

The Widow's Offering

An introductory level workshop teaching the story from Mark 12:41-43

Welcome

Introduce yourself and give reason for why you learn and tell scripture by heart

Tell the story

He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury.

Many rich people put in large sums.

A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny.

Then he called his disciples and said to them,

“Truly I tell you,

this poor widow has put in more than all those who are putting in to the treasury.

For all of them have put in out of their abundance;

but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had—

all she had to live on.”

Agenda

This 2-session workshop has two goals:

1. To learn by heart the story of the widow's offering
2. To acquire skill in learning and telling biblical stories

Here's the plan:

- Learn the story—first get a feel for the whole story, then get as close as we can to telling it the way it was first told, as recorded for us by Mark.
- Explore the story—how did people understand the story when first told?
- Connect with the story—how does this story relate to our lives today?
- Tell the story—to a friend, to a small group.

Today we'll mainly do things as if we were all competent oral learners (that is, as if we were really good at listening, speaking, visualizing, and remembering).

Tomorrow we'll use our literary capabilities to work on the story. We'll go over ways to learn stories by heart at home and touch on some aspects of performance, like movement, voice and performance anxiety.

How does that seem to you?

Sounds of the Story

I will tell our story to you again. This time, close your eyes and listen to the sounds of the story, to its words and phrases...

Jesus had come to Jerusalem for the Passover and was spending time in the temple. In this story he sat down opposite the treasury. This little gold box will be our treasury, and also our talking piece. We'll pass it around; when it comes to you tell a word or phrase that you remember from the story I just told.

I'll go first...

Lion Hunt and Repeat-After-Me (sitting)

The traditional way to start learning a biblical story in a group is by going on Lion Hunt. To go on a Lion Hunt you have to repeat after me everything I say and everything I do. So you'll need your mouths; let's warm them up... And you'll need your hands; let's warm them up... Okay, I think we're ready. Let's begin (remember, repeat after me):

Do you want to go on a Lion Hunt?... Sure!...

Repeat-After-Me (standing)

Storyboard è Tell to a Partner

Assessment: Raise your hand if you remembered... (see "keys to story" chart at end of outline)

Structure

- Outline on chart or board: 2 parts (action and speech)
- Logic of the story (something happens which Jesus comments upon, explanation of why widow “put in more”)
- Verbal threads (put in, treasury, poor widow)

Story Analysis, Figure Telling, Background; Demo and Invite Tellings

- Setting: from this story all we know it is “opposite the treasury”; from canonical context we learn it is in the Jerusalem temple, a few days before the Passover and a week before Jesus’ resurrection
- Characters: Jesus, crowd, rich people, poor widow, disciples
- Things: treasury, two small copper coins, which are worth a penny
- Plot: follow the verbs (action words)

Chant

TRULy i TELL you THIS poor WIdow
HAS put IN-xx
MORE than all THOSE who are PUTting Into the TREASurY

Remove-a-Word exercise for last verse

Connections

One or more of connections are shared with a partner and then invite sharing with whole group

1. **In this story, Jesus paid attention to a very poor person: a widow with only one penny to her name. Tell about a time you noticed someone that appeared to be very poor.**
2. **The widow was very poor, but she was also very generous. Can you remember a time when you experienced generosity? Tell your partner about it.**
3. **The widow didn't have very much, but what she had she gave to the Temple treasury for God. I wonder if each of us has something to give for God?**

Tell story one last time to the group; invite them to listen in light of their connections

Homework Challenge

Tell someone the story as best you know it, without reviewing it in print; then jot down what you could remember of it.

Keys to the Story	1	2	3	4
Jesus/he sat down				
opposite the treasury				
watched the crowd				
money				
rich people				
large sums				
poor widow				
two small copper coins				
worth a penny				
called his disciples				
Truly I tell you				
out of their abundance				
out of her poverty				
everything she had				
How many did you get?				
Bonus: Scripture Reference				