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TEACHER LESSON PLAN

Two Tiny Coins

PreK–Kindergarten · The Widow's Mite

THE 25 MINUTES

4 min
CIRCLE TIME

6 min
THE STORY

3 min
LOOK
CLOSELY

9 min
ACTIVITY

3 min
CLOSE

BY THE END OF THIS LESSON

You will be able to:

- 1 count the widow's two coins, and tell *many* coins from *two*
- 2 say, in your own words, why Jesus called her two tiny coins the biggest gift
- 3 name one thing you could give to God or to others: a thing, some time or a kindness

WHY THIS MATTERS Even a tiny gift is big to Jesus when we give with all our heart.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- A big handful of coins and **two** pennies, kept apart
- A bowl or basket to be the Temple treasury
- The *Show your class* page (page 3), projected or printed
- Crayons, including brown, and the differentiated handouts

CIRCLE TIME · 4 MINUTES

Many coins, two coins

Sit in a circle with the bowl in the middle. Drop the big handful of coins in, one noisy handful at a time. Then, quietly, drop in the two pennies. Ask: *"Who gave more?"* Most children will point to the big handful. Say: *"Jesus watched people doing just this. And he said something surprising."*

THE STORY · 6 MINUTES

The poor widow

Explain that a widow is a woman whose husband has died. In Jesus' time a widow often had very little. Tell the story simply: Jesus sat near the place in the Temple where people put their money for God. Many rich people put in lots of coins. Then a

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

What children will understand

Children will hear the story of the poor widow who put two tiny coins into the Temple treasury, and learn that Jesus called her gift the biggest of all because she gave everything she had. They will count to two, compare *many* and *two*, and think of something they could give to God and to others.

THEMES

- **Scripture** — Mark 12:41–44, the widow's offering
- **Catechism** — CCC 2544: shortly before his Passion, Jesus held up the poor widow, who gave all she had to live on, as an example for his disciples
- **Virtue** — generosity: giving with the whole heart, not only from what is left over
- **Early learning** — counting to two; comparing *many* and *few*; fine motor skills (tracing, coloring, drawing a line); listening and retelling

poor widow came. She put in two tiny coins. That was all she had.

Jesus called his friends over. He told them that the widow had given more than everyone else. The others gave what they had left over; she gave everything. Read the passage aloud:

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 pence. 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.’

MARK 12:41–44

LOOK CLOSELY · 3 MINUTES

Real coins from Jesus’ time

Show the two coins on page 3. These are real coins, very old, the same kind the widow gave. The exhibition shows **two** because the Gospel says two. Let children hold up two fingers, then cup their hands like the widow’s hands in the picture. Ask: “Are they big or tiny? What color are they?”

ACTIVITY · 9 MINUTES

Each child works on a handout. All three show the same two coins and the same question: which was the biggest gift?

GREEN LEVEL MORE SUPPORT

Picture-led. Count the coins and circle the number, follow the dotted line from the coins to the widow’s hands, circle the biggest gift, color the two coins, trace *GIVE*.

YELLOW LEVEL GRADE LEVEL

A little writing. Circle the number, draw a line from the coins to the hands, circle the biggest gift, copy *GIVE* under a model, then draw a gift of their own.

RED LEVEL GO DEEPER

Draw and tell. Circle the biggest gift and say why, draw something they could give that matters to them, then tell a grown-up about it or write a few words.

LOOK BACK AND PRAY · 3 MINUTES

Put the questions on the screen. For each one, the children show a thumb up, sideways or down: “Can you now count the widow’s coins? Can you say why her tiny gift was the biggest? Can you name a gift you could give?”

Ask the children to hold out their cupped hands, like the widow. Pray together, a line at a time: “Dear Jesus, the widow gave you all she had. Help me to give you my heart, and to share with others. Amen.”

FOR THE TEACHER

Why two tiny coins were the biggest gift

The amount is not the point. The lepton was the smallest coin in use in Judaea. What Jesus measures is the proportion: the rich gave from what they had to spare, the widow gave everything she had to live on.

A gift that costs something. Young children understand this when it is made concrete. Sharing a favorite toy is a bigger gift than giving away one we no longer want. Help them name gifts of time and kindness as well as things.

The last teaching. In the exhibition, this is the last public teaching of Jesus before the events of the Passion began. A few days later he would give everything too.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- Can the child hold up or circle **two** for the widow’s coins?
- Can the child say, in their own words, why Jesus called hers the biggest gift?
- Can the child name one thing they could give — a thing, some time or a kindness?

MINI MUSEUM CONNECTION

Visit the exhibition: find the Widow’s Mite in Case 7, *Ministry and Passion*. Count the coins together — there are two.

Virtual visit: in *Hands of History*, the children can meet the widow and see her hands holding the coins.

minimuseumproject.org/exhibitions/in-their-hands

SHOW YOUR CLASS

The widow's two coins

Project or print this page for circle time, or take it to Case 7.



CASE 7 · MINISTRY AND PASSION

The Widow's Mite

COIN	Bronze lepton
DATE	103–76 BC, circulating 1st c. AD
REFERENCE	Hendin 1150
SCRIPTURE	Mark 12:41–44

The lepton was the smallest coin in use in Judaea in Jesus' time. These are genuine coins of the same kind the widow gave. The exhibition shows **two** because the Gospel says two.

THE TWO COINS IN CASE 7



Coin 1



Coin 2



HANDS OF HISTORY

Whose hands held this lepton?

The exhibition imagines the widow's hands, holding her two coins at the Temple. Being a widow, she would have had very little. She put in two leptons — everything she had.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CHILDREN

- How many coins can you see? Let's count them together.
- Are these coins big or tiny?
- The rich people gave lots of coins. Why did Jesus say the widow gave the most?
- What could *you* give to God, or to someone who needs it?