

# Secret Service

Unit introduction and the Widow with Two Mites

## Lesson 1

### Title: With All Her Mites

Text: Matthew 6:1-7, Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4



### Kick Start (Pivots)

#### Supplies

Power Point slides 1 - 4

#### Presentation

Show the slides and go over each one to introduce the Pivot Points of the lesson. The Pivots will be referred to at different points of the lesson.

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

**Pivot Verse:** When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do, you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven. Matthew 6:1 CEV

**Overview:** an introduction of the unit found in Matthew 6 and the story of the widow who gave all she had. Jesus valued her offering more than the rich people who gave much more.

### Pivot Icebreaker (Warm up)

Penny Flipping

Use the Icebreaker activity as kids check in and for any early arrivals before the actual lesson begins. This is a simple game or activity that gets kids involved and engaged. It is not based on Bible knowledge so all can participate easily and with confidence. Sometimes it is loosely tied to a concept of the lesson but again, the primary purpose is to involve the kids and break the ice to help them relax and feel comfortable in the classroom.

**Supplies:** PP slide 4, a LOT of pennies, container (like a metal cake pan) small box, masking tape

#### Preparation:

- Place a masking tape line on the floor
- Remove box flaps for an open top
- Place box a few feet from the line
- Place pennies into cake pan
- Place cake pan behind line

Note: For larger classes – set up more than one area of play

#### Presentation and Play

As kids come to class – show them how to stand behind the line and flip the pennies into the box using their thumb. Note: If younger kids have trouble flipping the pennies, they can toss the coins underhanded.

Tell the kids to try and get as many coins in the box as they can.

After a short time stop the activity; count the coins. Move the box further away; start over if time permits.

## Kick It Around

### Rampin' Up

#### Supplies

PP slides 5-6, 2 rolls of pennies, 2 pennies, \$1, \$5, \$10 bill

**Preparation:** none

#### Presentation

(Introduce the concept of value - worth)

(Slide 5) (Hold 2 pennies in palm of hand) Pennies aren't very exciting these days are they? How many pennies make a dollar? Yep, still 100 – 2 rolls of 50 make one dollar. (Hold up rolls). But it seems people look at pennies differently now. They don't value them very highly. If you see a penny on the ground, do you pick it up? Have you seen people just kick a penny aside or step on them instead of pick them up? Some people don't even want to bother with nickels or pennies when they get change at a store or restaurant.

(Slide 6) (Hold up a dollar bill) Now, how about if you saw a dollar (put it on the ground) on the floor; would you step on it and leave it? No, I don't think so! (Do the same with the 5 and 10 bill) Are you kidding me? Sure we would all get excited and pick the bills up.

The saying, "bigger is always better" would seem to make sense with money, right? Yes in most cases - BUT we are going to find out about a time when bigger wasn't better; AND pennies were worth a lot!

Let's go to our Lesson Launch and see what happened. I think you might be surprised!

But, let's say our **Pivot Point** first out loud a couple times. It's even better if you shout it out!

(Slide 3) **Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

### Lesson Launch **Matthew 6:1-7, Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4** (Widow with Two Mites and Topic Introduction)

**Supplies:** PP slides 7-14, Bibles, 2 drinking glasses (1 transparent/clear glass: 1 opaque plastic, red construction paper, scissors, and pencil.

#### Preparation:

- Gather objects
- Draw and cut out two simple hearts. Size them to easily fit into each glass
- Place one heart into each glass

#### Presentation

What is our **Pivot Point**? God sees the secret intent of our heart

Our series for this month is called Secret Service. Have you heard of the Secret Service? Yeah, they are the secret agents that protect the president and conduct secret, high level investigations. Sometimes you see what they do, but most times you don't because they are undercover. ***They try not to be noticed and bring attention to themselves if possible.***

(Slide 7) How would you like to be a secret agent for God? How CAN you be a secret agent for God? What does God require? Well, let's look at some things in **Matthew 6:1-7 (Kids can look up the passage and/or use the slides to present).**

(Slide 8) Let's look at verse 1-4. These verses are talking about giving. Are we supposed to make a big deal out of it? (Allow responses) NO! The words say to do it "secretly" or without calling attention to yourself. Do it in a humble fashion. When you do a good deed or work – when you help someone or you volunteer to do something at school, home, or church let's say... you do it whether it is noticed or not.

Your motivation or intent is to just do what's right- what is pleasing to God.

What is our **Pivot Point?** God sees the secret intent of our heart

You see... God knows WHY we do things. Is it the pat on the back we want... the applause or the compliments – or do we just do it out of love and caring to please God? God's requirement for secret service is to do good works and give with a humble heart.

The Pharisees or religious people in Jesus' days liked to call attention to themselves. They wanted everyone to see how holy and good they were. (Shout) HEY, LOOK AT ME – I AM DOING A GOOD WORK! PLEASE NOTICE HOW HOLY I AM! Jesus said- the attention, applause or the pat on the back was all they would ever get.

Bottom line is – because they brought attention to themselves - God would not bless them here on earth or reward them in heaven!

When the verse says "Don't let your left hand see what your right hand is doing" – that simple means that when you help someone out, don't think about how it looks. Just do it—quietly and without a bunch of fanfare. Have you ever done a good work or deed for someone and then it went to your head? WOW- I am PRETTY COOL! That's what these verses are talking about! God's secret agents serve with a humble heart. Yep- we can maybe fool ourselves or others but God knows why we do something! He rewards openly what we do in secret!

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

(Slide 9) Now - the next verses talk about how a secret agent prays. Did you know that God isn't impressed with big words or a beautiful voice? NO! God isn't interested in those things – He just wants to know what is on your mind and heart. Just be real with God.

The religious people liked to go on and on and on with big words and act all important to impress those who heard them speaking loudly. BUT, that isn't what God wants! God just wants us to talk with Him, spend time together, worship Him, thank Him, and ask Him for your needs and for others too. Just tell Him what's up! You don't have to use big words and follow a certain pattern. You don't have to be loud to be seen and heard.

(Slide 10) Instead of shouting in church or in the streets so people here you, Jesus says to get alone with God - just you and Him. Simple prayer; sitting outside under a tree – in your room on the playground speaking softly or sitting in class praying silently in your heart. That's secret prayer that God will honor, answer and reward.

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

Yes, God rewards secret service and He is looking for some good agents! Do you want to be a secret service agent for God? Let's take a quick look at our first secret agent.

**Mark 12:41- 44 (Luke 21:1-4)** (Kids can look up the passage and/or use the slides to present).

(Slide 11) Okay – now here is Jesus in the temple – in church. Jesus picked a spot where He could observe the people put in their offering. (Slide 12) The rich people put in BIG offerings. Wow! Jesus must have been impressed! I bet those rich people must have been smiling knowing Jesus was watching them put in all that cash! They should get a huge reward!

(Slide 13) Then a little widow woman quietly walked up and placed two small coins in the box. TWO Pennies- maybe worth less than 2 cents today! Remember our game earlier? We were flipping pennies and some people won't even pick a penny up off the street! So, Jesus couldn't have thought much of her, right? She must have been a cheapskate – a tight wad! TWO CENTS... REALLY? That's no offering! I bet she would have wish she had put in more if she knew Jesus would be watching, right?

Well, wait a minute here. Jesus called His disciples over. They must have though Jesus was going to be wowed by the rich people's monster offerings, don't you think? But Jesus told them the widow gave MORE than all the rich people did. Say what? How could that be? Any ideas?

Jesus said the rich gave a lot but it was a small part of what they had. They didn't feel it. They wouldn't even notice it. And, they did it to impress people. BUT this widow, she gave all that she had! The widow gave the money she had to buy food! Jesus looked inside her heart. He knew that kind of giving took faith! That kind of giving took loving God and trusting Him to provide her needs.

Pivot Point: God sees the secret intent of our heart

## What About Me?

We found out some things about God's secret agents. You don't have to be big men, strong physically, and you don't have to be rich!

(Hold up the opaque glass) You can fool people or even yourself but you can't fool God! Let's say this glass represents you or me. Can you see what is inside? No! There might be something in it and there might not be. You don't know. On the outside, people can see you doing a good work but they don't know the intent of your heart, do they? They can't see inside of you. (Show the heart that is inside)

(Hold up the clear glass) Now, how about this... can you tell me what is inside? Yes, of course, a heart. This is what God sees. He can see through us! He knows us inside and out. He knows not only what we do but why we do it. God is looking for secret service from agents that have a pure heart!

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

The widow gave her two coins – all she had - out of love for God. God saw her and would reward her!

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

# Kick It In

## Air Time

**Supplies:** PP Slides 14 - 23

**Preparation:** none

### Presentation

Show the slides and review the lesson and Pivots to this point

1. What does God want us to do in secret? (Good works - service)
2. Who rewards secret deeds? (God)
3. Was Jesus impressed with the rich people's big offering? (No)
4. What did Jesus tell the disciples? (Widow gave more than all – gave all she had)
5. Can we always tell what someone's motive to serve or give is? (No – only God)

## Thrash Time

### Pivot Verse Game

*Note – try this game or one of the Pivot Verse games listed on the components page if you prefer. Mix and match games each week or if you find a class favorite, stick with it! **Note: Do not discard supplies. This game is repeated next week!***

#### **Writer note: Why do the same game 2 weeks in a row?**

Kids have such a short time in class to engage. I have found when you play a fun game that there never seems to be enough time for kids to participate - especially with larger classes. More times than not they plead to do it one more time! The other thing that is more and more prevalent is that kids often don't come every week due to staying with different parents on different weekends. By doing each verse multiple weeks it addresses both situations with the added - the WORD gets in their hearts by repetition.

**Pivot Verse:** When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do, you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven. Matthew 6:1 CEV

### Supplies

PP slide 24, 48 pennies, 2 plastic bowls, table, masking tape,

### Preparation

- Place 24 pennies in each bowl
- Make a masking tape line at one end of the room
- Place the bowls at opposite ends and behind the line
- Place the table at the other end of the room
- Display the slide
- Divide the class into 2 teams – mix up younger and older kids
- Two teams line up by the bowls behind the line

Show PP slide and repeat it several times with the class. (Leave the slide displayed during the game)

### Play

- Start the game – the first player from each team grabs a penny and runs to one end of the table

- Each player places the coin on the table and shouts out the first word of the Pivot Verse
- The player then runs back to the line
- The second player for each team grabs a penny, runs to table, shouts out the second word of the Pivot Verse then stacks the penny on top of the first penny to build a tower
- Repeat this until all 24 pennies are stacked and the entire verse has been shouted out
- The first team to do this wins!
- Play another round or two

Note: If the tower falls it must be rebuilt before the player returns to the line

Optional play:

- For more of a challenge - especially for older kids – each kid must say the entire verse up to their word when they stack the penny.
- To play a non - relay version simply have the teams stand in a line at the table and play the game as above without running back and forth.

Discuss with the kids what the verse is saying:

- Name some good deeds
- Can you do enough good deeds to get to heaven? Why or why not?
- What kind of reward do you think God is talking about?

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

## Game / Activity Grades 1-5

**Supplies:** 2 rolls of masking tape, 2 poster boards, 12” diameter plate, marker, 2 blindfolds (sleep masks are ideal – buy at a drug store or online inexpensively), coin pattern (SSL1coin), two plastic bowls

### Preparation

- Print enough coin patterns to have at least one coin per kid (make extras)
- Cut out the coins (have kids cut them out in class if you prefer!)
- Place equal amount of coins in each bowl - at least one per kid
- Using marker draw 2 large circles on the front and back of each poster (Place the circles anywhere you want- but don't overlap them.
- Tape the posters to the wall leaving a few feet between them (tape at a height that the shortest kid can reach the top easily)
- Make a masking tape line several feet from the posters
- Divide class into 2 teams
- Line up kids behind line

### Presentation

I hope by now you all want to be secret service agents for God! It's awesome to serve Him with a humble heart! Do you remember when we talked about Matthew 6:3 where it says “don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing”? It means not to get all prideful about your giving and service doesn't it! Stop looking at yourself! Well, we are all going to place a coin in the offering plate (point to the plates on the posters). Now, it is important as a secret agent to be sure you do it with a humble attitude and not let your left hand see what the right hand is doing... so you are going to be blindfolded!

The reward is 2 points for each coin placed in the top plate (at least half way in) and 1 point for each coin placed in the bottom plate Now I am going to play Jesus and observe you all giving your offering!

**Play:**

- The first player for each team takes a coin from the bowl, tears a small piece of masking tape off and places it on the coin – Make sure to leave some sticky part of the tape out so you can stick the coin to the plate! (Demonstrate to the kids how to do this)
- Each player puts the blindfold on – you or other leaders or team members can assist with this
- Each player carefully walks to the wall and tries to tape their coin in the plate
- The player can then take their mask off and run back to the line
- The second player takes a turn
- Do this until all players have taken a turn
- Tally the reward points and see which team has the most – they win!

If you have time - play more rounds. You can flip the poster over too and use the other side if necessary.

Note: Tell the kids this is NOT a race. It doesn't matter who finishes first. Kids can take their time to put the blindfold and tape on.

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

**Small Group – Use before or after the Final Spin**

(See detailed description in the Lesson Components)

**Tweet It**

Supplies: Index cards, pencils, PP Slide 25

**Presentation:**

(Display slide) Have you heard of "Twitter"? Maybe you or someone in your family use it. Twitter is an online social network that lets people post their thoughts about anything at just about any time. Other people who "follow" this person can read about their thoughts or comments on events or things they have experienced. It could be serious or fun. Each post or "burst" of information you send can be up to 140 characters long.

Text messages are similar but you only send a text to one person or sometimes a small group of people. Twitter posts go to many people.

Today we are going to pretend we are texting or tweeting something. And to make it simple, instead of counting 140 characters – we will limit your tweet or text to 10 words.

Pick 2 of the 4 characters in the story:

1. Widow
2. Rich person
3. Jesus
4. Disciple

You are one of the characters in the temple that day. What would you tweet or text? You can do them all or more than one tweet for a character. Maybe do one serious and one funny! Let's say for an example we do a disciple:

"Wow, there are some big givers in this temple today!

Or maybe the widow – "I only have 2 mites but God knows my heart!

Or a rich person – "That widow only gave 2 mites – LOL!"

Do you get the idea? It could be 1 word, 3 words up to 10 words! Just a quick thought if you were there in

the temple! (Give the kids a few minutes to do their tweets. Allow kids to share them. Discuss their tweets and possibly let all small groups share with the class for a certain character. Ask who

## **Bible Workout**

Supplies: Bibles

Help kids (if needed) look up Mark 12:41-44. Kids need to know how to use their Bibles and that the Story is real and from the Bible.

<sup>41</sup> *Jesus sat down across from the place where people put their temple offerings. He watched the crowd putting their money into the offering boxes. Many rich people threw large amounts into them.*

<sup>42</sup> *But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins. They were worth much less than a penny.*

<sup>43</sup> *Jesus asked his disciples to come to him. He said, "What I'm about to tell you is true. That poor widow has put more into the offering box than all the others.*

<sup>44</sup> *They all gave a lot because they are rich. But she gave even though she is poor. She put in everything she had. She gave all she had to live on."* Mark 12:41-44 CEV

Discussion starters: (add your own questions!)

- What if Jesus came to church – what do you think He would observe with you? What would He see? What is the secret intent of your heart in worship – in service – in giving?
- The widow gave all she had even though it wasn't much – two pennies! Jesus saw her and He sees the little things we do. It was all about the attitude and intent of her heart – not the showy stuff. What would you answer someone who said:
- You're wasting your money by giving - no one cares or sees it or it's only a few cents.
- God doesn't even exist so what good is it to go to church – do good works and serve – It's a waste of your time!

Help kids (if needed) look up Matthew 6:1. Kids need to know how to use their Bibles and that the Story is real and from the Bible.

Matthew 6:1 CEV – *"When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do, you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven".*

Discuss starters: (add your own questions!)

- What are some good deeds you might do?
- Have you ever served in the church? Have you served others at home?
- Have you ever shown off or seen someone else show off then they performed a good deed for someone? Did they brag?
- What do you think a reward would be from God? Would it always be here on earth or could it be in heaven?
- How do you think God rewards or blesses people on earth... in heaven?

If kids have their own Bibles with different versions – compare the different translations for greater insight. Do you have any questions about the Bible story today? Does it make sense to you?

End in prayer asking the kids to pray now and at home this week and ask God to give them insight and understanding of their intent and motivation to serve and do good works or deeds. Are they doing it to impress or please others? Or is their intent as a secret agent to please God and to be obedient to Him out of love for Him even if no one else sees!



## Kick It Home

### Final Spin

**Supplies:** PP slides 2, 3 - 26-27, party horn/noisemaker

**Preparation:** none

**Large Group** Go over the Pivots one more time

**Pivot Point:** God sees the secret intent of our heart

**Pivot Verse:** When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do, you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven. Matthew 6:1 CEV

That was a surprise wasn't it; the little widow met the requirement of a secret service agent more than all the rich, religious leaders and important people! That got me excited to serve God! He looks at your heart not at the size of your gift or what you look like!

(Slide 26) He is more concerned about why you do it. Are you humble? Do you do it because of God's love inside of you? or – (pull out noisemaker and blow it loudly a few times) do you do it to call attention to yourself? Do you do a good work or serve to show off?

(Slide 27) Have you ever heard someone say *“that person is tooting their own horn?”* That's an old saying that means someone is calling attention to themselves bragging about what they did or said. They do it to show off.

God's secret service agents do humble, secret service to be obedient to God and would rather blend into the background rather than be out front in the spotlight.

A reward from God is better than applause and a pat on the back from others, don't you think?

### PIVOT SKITS Oily Al and Nathan Newsworthy

(See detailed description of these characters and suggestion for use in the Lesson Components)

#### Oily Al AL's MITE-Y COINS

**Supplies:** 2 pennies, Ziploc bag, Al's costume

**Preparation:** none

#### Action!

Oily Al bursts into the classroom carrying the Ziploc bag in his pocket and the two coins in another pocket.

Al: (salesman's voice) Well hello there!

Teacher (makes disgusted face): Oh, look who's here - Oily Al; the world's sleaziest salesman.

Al: Sleaziest? No, I am the world's most anointed salesman! That is what the oil in Oily stands for!

Teacher: Hmm, I don't think that's it... oily as in slick, greasy and slippery!

Al: Well I appreciate those kind words! Have you ever wanted to give an offering but didn't know how much to give? Have you ever (goes through pockets quickly) fumbled around as the offering container comes by ... unable to find your coins? Have you ever worried about the kid next to you spilling juice on your coins and ending up with a sticky mess? Have you ever worried about the kid next to you actually TAKING your offering from you?

Teacher: Al! What are you talking about? The kids don't worry about that stuff. That isn't going to happen!

Al: INTRODUCING (pulls out coins (MITE-Y coins). Yes, as we learned today with the widow's mites... Jesus is pleased with a mite!

Teacher: Oh, give me a break Al – you're not serious... they are just 2 pennies! And it isn't about the ...

Al: Please let me continue! (Pulls out the bag) And never worry about juice or theft either! (Unzips bag) Simply unlock the security pouch... (Place pennies in it and zip it back up) put the MITE-Y coins in and lock it back up. Juice can't penetrate and your coins are safe!

Teacher: (shaking head in disbelief) Al that is the worst product yet. That's a sandwich bag! You are crazy!

Al: Yes I must be crazy, these MITE-Y coins are just \$19.95 – not one but both! And that's not all... buy today and get this transparent, water proof, lockable security pouch free for only \$5 extra! Yes, let me recap it for you – You get the \$19.95 MITE-Y COINS and the free \$5 transparent, water proof, lockable security pouch for only – wait, I must be crazy...let me think about it...OK... but it's hurtin' me bad... for the today only combo price of just \$29.95!

Teacher: What? Give me a break! That's just a Zip-Lock bag – NOT a security pouch! And hold on – if you bought them separately it would be \$24.95 but the combo price is \$29.95! That's \$5 more! Even at \$24.95 it's a rip off...heck even at anything more than 2 cents you are overcharging!

Al: Thank you! Now kids, I guess the teacher just put her two cents in (laughs hard – holds up coins) Get it? (laughs again) Never worry about putting in the right offering again! The Mite-Y coins are the perfect amount. Even Jesus said that!

Teacher: Now hold on there, Al! That's not what the lesson was about. It wasn't about the amount; it was about her heart and intent as she gave. THAT'S what Jesus was pleased with! Everyone gives something different according to what God has blessed them with! I think it is time...NO, I know it is time for you to go!

Al: I'll be out in the hallway (opens jacket to reveal credit card logos as he leaves) I take cash, credit cards....

## **Nathan Newsworthy**

### **Interview with Peter**

#### **Characters**

Nathan, Peter

**Supplies:** Nathan's costume and microphone, Peter (robe and sandals works well)

Characters stand together

**Action!**

Nathan: (standing next to Peter) Good day, Nathan Newsworthy reporting for BBC TV on the scene outside the temple with Peter, Jesus' disciple. Good afternoon Peter!

Peter: Hey, what's up – am I on camera here?

Nathan: Well yes Peter you are but, just act natural okay?

Peter: (Looks straight out to camera) I used to be a fisherman until Jesus asked me to follow him!

Nathan: Uh yes, that's nice Peter... riveting... now, something happened in the temple today.

Peter: Really? Tell me about it Nathan!

Nathan: (frazzled) No, no... I don't know what happened; I wanted you to tell us!

Peter: GOTCHA! (Slaps Nathan on back) just a little disciple joke. We're a fun bunch!

Nathan: (pulling self together – fake laugh) Ha, ha... nothing like a disciple joke...good one... now can you tell us what took place in the temple?

Peter: Yeah sure... it was just a regular service, prayers, reading God's word, you know... all of that good stuff. Then as people were leaving they put their offering in the box. Jesus moved over so He could watch.

Nathan: Interesting – go on Peter.

Peter: That's it Nathan

Nathan: What?

Peter: (slaps Nathan on back and laughs heartily) GOTCHA again! Boy, are you easy to fool! Anyway, yeah there are some rich dudes in the temple. They were dropping some cash – let me tell you! BIG money! They were smiling ear to ear and making a big production out of pouring it all in the box! John elbowed me and said, "Man Jesus must be impressed with those gifts!" I know I was!

Nathan: I would have been too! Now that's giving! Go on!

Peter: Then this little ol' widow lady comes shuffling up and doesn't even lift her head. She drops 2 mites in the box and shuffles out the door. I turned to John and whispered, "she shoulda' just kept those for herself... what good would 2 mites be?"

Nathan: Yes, that isn't very impressive at all. I bet Jesus wasn't happy.

Peter: This is what blew us away! Jesus motioned us over. He quietly told us that the widow gave more than all the other rich dudes! She gave all she had! Jesus said she would be rewarded by God! Can you believe it, Nate?

Nathan: Ummm, my name is Nathan not Nate! Amazing! So the little widow secretly gave all she had and Jesus took notice!

Peter: That's right – He taught us that when we give, we are to do it out of love for God, not to try to impress people like the rich dudes did. He told us that God sees the secret intent of our heart when we do good works.

Nathan: Incredible! Thank you Peter for sharing that with us!

Peter: (Looks behind him and waves to someone) Hey there Bartholomew – catch you next week... save a good seat for me! (laughs) You 'da man!

Nathan: This is Nathan Newsworthy outside the temple with Jesus' disciple, Peter. Remember – God sees the secret intent of your heart! Give and serve humbly like the little old widow! God will reward you if you do!

