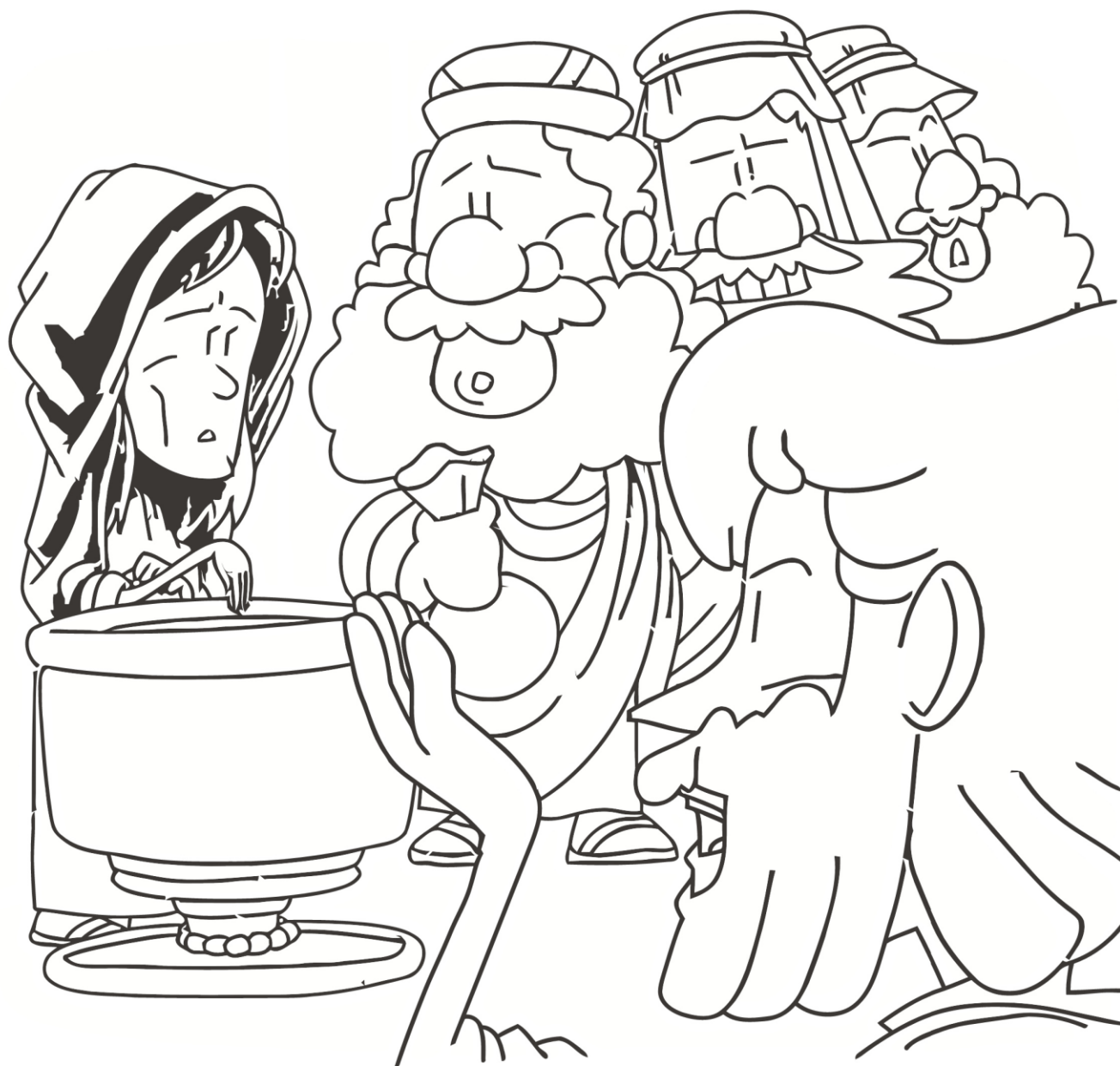
13 Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. 14 For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’”

15 She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. 16 For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah. -1 Kings 17:8-16

What happened here? In this story, Elijah asked a woman for help...what she didn't at first realize was that she was the one who would be provided for! God sent Elijah to a widow who had very little. In fact, she only had enough food to make a final meal, and she was ready to give up on life completely! But she trusted God's word, spoken through Elijah. She was willing to offer him some food out of her meager portions. What did God do as a result? He took care of her! The widow discovered there was an "auto-refill" on her supplies, and she never ran out of food! She had faith to be generous with what she had, and God blessed her for it.

The same can be said for us. Of course, this doesn't mean we have to give someone our lunch box sandwich every day or live in poverty in order to serve God. But we trust that HE will provide for us. We can give to God out of what we have, whatever it might be. God is pleased with whatever efforts and offerings we sincerely place before Him. He will bless us as a result. This might not always look like we'd expect, and can be confusing (as the widow might have been confused). But living with God front and center in our intentions will never go wrong!

Close with prayer, thanking God for His blessings and asking Him to help as we give back to Him all of who we are and what we have.



And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.” Mark 12:43-44 ESV

Sunday School Crafts

Craft: This lesson considers how we present our first fruits to the Lord and serve Him with all of what we have and who we are. Several simple crafts can celebrate this principle, such as the following:

- Create a “coin purse” paper envelope to recall the story and collect offerings.
- Make a coin bank using an old container re-decorated for money collection.
- Make a collage using aluminum foil, words, and pictures to consider ways we can give to God.
- Use coins (real or copied) to make a decorated sign reminding children to give back to the Lord.

God wants all of who we are. Giving Him our first offerings is about more than money. We should use our time, talents, and all of who we are to the Lord. In return, God promises to bless us and provide for us. He has already given us great things with His grace and salvation through Jesus. These crafts remind children of the importance of giving. A homemade coin purse is meant to save monetary offerings. A “shiny offerings” hanger uses foil shapes to recount non-monetary ways that we give to God.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider... (Mark 12:38-44)

And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. 44 For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.” -Mark 12:43-44

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 Corinthians 9:7

God loves a cheerful giver!

Give to God....All that you have!

All things belong to the Lord!

I give to God...more than just the “Shiny stuff”!

Craft one: "Save it up Coin Purse"

You will need:

- Stickers or decorations
- Scissors
- String or ribbon
- Markers and/or crayons
- Construction paper or cardstock



Procedure:

1. Measure your paper to find a solid equal fitting for an envelope shape, with a flat-topped triangle on one side.
2. Fold part of the paper up to join the triangle's corners.
3. Hole punch the sides of the paper, and string yarn or ribbon through the holes.
4. Add extra decorations or verses as desired.
5. Fold the top down and cut a small slit to tuck it into.
6. Use the container to carry or store coins and offerings!



Craft Two: "Shiny Stuff is God's" Decoration

You will need:

- Markers/crayons
- Cardstock/construction paper
- Glue or tape
- Aluminum foil (coins optional)
- Scissors
- Additional decorations (glitter, sequins, etc.)
- Captions/verses
- Yarn/ribbon
- Hole punch



Procedure:

1. Decorate the card (paper) and attach verses or captions.
2. Use aluminum foil to create shapes that represent things God might want, or create fun designs with the shiny foil.
3. Tape or glue some of the foil pieces to the paper.
4. Add words that represent other things we might give to God, aside from money.
5. Attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang the reminder display and consider what we offer unto the Lord.





Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



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May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer