

The Widow's Mite

Luke 21:1-4

MEMORY VERSE

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A chalkboard, chalk, and some examples of optical illusions.

Several small cutout circles for each student, pencils or pens, and a stapler.

As many sheets of construction paper, scissors, pencils, pens or crayons, as the number of children in your class, magazines, and glue.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Things Aren't Always What They Seem

Show your class various optical illusions to illustrate to your class that what we see doesn't always represent an accurate picture of a given situation. For example, which line is longest?



The correct answer is that both lines are the same length. One seems longer because of the direction of the arrows. Things aren't always what they seem! Sometimes people can look one way on the outside and be very different on the inside. God sees our hearts and knows our thoughts. Today we are going to see the heart of a very special woman who teaches us about the true meaning of giving and having a right heart before God.

LESSON TIME!

In our Scripture today we will see that Jesus always sees things as they truly are. **Nothing is hidden from God.** Sometimes we may think that we can't be seen, or no one knows what we are doing. We might even think that we can get away with things. But God can look right into our hearts and know what is truly there.

LUKE 21:1-2

Then He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury,

and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.

Jesus was in one of the outer courts of the Temple of the Lord. In this court there were thirteen vessels set out to receive the gifts from the people. These would be the tithes and offerings that the people would give to the Lord. Most of these gifts were money.

As Jesus watched the rich and the widow give their gifts to the Lord, He saw their hearts and understood their motives for giving to the Lord. 1 Samuel 16:7 says, "For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

It must have appeared to **everyone** else that the gifts the rich gave were more significant because they were large, abundant gifts. The gift of two mites would have looked so insignificant, so meaningless in comparison.

Two mites was such a small amount of money, just a few pennies **worth**. Jesus saw both kinds of givers. He knew everything about everyone who gave. He knew how much money the rich people had and how much they gave. He knew how much the widow had

and how much she gave. Not only did He see their money, He saw their hearts. He saw **why they wanted to give**.

Did you know that Jesus can see our hearts? He can look into our hearts and know our motives, or why we do the things we do. Do we help others because we love Jesus or because we think we will get something in return? Do we give from our hearts to the work of the Lord or **so our friends can see** how much we are giving or sacrificing for the Lord? These questions are important for us to ask ourselves, Jesus already knows the answer.

Our next two verses tell us what He saw going on that no one else might have realized **Nothing is hidden from God**.

LUKE 21:3-4

So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all;

for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty has put in all the livelihood that she had."

So what exactly did Jesus see? When the rich put in their **large** gifts of money, Jesus knew they were just giving what they had left over, their extra. They gave out of what they did not really need, out of what was not necessary for them to live on. They had met all their own needs and desires and then gave out of what was left over; they wouldn't even miss it. It wasn't a sacrifice; it was just a token of their money. Jesus saw their hearts; they had given God their leftovers because God didn't count for much with them. They did not feel dependent on Him at all.

It is important that we give to the Lord first, not out of what is left over. We should pray and ask the Lord what He would have us to give to His work. God loves a cheerful giver, not a giver who feels

like they have to give to the Lord. Giving of our resources is important because it shows that the Lord is in control and we are honoring Him by giving back to Him.

We must understand that God doesn't need our money. He just wants our hearts to be right. He has us give because He knows we need to be giving. Every time we truly give to Him in sacrificial ways, we are giving up some of our selfishness; giving helps us become less selfish. Giving also shows that we acknowledge everything comes from Him; He is our provider and gave us everything in the first place. When we give back to Him a portion, it tells Him that we know He gave it to us first. When we give sacrificially, it shows that we are more interested in Him than in ourselves.

All That I Have

Have your students cut out several small circles of paper, enough to make a small booklet out of them. Have them write on each circle, something that the Lord wants them to give to Him.

Staple the books together and let your students take them home to remind them that God wants our all, no matter how small.

Jesus saw the rich give their leftovers. **Nothing is hidden from God.** Jesus also saw the widow give her little two mites. We understand from our scripture that the woman was very poor. She was one of the poorest of the poor. Her little mites were not really valuable, but very meager and small; yet it says it was all she had. She gave them to the Lord with a willing heart even though it would be a sacrifice.

Jesus saw her. He saw that her gift was all she had. It wasn't her leftovers; it was her very best. The two mites were all that she possessed and her very life depended on them, but she was a woman that believed God. She knew He was her provider. She

knew her two mites were of no value to the temple. But she was giving to her God, and she put in all that she had. It cost her to give. **Nothing is hidden from God.**

The widow gave the most in God's eyes because she gave her all. It was precious to Jesus because He saw her heart; her giving spoke of her love, devotion, trust and faith in God. **Nothing is hidden from God.**

She didn't have to be afraid to give to Him. She knew that He could be trusted with her all. We don't have to be afraid to give our lives, our time, our will or our money to Him. He wants us to trust Him the way the widow did. He wants us to give up ourselves by giving Him our all. He always knows our hearts. **Nothing is hidden from God.** When we give our all, our total selves to Him, He can say about us, "Truly I say to you that (fill in several children's names) has put in more than all."

The greatest thing we can give up for Jesus is our will. We can say, "Not my will but yours be done, Lord." His will is far greater than ours. The widow can teach us to give our all. No matter how small it may seem, God can use it and make it worthwhile. He sees us and loves us. **Nothing is hidden from God.**

It never matters how much we give, only that we give from our hearts. Jesus wants to have a relationship with every one of us. Our gifts to Him should be out of a heart of love and worship. Anything that we give is an act of our worship to Him and we want Jesus to be blessed by our worship. That is why it needs to be from our heart.

My Widow's Mite

Have your class cut out 6" round pieces of construction paper. On one side have your students draw the likeness of a coin. Encourage them to be creative. They can write things like "In God We Trust,"

“ONE MITE,” and “Legal Tender,” etc. Maybe they can even draw the likeness of the widow.

On the other side you can have them write down a list of the things they can give to the Lord, like their money, their time, their obedience, their service, etc. If you want they can draw pictures that represent these things or even cut out pictures from magazines and glue them to the back.

When they are done with their projects, take an offering and have them give their “mites” to the Lord. You can return their projects to them at the end of class.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to give Him our all. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them an opportunity to do so.