

The Widow's Offering

Grades
1-2

APPEARANCES

MARK 12:38-44

What's happening in this story?

Mark 12 includes a series of public arguments between Jesus and religious leaders in the temple. In this story, Jesus criticizes the scribes, describing much of what they do as for the sake of appearances. Then Jesus observes and compares the monetary contributions of many rich people with the offering of a poor widow. Both episodes follow the pattern of Jesus' teaching that "the first shall be last and the last shall be first."

What does this story mean for kids?

What we do with everything entrusted to us says a lot about who we are and whose we are. Jesus calls us to give from the heart, trusting that God is a God of abundance. Kids surely have much less money to place in the offering plate than adults at church do. Help them know that Jesus values their small gifts highly when they give out of love for God.

Why this theme?

The motivations for our actions are important to Jesus. The widow is praised because her offering comes from a sincere desire to please God and help others. Kids can learn from her example about giving and serving in love.

AGE LEVEL TIP

Today's lesson focuses on money. But there are other ways to be generous by using our time, talents, and things. Remind kids that what we *do* can be a gift. When we do a chore for our family or help a friend on the playground, we are giving of ourselves.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Construction paper (half sheets)
- Markers

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Self-adhesive gift bows
- Crepe paper streamers (red, purple, gray, and white)
- Hand sanitizer
- Fish crackers (12 per kid)
- Large bowl
- Coins (2 per kid)

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Lay out gift bows, construction paper, and markers. Ask kids to think of three things they can give others. Then ask kids to draw or write these gifts on the paper. Kids can then peel the backing off an adhesive bow and use the bow as tape to stick papers on a window or bulletin board.

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Today, we learn how to be God's people. Our story shows us something about giving to God. There are many ways to give. Can you think of any? Allow kids to respond. **Great ideas!** Hold up two pennies. **These two pennies will remind us of our story today.**

Pray together: **Dear giving God, we can give big and we can give small. Teach us to give the best gifts of all. Amen.**

Pass out leaflets.

Hold up the leaflet and point to the text. With kids, read the text, **"Simple Gifts." We certainly know what a gift is, but what is a simple gift?** Allow kids to respond. **Simple gifts don't attract attention. They are small. A simple gift can be something as little as a smile. Why do you think simple gifts are important?** Allow

kids to respond. **There are three gift tags with photos on our leaflet today. Let's talk about why what's happening could be a simple gift.** Allow kids to respond to each of the photos. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



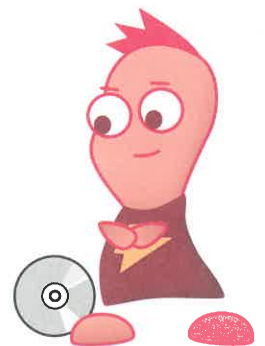
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

We take an offering during worship each week. It looks like the video kids do too. Let's watch to see how they do it.

View Episode 13, "Over Offering," on the Year Gold Winter PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Otto, Clara, and Victor are going to worship. Otto is looking forward to doing something. What is it?**
- **Why is Victor wearing a suit? What is he planning to do?**
- **Have you ever put something in the offering plate? What was it?**
- **How did Otto feel as he watched Victor pour all his money into the offering plate?**
- **What does it feel like when a friend receives something bigger and better than what you have?**



Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles.

Let's find our story for today! Help kids find "The Widow's Offering" on page 250. Before you read, invite kids to look for the colors of people's clothes.

Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **Who said, "I am sharing my money"? Why was he so loud?**
- **Who gave only two coins? Why was she so quiet?**
- **When are you loud? When are you quiet?**
- **In today's story, who was Jesus teaching?**
- **When you are kind, what do other people think of you? When you are mean, what do other people think of you?**



Gather near the Wall Chart to place today's sticker.

Point out the Testament (New), Bible section (Gospels), and character image (widow). **Today's Bible story is about people who gave offerings in the temple. Let's add a sticker to remind us of the widow's offering (two coins).** Point to the corresponding image of the coins on page 251 in the Whirl Kids Story Bible.



Play together!

Circle up and reenact today's story. **Kids, what sounds do coins make when they hit metal?** While handing out white streamers, let kids answer. **You are the money, so get your noises ready.** Pick three actors to play these characters: Jesus, the rich person, and the widow. Dress the rich person in red and purple streamers, the widow in gray, Jesus in red, and the rest of the group in white streamers. Ask white streamer kids to make sound effects, repeating, "CRASH," and "Clink, clink." **What actions can we suggest for the widow, the rich man, and Jesus?** Read today's story. Ask actors to repeat their lines after you read them and pantomime the actions. Then talk about it. **Why did the rich person want attention? Why didn't the widow? What did Jesus like?**

BIBLE BIT

In today's story the rich man was dressed up in a formal robe. By wearing a formal robe on an ordinary day, the rich man drew more attention to himself.

WATCH IT AGAIN

Turn off the video's volume. Add your own sound effects during the offering scene. Have kids drop coins on a table first for Victor and then for Otto.

OUR CHURCH

Invite an usher, pastor, or treasurer from your church to teach your class how the offering is collected during worship. If time allows, invite kids to help with the collection.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, hand sanitizer, fish crackers, and markers.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. Have kids clean their hands, then pass out twelve crackers to each kid. Ask kids to make two piles of fish crackers: two fish and ten fish.
2. Hold up a leaflet and point to the rich man's circle. **Let's pretend we are the rich man. The rich man has ten crackers. He's only going to give a little bit of his wealth away, but he's going to make a really big deal about it. Divide up your crackers as if you are the rich man. Put the crackers you are giving away in the "Give" section and the crackers you are keeping in the "Keep" section.**
3. **Now let's mark these fish on your leaflet. How many fish did you put in the "Give" section? Draw that many fish on your leaflet. Do the same for the "Keep" fish too!**
4. Have kids repeat the process with their piles of two crackers in the "Give" and "Keep" sections near the widow. Remind kids that the widow gave everything away.
5. **Now it's time for you to practice giving as you! We're each going to share some of our fish with the whole class and keep some for ourselves. How many fish would you like to give away? Pick them out and put them in our class bowl.**
6. **Draw the number of fish you kept in the upper left "Keep" circle and the number of fish you gave away in the lower right "Give" circle.**
7. Pour some extra fish into the class bowl and invite everyone to dig in for a snack. **When we share our gifts, it makes God happy! Thank you for giving today!**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

In our story one person gave money to be seen, and another gave money to show love. God wants us to give because we want to be generous and not because people are watching.

Pass out leaflet panels and markers.

Kids draw themselves and their contribution at a potluck picnic. **Everyone has a place at the table in God's world. What can you give to help make a yummy picnic?**

Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.