



LESSON 4: GOD'S STUFF, NOT OURS

WHAT WE WANT OUR STUDENTS TO LEARN: They must learn to see their stuff as God's, not theirs, to be used as He sees fit.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To commit to viewing all their possessions with a spirit of sacrifice, understanding that we only have what we have because God chose to give it to us.

Scripture Focus: Mark 12:41-44

OVERVIEW: In this lesson, you'll be looking at Jesus' observations of the widow giving her last two coins to the Temple treasury. And you'll have the chance to ask the question: how could the woman have done this? The answer is two-fold: she trusted God to care for her, and more importantly for our purposes, she saw her money as God's and not hers. This teaches us a great lesson about how we should view our stuff. We should see all of our stuff as God's to do with as He sees fit. When we adopt this attitude, we can be sure that our stuff will never be a hindrance to our faith.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Stuff Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Stuff Lesson 1 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-stuff-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter’s firsthand accounts.
- **Time frame:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50’s AD.
- **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus’ identity.

THE SETTING

Mark 12 finds Jesus squarely in the Pharisees’ and Sadducees’ crosshairs. They had focused their attention on bringing Jesus down. Mark 12 is tension-filled as Jesus spars with these so-called leaders who were intent on trapping Him in His words with the hope of arresting Him. Jesus, of course, knew the goal of their feeble scheming. Furthermore, we know that Jesus would not allow Himself to be taken before the time was right. This passage you’ll study today occurs in the midst of this tension.

THE MAIN POINT

Sacrifice is a practice that is foreign to many people today. The idea that we would “do without” is such a stark contrast to the values of the world around us. But Jesus, time and time again, extols this virtue as central to our faith. Nowhere is this more evident than in His teaching in the Temple after observing the widow give all she had to the Temple offering. Jesus points out what great faith and sacrifice this must take. It is precisely the attitude we should take with our possessions: seeing them as belonging to God in the first place, and trusting Him to take care of us instead of trusting in our stuff. It’s a tough lesson for us to learn, but a vital one if we’re to experience the brand of faith that Jesus calls us to in Scripture.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help students get used to the idea of seeing their stuff as God's not theirs.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need a way to show students the following YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G65z8p1YNhw>.

FIRST, remind students that this is the last lesson in Jesus and Stuff, and in this lesson you'll be looking at one final truth about how we think about our possessions. But first, you want to show a video that demonstrates the principle you'll be discussing today.

NEXT, show the video to your students. When you've finished, lead them in a brief discussion. **Ask something like:**

- **What do you think of this video? What thoughts come to mind?**
Answers will vary.
- **As people receive the money, how did you find yourself feeling?**
Answers will vary.
- **The guy alludes to the fact at the beginning of the video that he is probably financially well off. Does this change the nature of what he is doing? Explain your answer.**
Answers will vary, but lead students to see that while giving away \$100 to people might not be a huge sacrifice, it does demonstrate generosity on the part of the young man. After all, he could keep the money for himself.

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by **saying something like this:**

- **Does giving someone \$100 change their lives? No. No it doesn't. It won't get any of those people off the street permanently. But, it made all of them feel special. It brought joy into what may have been a pretty crummy day otherwise. All because one guy decided to be generous with what he had been given. He could have kept the money for himself. No one made him give it away. But because he was generous, he gave. This lesson will see Jesus commanding us to do the same thing: to see our stuff as resources to be freely given up to be used as God sees fit. Let's jump right in and see exactly what Jesus said.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help students understand that they have to learn to see their stuff as God's, not theirs, to be used as He sees fit.
- **Set-Up:** None.

FIRST, take a moment and see if anyone can remember what you discussed in the previous lessons. Use the following bullet points to help fill in the gaps:

- **Lesson 1:** We learned that Jesus said it's impossible to both love our stuff and truly love God.
- **Lesson 2:** We learned that if our love for our stuff comes between our devotion to God, we're doing it all wrong.
- **Lesson 3:** That no matter how much stuff we have, or want, it doesn't add any real meaning to our life.

THEN, instruct students to turn to Mark 12 in their Bibles. While they're doing so, help provide some of the context for the passage using the Details and Setting sections of your Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read Mark 12:41-44. When you've finished, lead students in a discussion. **Ask:**

- **Look back at verses 41. First off, did Jesus condemn the rich people for putting in large amounts?**

Answer: No.

- **Were the rich people generous?**

Answer: Yes. Seemingly so.

- **Do you think the Temple was able to put the money from the rich people to good use?**

Answer: Yes. Most likely.

- **In verse 43, Jesus makes His point clear. What does He mean? How did the woman put in more money than the rich people?**

Answer: She gave a higher percentage of her overall money than the rich did. While they gave more money, she gave more of her total money.

- Jesus pulls back the curtain even more in verse 44. What did He say made the woman's gift so remarkable?

Answer: She was poor. And so her two copper coins were incredibly valuable to her. In fact, they were some of her last coins.

NEXT, explain to students that this shows two very powerful truths about the woman, two truths that we'll use to apply to our own lives and how we look at our stuff. **Ask something like the following:**

- **First, the woman showed that she viewed her stuff (in this case her money) as not truly hers at all, but God's that He had entrusted to her. How did she demonstrate this?**

Answer: No one could give their last bit of money to the church (in this case the Temple) if they did not see it as God's to begin with. After all, she could have withheld the Temple tax. But she was faithful and godly and she did what she knew was right by God's law.

THEN, ask something like:

- **The second principle this woman demonstrated is the principle of faith. She demonstrated complete faith in God to meet her needs. How did she demonstrate this?**

Answer: She gave the last of her money she had to live on. This requires a tremendous amount of faith in God to provide for her. As a widow in the 1st Century, she would have had zero means to provide for herself. She would be at the mercy of other Christians and of the Temple to provide for her. This shows a great deal of faith in God to meet her needs.

NEXT, bring it around to begin applying this truth in their lives. Ask:

- **What are some examples of how you all as 21st-century teenagers can see your stuff as God's and not yours? What does this look like lived out?**

Answers will vary, but challenge them to be practical with their responses.

- **When we place too much value or importance on our stuff, how does this show a lack of faith in God and His ability to provide for us?**

Answers will vary.

- **How can you learn to show more faith in God as it pertains to your attitude toward your stuff?**

Answers will vary.

FINALLY, transition into the Last Word by **saying something like:**

- **One of the most important truths we can learn about our stuff is one the widow already knew: our stuff is God's, not ours. Everything we have we have because of God's grace. If we treat our stuff like it's God's that He is allowing us to benefit from, we will have a much more biblical attitude toward our possessions. We won't find ourselves looking for meaning in our stuff, or being greedy about wanting more. And we'll be much more inclined to give of our stuff to others.**

If there are no further questions or comments, transition to the Last Word.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students commit to viewing all their possessions with a spirit of sacrifice, understanding that we only have what we have because God chose to give it to them.
- **Set-Up:** None.

BEGIN by explaining to students that this is your last lesson where you'll be looking at how they view their stuff in light of their relationship with Jesus. Remind them that they have learned a lot about what Jesus expects of them, and about what the right attitude is. It's up to them to make the changes in their lives.

THEN, provide for them to spend a few minutes in prayer, asking God to reveal any changes they need to make regarding their attitude toward their stuff. Lead them to ask God to give them the strength to do the right thing. Encourage them to pray for God to use their new attitude concerning their stuff to grow His Kingdom.

FINALLY, once students have had a chance to pray, close with your own prayer for them.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

- *Do you have questions about a lesson?*
- *Something that worked particularly well you want to share?*
- *Something that didn't work you want to bring up?*

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.