

The Widow's Offering

PreK-
K

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

Money is a prominent theme in the story of the widow's offering. Young kids are likely to treasure things other than money, such as a special rock or a stuffed toy. Help kids understand that God's view of generosity and sharing goes beyond money.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- White paper
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Clear tape

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Coins
- Music source
- Stickers (12 per child)
- Cotton balls
- Dice
- Beanbags

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Place white paper and crayons on a table.

Think of your favorite toy and a friend you could share that toy with. Invite kids to draw a picture of their toy and their friend.

Remember to share the crayons as other kids arrive.

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Give each kid two coins from a bowl.

Our Bible story today takes place in the temple. The temple is a building where Jewish people in Bible times worshiped God. In the story we'll hear about two people who gave money in the temple. One person gave money to be noticed. The other person did it quietly. Let's each take two coins and tiptoe around the room and return the coins to this bowl.

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for all the gifts you've given us. Help us to give our best to others and back to you. We want to give from our heart! Amen.**

Pass out leaflets and coins.

We'll see and hear a lot of coins in our lesson today. The leaflet has four groups of coins on it.

Which group is the biggest? What would it feel like to carry that group in your pocket? Who could you give some of it to? Which is the smallest group? Would it be louder or quieter in your pocket than the big group? Which group is the heaviest? The lightest? Invite kids to match their coins with a group of coins on the leaflet. Encourage kids to swap and share coins to create a match. **Sharing means everyone can have enough.** Collect their leaflets until Respond.



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

In the video, Otto and Victor both have something to give. Look for who gives from their heart and who gives to get attention.

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

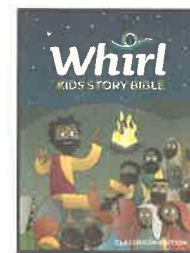
Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Why is Otto excited?
- When have you been excited to give or share something important to you?
- Victor is also giving money to God. How does he act different from Otto with his offering?
- What did Clara remind Otto of when he was feeling down about his offering?
- How can you give God your best this week?



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 Jesus smiling when the widow gives her offering. **A widow is a woman whose husband has died. In Jesus' time, most widows were very poor.**



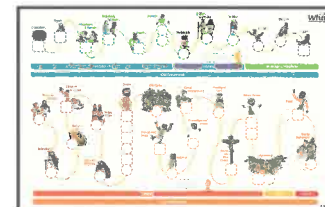
Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- How did the rich man call attention to himself?
- How was the widow different from the rich man?
- Why did Jesus say it's better to share a little bit quietly than a lot noisily?
- When have you shared something at church? School? Home?
- What's something important to you that you could share this week?

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

Point out the Testament (New) 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 253 in the Whirl Kids Story Bible.



Play together!

In the Bible story there were two people giving to God. One gave loudly and one gave quietly. Pass out six stickers to each kid. **When you hear the music, give your stickers away. You can give one at a time or all at once. Make a lot of noise and bring attention to yourself like the rich man from the Bible story.** Play the music. When kids have given away all their stickers, pass out six more stickers to each kid. **This time when you hear the music, try to be like the quiet widow. Share your stickers quietly and without anyone noticing.** Be sure all kids are given some stickers. **Why does Jesus want us to give?**

BIBLE BIT

The word *widow* means "woman without a voice." In Bible times, a widow might not have had anyone to support her or provide for her needs.

WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, pay attention to Otto's face when he sees how much more Victor gives. How does Otto feel at the end of the video?

OUR CHURCH

This Sunday is a perfect opportunity to have kids assist in worship. Even young kids can help collect the offering.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, crayons, cotton balls, dice, beanbags, and coins.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **The video and the Bible story today were full of sounds: the sounds of coins in an offering plate and the sounds of the rich man's robes, voice, and bag of money. What sounds have you heard today?**
2. **Let's do an experiment with sound on our leaflets! First, let's hear what sound cotton balls make.** Invite kids to place their leaflets on the table and drop three to four cotton balls onto the target. **Is it louder or quieter to drop only one cotton ball?**
3. Have kids drop dice on the target. **Remember to share the dice with your friends.**
4. **Let's hear what the beanbags sound like when they are dropped on the target. What noise do you think they will make? How would you describe that sound?**
5. **Now let's try the coins. First drop only two coins, like the widow did. Next, drop a handful. Remember to share the coins if your neighbors need some.**
6. **Look at the pictures of the items you dropped on your leaflet. Circle the item that was the loudest. Why was it loud?**
7. **Which item was the quietest? Draw a triangle around the picture of the quietest one.**
8. **Which item made the funniest noise? Draw a smiley face on that picture. Why was it funny?**
9. **Which one was your favorite? Draw a square around it.**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today we heard stories about people who gave to get attention and about people who gave from their hearts. **Who do you think gave their best to God? Why?** Take time to hear kids' responses.

Pass out leaflet panels, scissors, and tape.

Invite kids to cut the coin strip off the panel and cut the coins apart. Fold the panel into a coin bag. Help kids tape the sides shut. **Place the coins in the bag to remember the widow's gift.**

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.