



JANUARY THEME

WORK IT OUT

Stick to the Plan

BIBLE STORY

Mark 12:41-44

Pennies from Heaven | The Widow's Offering

Spark Story Bible | pg. 342-345

The Widow's Offering

BOTTOM LINE

Practice living for God

MEMORY VERSE

"Training the body has some value.

But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come."

1 Timothy 4:8, NIV

LIFE APP

Commitment | Making a plan and putting it into practice

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **COMMITMENT** and God's character, as shown through God's big story.

Key Question: How can you live for God? We sometimes think that we only practice our faith when we are at church. But when you practice living for God, you discover that whatever you do—work, play, read, sing, listen, whatever—can be a way you worship God with your life.

We finish out our month in **Mark 12:41-44**. Jesus is with his disciples and notices how wealthy people are giving lots of money, but then came a poor widow. She gave just two small coins. While this seemed like such a small gift, Jesus says this woman actually gave more than the rich people because she gave everything she had.

Bottom Line: Practice living for God. We know that most of us love to sing and worship God. But worship isn't just something we do when we sing at church; worship is really how we honor God with our whole lives—through how we love others and serve them, how we give of our time and talents, how we obey and praise God, even how we rest. We want families to practice the faith skill, LIVE, and discover that worship isn't just singing loud, it's living loud.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to help you encourage kids to live for God in order to show others God's love.

•• JUST FOR FUN

Made to Connect | *An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

What You Need: 10 pennies

What You Do:

- Give kids a category. Category examples could be:
 - Sports
 - Songs
 - Books
 - Colors
 - Vegetables
 - Superhero movies
 - Favorite childhood TV characters



- Spin the penny on your small group table.
- Challenge kids to work as a group to name at least 4 items related to the category before the coin stops spinning.

•• GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Pennies (from “Just For Fun” activity), empty leader bins, masking tape

What You Do:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Make sure the teams are even, or assign one kid to go twice if necessary.
- Mark a starting line for each team with masking tape, and line up the teams behind it.
- Empty out your leader bins, and place them about 15 feet away from each team.
- When you say, “Go,” kids will take turns placing a penny on the top of their shoes and hopping on one foot to the bucket without dropping the penny.
- Once they reach the bucket, they must tilt their foot and drop the penny into the bucket and run back to tag the next person in line.
- If they drop the penny, they must return to the starting line and try again.
- The first team to finish is the winner.
- **NOTE:** If this proves too difficult for your group, allow them to walk quickly to the bins instead of hopping on one foot.

What You Say: “Great job! Quick, someone raise your hand and tell me how much a penny is worth. (Pause.) That’s right! It would take ONE HUNDRED of these to make a dollar. A penny isn’t worth much, is it? [Transition] In our Bible story today, we’ll hear/we heard about someone who gave a little—like a couple of pennies—and someone who gave a lot. But one of these givers caught Jesus’ attention.”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

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

•• TAKE A SNAPSHOT [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: 18 index cards, pens, pennies (from “Just For Fun” activity), tape

What You Do:

- Create a 3 x 3 grid on your table using masking tape.
—The grid squares should be just large enough to fit an index card in each.
- Let students work together and help with this.
- As a group, brainstorm some places your kids go during the week; e.g. home, school, soccer field, grandma’s, bus stop, friend’s house, grocery store, church, park, etc.
- Write each example on an index card
—You need 9 examples so that you can create a 3x3 grid on your table with the cards.



—As kids come up with examples of places, ask a couple kids to make another set of identical examples (*these are the ones that you'll use to call out which card they should slap*).

- Divide kids into 2 teams.
- Give each team 5 pennies. Assign one team to be “heads” and one team to be “tails.”
- Tell students they'll be playing a version of Tic-Tac-Toe.
- Select a card from the second pile and read it to the group.
- The first team member to “slap” the card on the grid that matches the card you just read gets an opportunity to answer the following question:
—At (*fill in the place listed on the index card*), give an example of something God would want you to do? What could you do to show others how God wants you to live at (*fill in the place listed on the index card*)?
- Kids work as a team to answer the question, and once a team gives an example, they place a penny in that spot on the grid.
- If the team was assigned “heads,” they place a penny with “heads” side showing. Otherwise they place the penny with the “tails” side showing.
- The first team with 3 pennies in a row wins! (*Or if no one gets 3 in a row, the team with the most pennies on the grid wins.*)

●● **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: “Penny” activity cards, pens

What You Do:

- Pass out one penny card to each kid.
- Pair up the kids and ask them to share one thing they could do this week to practice living for God.
- Instruct the kids to write that one thing on the back (*the blank side*) of their penny.
- After they've written their answer down, instruct the kids to switch pennies with their partners.
- Then gather as a group and let each kid share what's written on the penny they are holding.
- Instruct the kids to return the pennies to their partners to take home.

What You Say: “You gave some great examples of ways we can all make a choice to **[Bottom Line] practice living for God**. I want you to take this penny home to remind you of the sacrifice the widow in our Bible story made AND to encourage you to take action as you make the commitment to **[Bottom Line] practice living for God.**”

●● **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Bibles

What You Do:

- Ask:
—Imagine you have a million dollars and you gave the church \$1,000. What affect, if any, do you think giving the money would have on your day? What does your gift to the church say about your faith and your relationship with God?
—Now imagine you have \$5 and you gave the church \$2. What affect, if any, do you think giving the money would have on your day? What does your gift to the church say about your faith and your relationship with God?
- Read 1 Timothy 4:8.
- Ask:
—What are ways you train your body? What are the benefits of training your body?
—What does it mean to “be godly”? What is the value of “being godly”? What can you do to train to “be godly”?



•• **VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Bible, “Rebus Verse” activity page, pens

What You Do:

- Hand out “Rebus Verse” activity pages and pens.
- Give kids a few minutes to solve the puzzles and read what God says about how God wants us to live.
- Kids can check their answers using the verse reference on each puzzle.
- Review the verses and discuss what each verse says about how God wants us to live.
- Answer Key:
 - Rebus 1: Do not steal. Tell the truth. Do not be jealous of others. (*Exodus 20:15-17*)
 - Rebus 2: Think and talk about good things. (*Philippians 4:8*)
 - Rebus 3: Treat people fairly. Show kindness. Be humble. (*Micah 6:8*)
 - Rebus 4: Love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your strength and love your neighbor as yourself. (*Mark 12:30-31*)

PRAY AND SEND [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: “Rebus Verse” activity page (*from earlier activity*)

What You Do:

- Review the verses from the “Rebus Verse” activity page.
- Ask:
 - Is there one verse that stands out to you?
 - Do you sometimes struggle with speaking the truth or maybe you find yourself jealous and wanting what your friend has?
 - Maybe you want to work on showing kindness?
 - Maybe you like to be positive and you enjoying talking and thinking about good things.
- Encourage kids to pick a verse and commit time this week to memorizing the verse and doing what it says.
- Close in prayer...

“Dear God, your ways are perfect! And you gave us your Word to help teach us how you want us to live. Help us this week to live a life you want us to live, to be focused on you and on your ways, and to show the world with the way we act and talk that we trust you no matter what. Amen.”

Give each child a **GodTime** card. Sunday leaders, pass out **Parent Cue** cards to any adult who has not yet received one this month.