

## Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
<b>Lower Elementary</b>		
<b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> God helps us give.	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles (optional)
<b>TRY AND GIVE:</b> Kids try to drop pennies into an offering jar.	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> None	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Pennies, containers (jars, bottles, or bowls) with a variety of sized openings, chair(s); quarter or large play coin
<b>FIND AND GIVE:</b> Kids give each other clues to find an item.		
<b>Upper Elementary</b>		
<b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> The smallest things mean the most.	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Bibles
<b>WHO WINS?</b> Kids play a beanbag toss game with varying degrees of difficulty.	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> None	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Beanbags, hula hoop, paper plates, quarters, masking tape or string; Spirit Search Bible Cards (page 45), Spirit Search Answer Sheet (page 47), pencils or pens, envelopes, tape
<b>SPIRIT SEARCH:</b> Kids do a scavenger hunt in the Bible.		
<b>All Kids</b>		
<b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> We all have something to give.	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None
<b>GUESS THE GIFT:</b> Kids play a game of charades.	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Coins, basket	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Chart paper or whiteboard (optional), marker (optional)
<b>JESUS SAYS GIVE:</b> Kids play a Simon-Says type of game about giving.		



Visit [www.sparksondayschool.org](http://www.sparksondayschool.org) for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation's story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.



**Workshop Focus:** God helps us give.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit [www.sparksondayschool.org](http://www.sparksondayschool.org) to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### The Widow's Offering Storytelling

**Welcome to Bible Skills and Games! Let's start out with a silly song to get warmed up.**

Sing to the tune of "Shake Another Hand."

**Give a high five to the person next to you,  
Give a high five when you sing this song.  
Give a high five to the person next to you,  
Give a high five when you sing this song.**

Repeat, substituting the following actions for additional verses:

**Give a fist bump to the person next to you.**

**Give a big smile to the person next to you.**

**Give a nice hug to the person next to you.**

Spark Resources  
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies  
None

**It was fun to sing that song and give your neighbor something that would make them feel good, wasn't it? Today's story is called The Widow's Offering. What is an offering?** Accept answers, and guide kids to understand that it is something you give. **That's right, an offering is something you give to someone else, especially to God! Let's read the story to find out what the widow gave.** Hand out Spark Story Bibles to the kids, and help them find the story of The Widow's Offering on page 342.

**Why did the rich man want everyone to see him give his offering?** (*He thought he was really important and special.*) **What did the widow give?** (*all she had, two coins*) **The widow gave away all her money. Let's look at the picture of her. She really needs new clothes, doesn't she?** (*yes*) **But she gave all her money away. Will she be able to buy clothing?** (*no*) **What about food? Will she be able to buy that?**(*no*) **Why do you think she gave all she had as her offering?** (*She loved God. She trusted in God's generosity.*) **Who does Jesus want us to be like? Why?** (*The widow, because she gave out of love.*)

**You were really good listeners. You really understand the story!**

## Activate Faith (25 minutes)

### Try and Give

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**Set Up:** Gather a collection of containers, making sure to have a variety of openings from wide to small. Place a wide-mouth container behind each chair.

#### Activity Instructions

Divide kids into groups of three or four, and each group line up in front of a chair.

**I have two pennies for each team to use. Can anyone think of why we would be using exactly two coins?** (*That's the same number as the widow in the story had!*)

**You're right! That was the same as the widow's offering. Two coins is not a lot of money, but it was everything she had. Do you think it was difficult for her to give all her money away?** Accept answers. **We're going to play a game where each of you will try to drop two pennies into an offering jar to remind us of our story today.**

Invite one kid from each group to be first, and have them kneel on the chair facing the back of the chair. For the first round, use a container with a wide mouth, and make sure all kids have a chance to drop the pennies into the jar. You can also place the containers on a stack of Spark Story Bibles to make round one easier to achieve, and remove a Bible with each round of play to increase the difficulty.

**Great job! Did you find it easy or hard to "give" your two pennies to God?** (*pretty easy*) **Let's try it again, but I'm going to make it a little more difficult.** Replace containers with others that have smaller openings, and play again. Continue playing until you run out of containers or time, with container openings getting smaller and smaller with each round.

#### Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles (optional)

#### Supplies

Pennies, 2 per every 3-4 kids  
Containers (jars, bottles, or bowls with a variety of sized openings), 1 set per every 3-4 kids  
Chairs, 1 per every 3-4 kids

**You did a great job trying to get the pennies into all the containers! It started out being easy, but got harder and harder. Two pennies is not a lot, but as the game went on, it got more difficult to give them away, didn't it? (yes) Just like the widow in today's story, you tried really hard to give all your coins to God! The widow had an even bigger job than getting pennies into containers. She had to trust God or she couldn't have given everything she had.**

## Find and Give

**Set Up:** Gather kids in a circle on the floor or around a table.

### Activity Instructions

**I have coin that we're going to use in our game. Show kids the coin. I am going to hide the coin somewhere in the room, and one of you will try to find it. The other kids are going to give clues to help you.** Invite a kid to be the first "Finder." Ask this kid to cover both eyes so he or she does not see where you "hide" the coin. The coin does not have to be out of sight; it should not be at their eye level. Chose a simple place, such as on top of a counter in a corner, or under a chair on the floor. Remind the other kids to not tell the Finder where the coin is hidden. Once the coin is hidden, say, **Okay, you can look now! Kids, remember to help our Finder find the coin by giving clues like "look up," "look down," "hot" when they are getting near the coin, or "cold" when they are moving away from the coin.** Repeat until all kids have had a chance to be the Finder if they wish.

**Good job, everyone! It was really fun for me to see you give the coin to a friend so everyone could have a chance to be the Finder! I am so lucky to have so many giving kids in my group today!**

## Send (5 minutes)

### Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

**We used coins in each of our games today, didn't we? Can anyone tell me why? (The widow gave two coins; coins were offerings in the story.) The widow gave two coins, all she had. Jesus wants us to give, too! We'll have one more chance to use pennies before we go, because we're going to use them in our prayer!**

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

Quarter or large play coin

### Spark Resources

Family Pages



### Supplies

Pennies, 1 per kid  
Basket with wide opening

## Prayer Time

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Hand a penny to each kid. **As I say your name, I'd like you to come up and put your penny in our offering basket.**

**God,**

**Thank you for [name] and all they give to you and others.** Repeat until all kids have been named and have had a chance to place their penny in the basket.

**Amen.**

**Workshop Focus:** The smallest things mean the most.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit [www.sparksondayschool.org](http://www.sparksondayschool.org) to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### The Widow's Offering Storytelling

After all kids have arrived and are seated, whisper, **Welcome to Bible Skills and Games! Today's story is The Widow's Offering. I'm using my small, quiet voice because the smallest things can mean the most, and our story today is about a small thing.**

Hand out Spark Bibles to the kids, and invite them to open them to Mark 12:38-44 on page 1118. Ask for volunteers who want to pantomime the parts of the rich man, the widow, and Jesus. Ask the remaining kids to pretend they are the disciples. **As I read the story out loud, [name] will pretend to be Jesus, [name] will be the widow, and [name] will be the rich man. The rest of you will be the disciples. Do you know what pantomime means? (act out) As I read the story out loud, I'd like you to pantomime your parts, using your face and body to express what you think each of your characters is thinking, feeling, and doing.** Read the story, and perhaps read it again if the kids are engaged.

**Why would Jesus think that the woman's two coins were so important?** (She gave all she had.) **What was Jesus trying to teach the disciples?** (It's not what you give, it's how you give it; small gifts given out of love and trust are big gifts) Invite the kids to place a Spark Bible Sticker of their choice in the margin by the passage.

**Spark Resources**  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

**Supplies**  
None

# Activate Faith (25 minutes)

## Who Wins?

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**Set Up:** Create a starting line with masking tape or string. Place the hula hoops across from the starting line, as far away as your space allows. Have paper plates and quarters ready to use. Place a set of beanbags at each starting line.

### Activity Instructions

Divide the group into teams of five or six kids, and have each team line up at the starting line by a set of beanbags.

**We're going to do a beanbag toss game to see which team can score the most points. Your team will get one point for every beanbag that lands in or on your target. Each person on each team will have a chance to toss beanbags onto each of the different targets. The targets will keep getting smaller and harder to land on. First we'll start with getting your beanbags into your team's hula hoop. Remember, your team wants as many points as possible!** Each team should designate a score keeper. Watch for kids who encourage each other, and compliment them with phrases such as **"Nice sportsmanship, [name],"** or **"You're a great teammate, [name]!"** Keep track of kids who are helping each other. Move the hula hoops out of the game area after this part of the game.

After all kids have had the chance to toss beanbags into the hula hoops, replace the hula hoops with the paper plates. Continue complimenting encouraging behavior. **Let's do a check of the scores. I'd like the first person in each line to tell me how many points their team has.** After each team has given their score, say, **Wow, you are doing really well! I think the paper plates were a little too easy for you, so let's make the distance a little greater!** Make the distance between the starting line greater by moving the plates farther away, having the kids take a giant step back from the starting line, or both. Continue to compliment and keep track of kids who encourage each other, particularly if they are on different teams.

**All right, now it's time for a new challenge. Instead of paper plates, you're going to toss your beanbags onto these quarters.** As you replace the paper plates with quarters, some kids are bound to complain. Focus on complimenting kids who were positive or said nothing at all. **And, because the quarters are very small, a beanbag that lands on them is worth five points rather than one.** Continue to "catch" and keep track of kids who are encouraging, and compliment them so all can hear. After all kids have had a chance to toss beanbags onto the quarter targets, ask kids to sit down where they are.

**You all did a great job and tried really hard! What was the easiest part of this game?** Accept answers. **The hardest?** Accept answers. **Why do you think the quarters were worth more point than the paper plates?** (*because it was more difficult*) **The quarter targets remind us of the widow's offering. The quarters**

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

Beanbags, 3 per every 5 kids

Hula hoops, 1 per every 5 kids

Paper plates, 1 per every 5 kids

Quarters, 1 per every 5 kids

Masking tape or string

were the smallest but most important for points in our game, and the widow's offering was the smallest but most important offering because she willingly gave all she had.

**Let's see who our winners are! I'd like the last person in line for each team to tell me their total team points.** After all teams scores have been shared, say, **The team with the most points is [team name]. But we have another winning team, too. It is a new team, and it consists of [names of kids you noticed encouraging others]. I happened to notice that these kids were really encouraging and kind to their teammates and others. What are some encouraging things you can say to others? (Way to go; good try!) It's a little thing to say something nice to someone else, but the smallest things can be the most important!**

## Spirit Search

**Set Up:** Make copies of the Spirit Search Bible Cards and Spirit Search Answer Sheet. Number each set of envelopes 1 through 10. Cut apart the cards and put them in the corresponding numbered envelope. Tape the envelopes in obvious places throughout the room.

### Activity Instructions

**Our story today teaches us that Jesus wants us to have a giving spirit, right? (yes) But there are other attributes that Jesus wants us to have, too. Let's have a scavenger hunt to find out what those are. First, everyone needs to find a partner.** Be mindful that some kids may not be inclined to find a partner on their own. Gently guide kids to partner with them. Once kids are in pairs, pass out Spirit Search Answer Sheets and pencils or pens. **I have taped 10 envelopes up on the wall for each team. Each envelope has a clue as to where in your Bible you can find an attribute that Jesus wants us to have. When I say go, go to an envelope together, take it off the wall, and sit down with your partner to find the word that describes a behavior Jesus wants us to have. It doesn't matter what number you begin with, it just matters that you get to all the envelopes to find the answers. Let's see who can find all the answers first. When you are done, bring your list up to me and I will check to see if they are all correct. Any questions?** Allow a moment for kids to pair up, and then get started.

Answer key:

- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| 1. Luke 14:11           | humble     |
| 2. 1 Peter 4:9          | hospitable |
| 3. Colossians 4:6       | gracious   |
| 4. Acts 2:46            | generous   |
| 5. Matthew 18:21-22     | forgiving  |
| 6. 1 John 3:11          | loving     |
| 7. Philippians 3:4      | rejoicing  |
| 8. James 5:7a           | patient    |
| 9. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 | thankful   |
| 10. Matthew 8:13        | faithful   |

### Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

### Supplies

Spirit Search Bible Cards  
(page 45), one per every  
two kids  
Spirit Search Answer Sheet  
(page 47), one per every  
two kids  
Pencils or pens  
Envelopes, 10 per every 2 kids  
Tape

**Wow, you did a great job! Let's review the list. Jesus wants us to be humble, hospitable, gracious, generous, forgiving, loving, rejoicing, patient, thankful, and faithful. Phew, that sounds like a lot to do! But remember, a small act of kindness can make a big difference!**

## Send (5 minutes)

### Wrap Up

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Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

**You were awesome today at Bible Skills and Games! We're going to close with a beanbag prayer today.**

#### Spark Resources

Family Pages



#### Supplies

Beanbag (from Activate Faith)

### Prayer Time

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Gather kids in a circle, and hold the beanbag as you say, **I'll start and then pass the beanbag to the person on my right. He (or she) will then say, "Jesus, help me give to God and to others," and so on until everyone has had a chance to pray.**

Once all kids have held the beanbag and prayed, close with, **Amen!**

**Workshop Focus:** We all have something to give.

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## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### The Widow's Offering Storytelling

**Welcome to Bible Skills and Games! We have a great story today, but before we read it, I have some things I need each of you to hold for me.** Pass out a coin or two to each kid. **Now let's get to our story, The Widow's Offering.** Hand out Spark Story Bibles to the younger kids and Spark Bibles to the older kids. **We'll read the story from the Spark Story Bible, on page 342. Older kids, you can follow along in your Spark Bibles. Turn to Mark 12:38-44, on page 1118.** Assist kids who need help finding the correct pages. Invite a volunteer to read the story out loud.

Pass the basket around, asking kids to put their coins in it. **Was it hard to give up the coins you had? Why?** Accept answers. **Who would you rather be like, the rich man or the widow? Who does Jesus want us to be like? (the widow) Could you still be like the widow if you were rich? (Yes! It's not how much you have, it's how much you share.)** Invite older kids to allow a younger kid to help them choose a Spark Bible Sticker to place in the margin of their Spark Bibles.

**Spark Resources**  
Spark Story Bibles  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

**Supplies**  
Coins, 1 or 2 per kid  
Basket

# Activate Faith (25 minutes)

## Guess the Gift

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Divide your group up into pairs, matching an older kid with a younger kid.

**The poor widow had very little, yet she gave all she had. I wonder what she would have to give up because she gave her two coins.** Allow time for kids to think about that, and accept their answers. **There are a lot of people in the world who don't have much money. Usually kids don't have a lot of money of their own to give, so I wonder what you kids are supposed to give?** Allow kids to brainstorm what they have to give other than money. **We're going to play a game of charades and see if you can come up with even more ideas! I'd like you to move to an area where you and your partner can talk quietly, yet can still see the front of the room.** Allow time for kids to relocate. **Now talk with your partner about what gifts you, or other kids, have that can be shared with others. You can use an idea that we talked about, or come up with a new one. It might be sharing a smile or doing something to help someone. Then the two of you will come up and together act out, without any talking, the gift you are sharing so the rest of the class can try to guess what it is. I'll give you a couple of minutes to figure out what you're going to do when it's your turn.**

After a minute or two, ask for a volunteer pair to start. Encourage your group to clap and cheer after each pair's performance. After all pairs have had a chance to perform their charade, say, **Let's see if we can remember all of the gifts God has given to kids that they can share.** Write the list on chart paper or a whiteboard if you wish.

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

Chart paper or whiteboard (optional)  
Marker (optional)

## Jesus Says Give

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Gather kids in an open area in your space, making sure there is room for kids to move about.

**We've figured out that God has given us special gifts to share with, or give to, others. We also know that Jesus wants us to give all we have. So let's see how good we are at doing that. I need a volunteer. Who would like to be our first "Jesus"?** Select an animated kid to start the game. **Our game today is like Simon Says, except we will be doing what Jesus says. [Name] will be Jesus. [Name] will tell you different things to do, but only if he (or she) says "Jesus says. . ." should you do them. If you get caught doing something that Jesus didn't say, you'll need to leave the group and go to [designate a spot for kids to wait until the next round]. The last person in the game will be our next Jesus. Ready?**

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

None

Be prepared to provide activities for the kids to do, such as:

“Jesus says” activities:

- Give a neighbor an invitation to come to church.
- Give a hug to someone older than you.
- Give a smile to someone younger than you.
- Give your best imitation of a chicken to a neighbor.
- Find someone you don’t know well and give that person a crazy handshake.
- Give a wink to someone you like.
- Give your neighbor a story about Jesus.
- Give a compliment to the person in front of you.
- Give a pat on the back to the person in front of you.

Other activities:

- Jump as high as you can.
- Shout your name as loud as you can.
- Sit on the floor and laugh.
- Clap your hands quickly 10 times.
- Take off your shoes.
- Find the person who is closest to your exact age.

Optional: Pair younger kids and older kids together, and have them work as a team to lead the game.

Play as many rounds as time allows and kids are having fun.

**Wow, you listened really well in our game. I hope we all remember to listen to Jesus in our everyday lives. I heard lots of laughter during our game. Did you know that laughter is a gift you can give others, too? Yes, Jesus wants us to laugh, and enjoy ourselves, as we give to others.**

## Send (5 minutes)

### Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven’t already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

**You were all great today. I’m so glad you were here! We talked a lot about how we can be like the widow and give what we have, and how we can give special gifts that aren’t money. Take a minute to think about a special gift you have, because you’ll have a chance to say that gift in our prayer.**

**Spark Resources**  
Family Pages



**Supplies**  
None

## Prayer Time

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**Our prayer today will be a popcorn prayer, where each of you can pop in! I will start and thank God for a special gift that I have to share with others. Then you can be like a piece of popcorn and “pop” in with a thank-you to God for a special gift that you have to share with others.**

**Thank you, God, for giving me the gift of [name of gift] that I can share with others.**

Allow time for kids to add their thank-yous.

**Amen.**

# Spirit Search Bible Cards

1. Luke 14:11

2. 1 Peter 4:9

3. Colossians 4:6

4. Acts 2:46

5. Matthew 18:21-22

6. 1 John 3:11

7. Philippians 3:4

8. James 5:7a

9. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

10. Matthew 8:13



# Spirit Search Answer Sheet

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_