

What's in Your Heart?



- Theme:** God looks to see what's in your heart, not your purse. - Proper 27(32) Yr. B, Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost
- Object:** Several coins of various values from small to large and a bag of pennies to pass out to the children.
- Scripture:** They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on." Mark 12:44 (NIV)

I enjoy taking walks in the neighborhood where I live. Sometimes on my walk, I will find a coin in the street. If it is a penny, I might not even bother stop to pick it up. After all, a penny isn't worth much. If I find some other coin that is worth more than a penny, I will probably stop, pick it up and put it in my pocket. If I am lucky enough to find a dollar, do you think I would stop and pick it up? You know I would!

You and I sometimes look at other people and form an opinion about them by how much money they have. If there is a child in your class at school whose parents have a lot of money, is that child treated better than others in the class? If there is someone who doesn't have much and can't afford to wear nice clothes, are they treated the same as those who have a lot of money? When we see a homeless person on the street, do we look at that person the same way we look at someone who lives in a big, fancy house?

In today's lesson, we will see the way Jesus looks at people and hopefully, it will change the way we look at people as well.

One day, Jesus and his disciples were sitting at the temple, watching people drop their money in the offering box. As they watched the pass come by, they saw some who were rich people put in large amounts of money. The disciples were very impressed to see the large offerings the rich people gave. Then along came a poor widow. She put just a small amount into the box. When Jesus saw her, he called his disciples together and said, "This poor widow has given more than all the others have given. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has."

When we give our offerings of money or time or talent to God, he doesn't compare our offerings to those of other people. Some of us have more time or more money than others to begin with. God looks at what we have to start with, and God looks at the attitude we have about giving. When we give with a generous and thankful heart, God is pleased with us and happy. I am glad that God doesn't judge us by how much money we have, aren't you?

Today I am going to give each of you a penny. That penny is to serve as a reminder to you that in Jesus' eyes, you are just as important as someone with a million dollars. I hope it will also serve as a reminder to you that we should look at others in the same way that Jesus looks at us.

Heavenly Father, we are thankful that you judge us by what is in our heart and not by what is in our purse. We pray that we will look at others in the same way that you look at us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PENNY HUNT: Find a room that can be darkened where the children can gather. When the lights are turned off, scatter a hundred or so pennies on the floor and see how long it takes the children to find all of the pennies!

PENNY RELAY: Divide the children into teams and run a penny relay to see how many pennies each team can put into a can before the teacher blows a whistle. The children will run back and forth, back and forth carrying one penny each time.

LACED HEART: Provide the children with two cut out hearts and hole punch around the edges. The children will first decorate the hearts with words from today's Bible story on each side of the heart. Lace the two hearts together with yarn and stuff the heart with some tissues before closing up the heart completely with the lacing.

HEART PENNY CARD: Give each child a colorful card stock square to cut into a heart shape and hot glue a penny to the middle of the heart. Using markers, the children will decorate the heart with their name and words from today's lesson. Hole punch the heart and add yarn to hang around the child's neck.

HIDE THE PENNY: Have all the children cut out a large heart from construction paper and glue tiny paper wads made from colorful tissue paper to the heart. HIDE one penny behind some of the wads of tissue paper and glue. Children can use this object for telling someone else about today's lesson.

PURSE PENNY: Have the children tape around three edges of two colorful recipe cards make a purse. Add a piece of yarn to make a handle. Use bright markers to write words from today's Bible lesson to decorate the outside. Each child can carry this home with one penny inside to remind them how important they are and how to look at others, as well.

A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS: The teacher will ask the children questions about today's lesson. The teacher will give each child a penny for their "thought" as time allows!

The Widow's Mite



Theme: It isn't the size of the gift that matters. Proper 27/Ordinary 32 Year B

Object: A small coin purse with fifty-seven cents in it.

Scripture: Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, 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 12:43-44 (NIV)

Each Sunday in our worship service we take an offering. Do you think Jesus is interested in how much money we put in the offering plate?

The Bible says that one day, Jesus went to the temple and sat down near the place where the offerings were placed. He sat and watched the people as they came by and put in their offerings. Many rich people, dressed in fine robes, came by and put in a lot of money. Then, a poor widow came by and put in two small copper coins that weren't even worth a penny.

Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "This woman has given more than anyone. The others gave out of their wealth, but this woman gave all that she had." You see, Jesus is more interested in what is in the heart of the giver than he is in the size of their gift.

I have a small coin purse. Let's see how much money is in it. Hmm...fifty-seven cents. Well, that isn't much money, but this morning I want to tell you the story of a little girl named Hattie and how her gift of fifty-seven cents helped to build a great church.

One Sunday morning, the pastor of a church went outside to find a group of children who were unable to get in to go to Sunday School because the building was too crowded. One of those children was a six year-old named Hattie. When the pastor saw her, he lifted her up in his arms, put her up on his shoulder, and

carried her into the church where he found a place for her to sit in the Sunday School class.

The next morning as he walked to church, the pastor saw Hattie again and stopped to talk to her. He told her that he hoped that some day the church would be able to build a building that was large enough so that there would be room for all the children who wanted to attend.

Two years later, little Hattie died and the pastor was asked to preach the funeral service. After the service, Hattie's mother handed the pastor a small purse containing fifty-seven cents. She told him that Hattie had been saving her pennies to help the church build a new Sunday School building. The pastor took the fifty-seven cents back to his church and told the people about the little girl who had been saving her pennies to help them build a new Sunday School building. The people were so inspired by Hattie's gift, that they gave faithfully until they built a wonderful new building with plenty of room for all of the children who wanted to attend.

I am sure that Jesus would say that Hattie gave more than anyone to build this great church. She gave all that she had.

Dear Father, everything we have is a gift from you. Help us to remember that we should give back to you with a cheerful heart. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

OFFERING RELAY: Divide children into 2 teams. One player from each team must go to the opposite side of the room and sit down with an offering plate. When the game begins, the team players will take turns running their money to the offering plate on their side of the team and then back for the next player to do the same. Have players sit down after completing their offering "run" and the first team to complete the "offering relay" is the winner. Play again if time allows and then have children sit in a circle and listen to the Bible story.

MEMORY JUMPING: Use sidewalk chalk and make large squares with part of the Bible verse in each square (add crosses, hearts, church, etc in each square before classtime). Children can be given 5 pennies each and when they jump on a square, they can throw a penny to another square and the words of the verse will be taken away. Then children will try to say the Bible verse together and continue to play with a new jumper, etc.

GIFTED HEART: Give children supplies to wrap a small package with ribbon and a bow. Give each child a foam or wooded heart to glue onto the top of the little gift and share the gift with the pastor or an older person. The gift could just be a written note of appreciation or a small piece of candy, etc.

BUILD A CHURCH: Provide children with various sizes and colors of small pieces of construction paper to glue together on a sheet of paper, to form a church. Children could use toothpicks for a cross over the church and a shiny silver gum wrapper for the door, etc..... children will enjoy being creative. Have children write .57c on several little pieces of construction paper on the church. Let children tell what the 57c means in our story today so they can be prepared to share this story with others.

GIFT CARD: Have card stock paper folded in half for each child, before class begins. Cut a piece of colored contact paper the same size as the folded card. Give the card to child to cover with the contact paper and write inside the card with bright markers --- I CAN GIVE JESUS MY MONEY, MY _____ AND MY _____. Signed _____

QUARTER HOLDER BOOKS: Have one quarter holder book for each child in the class. Let the children trace the quarter holder book onto construction paper, and glue the cons. paper onto the quarter holder book. Let children write I LOVE JESUS.... or put a cut out heart between I and JESUS! Encourage children to do odd jobs around the house and for others in order to fill the quarter slots and then give their book to Jesus!

OFFERING CAN: Give each child a small can or box to cover with construction paper. Draw and decorate the construction paper and then tape to the container and encourage children to play

loose monies into their offering can and give back to Jesus each week. Children will enjoy telling all the places that they might find loose change -- such as in their cars, under the couch cushions, etc.

BIBLE VERSE COINS: Before class time, draw coins on a piece of paper and make copies. Then write today's Bible verse for Mark 12:44b with a word on each coin. Give each child or team (depending on teacher's preference) an envelope with the Bible verse coins and let the child or teams put the coins in order and glue onto a cut out picture or drawing of a Bible.

PENNY JAR DROP: This can be played like the old game of "drop a clothespin in the jar", so the children will take turns kneeling on a chair and the penny jar will be at the back of the chair and pennies can be dropped into the jar. Give each child a chance to drop at least 5 pennies into the jar and see who gets the most pennies in the jar. Then let the children keep the pennies to put into the SS or church offering.

PENNY GUESSING: Have a jar full of pennies (any size jar is fine) and see which child in the class can guess the correct number of pennies in the jar!! The child who guesses the closest to the correct number of pennies could get a small prize or could have the choice of how the pennies would be spent for the SS class or in church, or to be given to a missionary, etc.