

Today's Suggested Schedule—May 2024, Week 4

Today's Bible Story: All I Have to Give (The Widow's Offering) • *Mark 12:41-44*

Today's Bottom Line: Practice living for God.

Monthly Memory Verse: *For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.* 1 Timothy 4:8 (ESV)

Monthly Virtue: Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

LARGE GROUP (35 minutes)

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

Welcome/Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Bottom Line

Prayer

Closer

SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Story Exploration

Bible Story Review: One Story/Three Ways

Application Activity: Be an A-MAZE-ing Giver

Memory Verse Activity: Stacking Pennies

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Use this if kids have questions about following Jesus.

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

If a child has expressed interest in following Jesus, please let the parents know so they can be a part of the conversation that their child is having about faith.

What Now?

If you put your trust in Jesus Christ and believe in Him as the One who forgives your sins and makes it possible for you to know God, we are so proud of you! There is no greater single decision that you could make.

We believe that baptism is an important next step for you. Baptism is your way of telling your friends and family, “Hey, I'm a follower of Jesus!” If you're interested in learning more or participating in baptism, talk to a staff member about the next steps you should take.

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Story Exploration

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. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

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

In this passage, Jesus is observing people as they make their offerings in the Temple. He sees rich people donating large sums of money, which seems impressive at first glance. However, he then sees a poor widow who gives just two small coins, an amount that appears insignificant compared to the large donations from the wealthy.

Jesus’ Teaching:

Jesus uses this moment to teach a powerful lesson. He tells his disciples that the widow’s small offering is actually greater than the large sums given by the rich people. Why? Because the rich gave from their surplus—they had plenty more money where that came from. The widow, on the other hand, gave everything she had, even though it was very little.

Key Points:

True Generosity: The widow’s offering was more valuable in God’s eyes because it represented true sacrifice and generosity. She gave all she had, showing her deep faith and trust in God. This teaches us that real generosity isn’t about the amount we give, but the spirit and sacrifice behind it.

Heart Over Amount: God values the heart behind the giving more than the actual amount. This can be applied to many areas of life—time, talents, kindness, etc. What matters is the willingness to give wholeheartedly, even if it seems small.

Trust in God: The widow’s act demonstrated her trust in God to provide for her needs. For teens, this is a reminder to rely on faith, even when things seem tough or resources are limited.

Applying the Lesson:

Be Generous: Look for ways to be generous in your own life. It could be with your time, talents, or even just being kind to others.

Check Your Motives: When you give or help others, think about why you’re doing it. Are you doing it for recognition, or because you genuinely care?

Trust in Hard Times: Remember the widow’s faith when you face challenges. Trust that God sees your efforts and will take care of you.

Jesus is teaching us to value and practice genuine, heartfelt generosity and to trust in God’s provision, no matter our circumstances.

1. One Story/Three Ways

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Review the main points of today's story.
 - Jesus was at the temple where people were giving their offering. Some rich people gave a lot of money and wanted everyone else to see their extravagant gifts of money so they could show off. They weren't the ones who caught Jesus' eye though! A widow, who gave two small coins, which wasn't worth much, was the one Jesus pointed out because she gave more out of the little that she did have.
- Divide your group into three groups.
- Instruct each group to work together to act out the story from a different point of view.
 - Assign one group to act out the story from the widow's point of view.
 - Assign another group to act out the story from the point of view of the rich people.
 - Assign another group to act out the story from Jesus' point of view.
- Give each group about 5 minutes to plan what they're going to do and say.
- Tell the groups that they will be performing their roles for each other.
- Help each group come up with some words and actions to act out their perspective of the story.
- Offer the following insights to each group to help them understand what each character may have been feeling:
 - Widow: While we don't know for sure if she was smiling, we can assume she was happy to give her offering to God because she was willing to give so much of her own money to God.
 - Rich people: They may have thought they were more important because they could give more. They might have been proud of themselves for the large amounts of money they could give.
 - Jesus: When He saw what the rich people were giving, He did not feel joy, but sadness, because it's very likely that they were giving their money to show off. When Jesus saw the widow's gift, He was pleased because He knew she was showing her love for God by giving everything she had.
- Bring the groups back together.
- Invite each group to take turns showing the others their reenactment.

What You Say:

"It's interesting when you look at a story from different perspectives! Jesus showed us how we can **[Bottom Line] practice living for God**. But what about the others in the story? Did the rich people want to show their love for God with their money? (*Invite responses.*) No! How about the widow? (*Invite responses.*) Yes! She gave so much of what mattered to her because she loved God so much. Jesus showed us that it's not the size of the gift that matters to God. It's our heart behind the gift that God values.

[Make It Personal] (Share a time when it was difficult but you gave [money, time, or something special] to honor God and love others.)

* 2. A-MAZE-ing Giver!

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

What You Need: “A-MAZE-ing Giver!” Activity Page, “A-MAZE-ing Giver! Answer Key” Activity Page, and pencils

What You Do:

- Give each kid a pencil and an “A-MAZE-ing Giver!” Activity Page.
- Instruct the kids to find the picture of the widow on the “A-MAZE-ing Giver!” Activity Page.
- Direct the kids to try to find their way from the widow to the offering box in the middle.
- As kids find their way, say: “The best way to take the widow through the maze wasn’t through ALL of the coins, but through the two coins that were hers.”
- Invite the kids to write their names on the line on the “A-MAZE-ing Giver!” Activity Page. (Help as needed.)
- Instruct the kids to try to find their way through the maze from their name to the offering box in the middle.
 - Refer to the “A-MAZE-ing Giver! Answer Key” Activity Page if they get stuck.
 - Say: “You might have noticed that the best way for you to get through the maze was also to go through only two coins.”
- Ask: “What are some ways you can give to God?”
 - To get their thinking started:
 - Help kids think of places they can give to God: at home, school, or anywhere.
 - Say: “Giving to God is not just about giving money. It could be giving to help others, or a good attitude to cheer others up.”

What You Say:

“We don’t have to have a lot to give a lot. The way Jesus celebrated the widow’s two coins shows us that the greatest things we can give don’t have to be big and shiny. They don’t even have to be money, or toys, or something we can hold.

“They can be things we’re committed to practicing. If we’re great at a sport, we can give our game to God and whether we win or lose, be cheerful and thankful. If we’re great at singing, we use our voice to sing songs that worship God! If we’re great at making people laugh or smile, we can use our gift to encourage people who are sad or lonely. When we help people see God at work all around them, it’s one of the ways we can **[Bottom Line] practice living for God.**”

3. Stacking Pennies

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: “Verse Card” Activity Page, and pennies

What You Do:

- Divide the group into four smaller groups.
- Read the verse from the “Verse Card” Activity Page.
- Invite the kids to repeat the Memory Verse after you.
- Give each group about 30 pennies.
- As you recite the Memory Verse, instruct the kids to take turns stacking pennies—one penny for each word you say.
- Continue repeating the verse.
 - Build interest by pausing between words for different lengths of time.
- Continue until you’ve read the entire verse and each group has stacked up the corresponding pennies.
- Give each group a card from the “Verse Card” Activity Page.
- Instruct the groups to unstack their pennies.
- Invite any kids who want to read the verse to lead the group in penny stacking again.
- Provide assistance if needed.

What You Say:

“Learning God’s Word is an important way to **[Bottom Line] practice living for God**. Giving—whether it’s money, food, toys, time, or sharing God’s Word with others—is a very important way we can show others how we love God. These are just a few ways we can **[Bottom Line] practice living for God!**”

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Say:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember?
- How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission?

What You Need: Prepared envelopes, blank paper, pennies, markers or crayons

What You Do:

- Give each kid an envelope with the prayer written on the front and a blank piece of paper.
- Set out the markers or crayons.
- Invite the kids to draw pictures on the blank paper of things they would like to ask God to help them be more giving with.
 - If needed, prompt them with ideas of things to draw, like: their favorite toys that they could share more, a clock to help them remember to share their time by helping someone, a picture of them cleaning up after dinner, donate some of their old clothes, money, etc.
- After a few minutes of drawing, read the outside of the envelope.
- Encourage the kids to repeat after you: "God, help me live for You by being more giving and loving towards others."
- Instruct the kids to tuck their drawings in the envelope.
- Give each kid two pennies.
- Instruct them to tuck the two pennies in the envelope along with their drawing to remind them of the widow's gift—it was small, but mighty!
- Help kids seal the envelope.
- Encourage the kids to put their envelope somewhere that they see often during the week. Whenever they see it, they can feel for the coins and ask God to help them be more giving throughout the week.
- Close your group time in prayer.

What You Say:

"God has blessed us all with some special things! Jesus showed us how to live for God by loving others. The coins the widow had meant a lot to her, but she gave them to God when she put them in the offering box because God meant a lot to her too. Jesus showed us how we can **[Bottom Line] practice living for God** through what we give.

"God, thank You for the true story of the widow's offering. Help us have hearts like hers and think of ways we can show our love for You with everything we have. We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to show someone they know their envelope and ask them how they could **[Bottom Line] practice living for God!**

GETTING READY

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Story applies to real-life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

1. One Story/Three Ways

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

*** 2. A-MAZE-ing Giver!**

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

What You Need:

- Print "A-MAZE-ing Giver!" Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Print "A-MAZE-ing Giver! Answer Key" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- Pencils, one for each kid

3. Stacking Pennies

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need:

- Print "Verse Card" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, four cards for each Small Group
- Pennies, about 120 for each Small Group

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need:

- Blank envelopes, one for each kid
- Blank paper, one for each kid
- Pennies, two for each kid
- Markers or crayons, enough for a Small Group to share
- Before group time:
 - Write the following on the front of each envelope: "God, help me live for You by being more giving and loving towards others."

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app**