

Text: Mark 13: 41-44

Materials/Supplies:

- ⊗ A prize that can be shared with others (slab of chocolate, or box of smarties) for game 1
- ⊗ Coins or chocolate coins for game 2
- ⊗ Play money for game 3
- ⊗ A coin to add to the sensory bottle
- ⊗ 2 Jars with coins inside (one with few, one with a lot) for Word
- ⊗ Clothing, coins and offering box for the drama at Word

WELCOME

Game 1: Letter in my name: (This game works better with a larger group and does not require any preparation.)

Let everyone stand in a row. Start calling out the letters of the alphabet from A-Z. As you call the different letters, give instructions of a certain amount of steps they need to take if they have that letter in their name e.g. A: 1 step, B: 4 steps etc. Help the little ones who cannot spell yet. Variation: Name different colours and if they have a clothing piece on in that colour, they can step forward. The winner gets something, but he/she has to share with the "losers". It is about giving and sharing.

Game 2: Treasure Hunt: (Suitable for a big group; little preparation.)

Have a treasure hunt in the garden. Let the group search for coins or chocolate coins which you have hidden beforehand. Afterwards, share and divide the coins so that everyone gets the same amount.

Game 3: Money, money, money: (This game works better with a smaller group and requires good preparation and use of resources.)

Hand out different amounts of play money for each group/person. Let the children decide what they would like to do with the money. Listen carefully to children who want to help others or who want to give the money away. We will get back to this later in the session. For now they only have to dream...

WORSHIP

Songs: He's got the whole world in His hand
Jesus loves me
Making melodies in my heart

Theme song: The children sit with eyes closed and listen to the song "Trust in the Lord". (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPZJtZzQBBO>). The song can be played a few times and the children can sing along as soon as they catch the tune.

Settle down ritual:

Pass the sensory bottle around while the children say Psalms 23:1-3: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake."

WORD

(Hold the two jars in front of the group. One jar has two R5 coins in it. The other jar has a R100 note in it or lots of R5 coins. On the bottom of the jar with the little money in, put a sticker of the word "gratitude" and at the bottom of the jar with a lot of money in it, put a sticker of the word "brag/boast". Do not show the stickers to the children yet.)

Ask the children which jar has the most money in? It is clear, right? Did you know that Jesus thought the jar with the LITTLE

money had MORE worth? How is that possible? Is this weird? Is He crazy? Let's listen to the story of our next "weird and wonderful woman" to find out.

(The story of Mark 13: 41-44 can be dramatized by the children themselves. Be very creative. Ask a few spontaneous children beforehand if they will partake in the drama.)

Characters that will be needed:

- ☺ Rich people with lots of money and beautiful clothes
- ☺ Jesus and disciples
- ☺ Poor widow
- ☺ An offering box
- ☺ Coins (large and small) - can also be made

Possible text for the narrator:

Have you ever seen how people in the church give their money or offerings to Jesus? How does it work in your church? Have you ever wondered how it worked in Jesus' days, in Biblical times? At that time there was a big box in the middle of the hall of the temple where everyone could put their offerings. Jesus sat in the temple and watched people bring their offerings/money to God. There were many rich people in Jerusalem. They lived in very large homes and wore expensive clothes. They also had plenty of food to eat. After paying for everything - their expensive food and clothes and everything they wanted - they took a little of the money they had left and brought it to the temple.

They dressed in very beautiful clothes and went to the temple when there were lots of people to see them. They wanted people to see how wealthy they were and how they also gave a little of their money to God. They did this so everyone would think they were very religious and generous. They looked around and made sure everyone looked at them and saw how they poured the money into the box in the temple. In those days there was no paper money yet, only big and small coins and it made a big clanging noise when you dropped it. The rich people made sure that their money was clanging when they threw it in the box so that everyone could hear that they were giving money to God. They wanted everyone to see who was throwing in the money. They hoped that everyone would listen and whisper to one another: "See how much money they are giving and how generous they are!"

But Jesus knew that this money was only a bit of their money and that they did not have to make any sacrifices to give this money. For those rich people, these coins were actually very little money. They did not have any less food to eat, nor did they buy less expensive clothes. They could still buy everything they wanted because the money was just a little bit of what they had left.

Then Jesus saw a woman at the offering box. This woman's husband had died, and she was alone. She was very poor and did not even always have food to eat. The woman hoped no one saw her because she was very shy. She had only two small coins to give. She quickly threw it in because she thought it was too little.

Jesus said to his disciples: "This woman has put in more than all the other rich people together." "How could it be?" they wondered. "She only threw in two small coins and they gave a lot of coins." Jesus explained that she gave everything she had; that was all she could bring. The rich people could have brought so much more money out of all the money they had, and they did not. The woman gave the little she could give with joy and gratitude to God, not to impress people.

Text with video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhcqURSxPs>

Children now get a chance to think about the story:

1. I wonder which part of the story you liked the most.
2. I wonder why the poor widow threw in the last of her money.
3. I wonder how she would have felt if she knew how glad Jesus was over her offer.
4. I wonder what the disciples thought when Jesus told them that she gave more money than the rich people together.

Let us have a look at the jars again. What is stuck at the back/bottom? The jar with the little money says "grateful" and the jar with a lot of money in it says "boast/brag". Jesus noticed that the little money had more worth for Him, because it was given with gratitude. The big amount of money was given to "boast" and impress other people and therefore it was worth less.

1. I wonder how one can show gratitude without money.
2. I wonder in what different ways one can show your gratitude to Jesus.

WORKING AND PLAYING TIME

- ◆ **Gratitude jars:** Let everyone decorate a jar in which they can put notes about things they are grateful for. It can be a glass jar, a box or a foamlite cup which is taped closed on the top (with a slit). These jars can be returned at the end of the term and you can go through the notes together. Or you can make a big jar/box for the group and everyone can put in thank you notes regularly. Stick this text to the jar: "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor 9:7 NIV)
- ◆ **Offering for someone else:** Everyone gets two sweets, one for themselves and one they have to give to someone else. It teaches the children that gratitude also means giving something away.
- ◆ **Thank You wallets:** Make a wallet from material or cardboard. Make two paper coins to put in the wallet with the following words on it: "God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor 9:7b)

BENEDICTION

Close with the blessing:

May the Lord go before you to show you the right path;

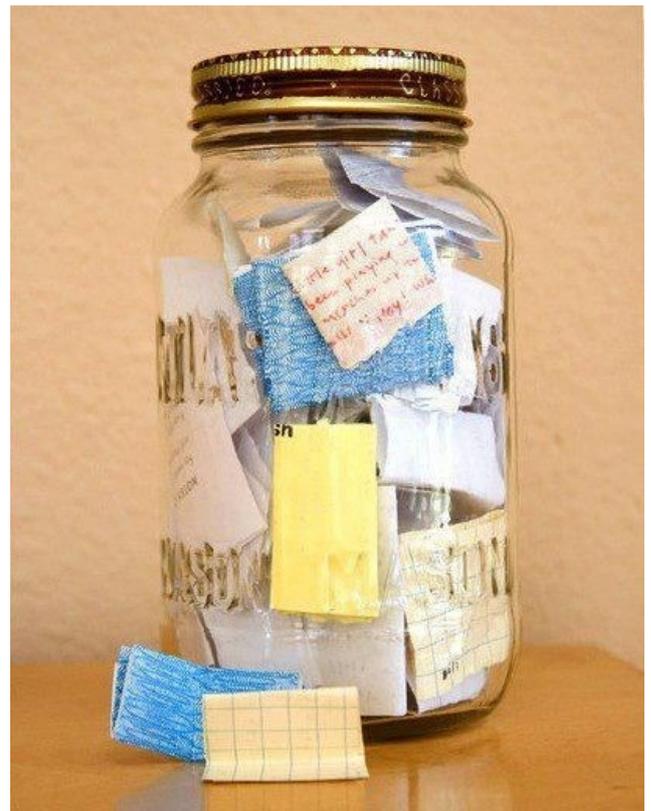
May the Lord be behind you to protect you;

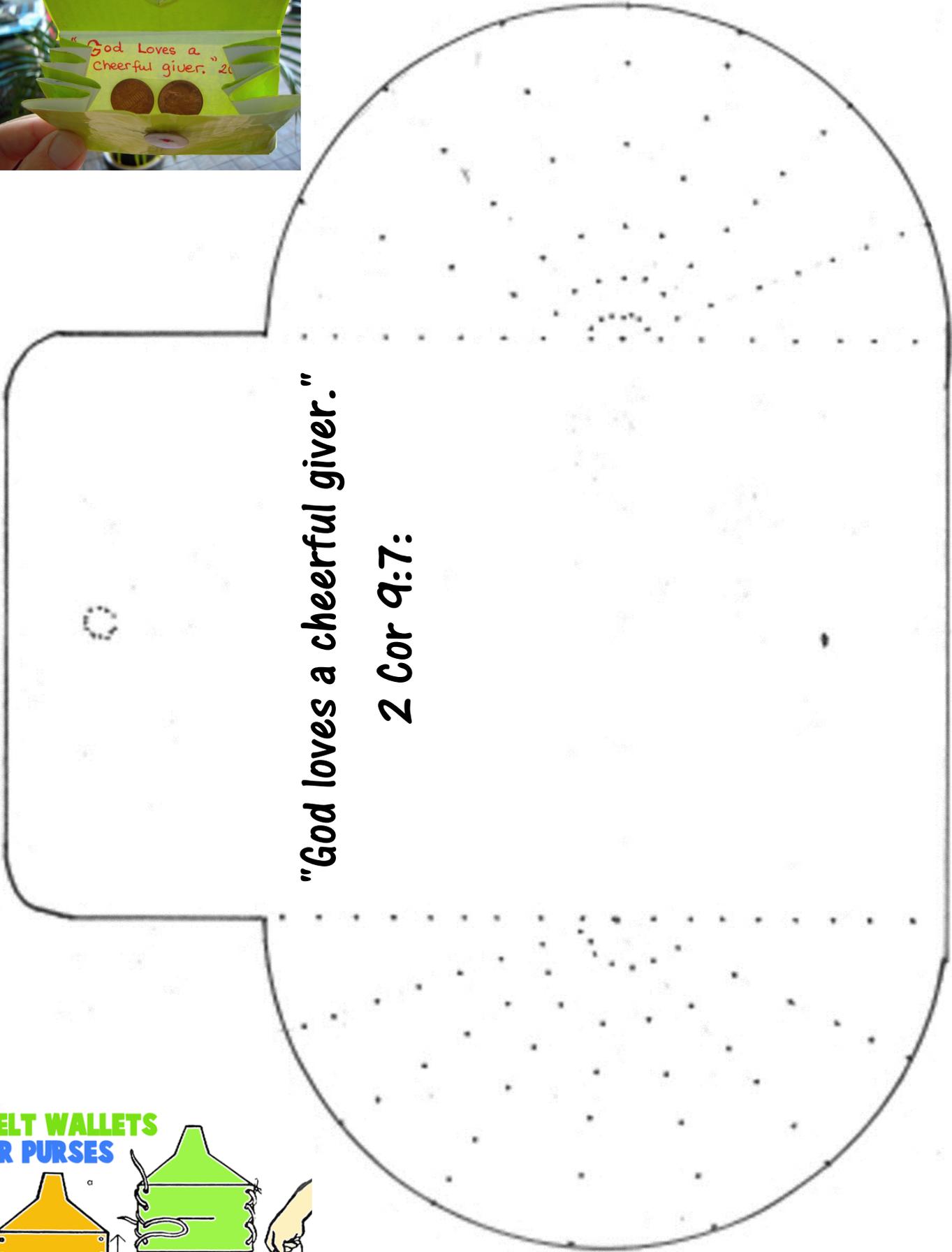
May the Lord be beside you to comfort and embrace you;

May the Lord be below you to catch you when you fall;

May the Lord be above you to bless you;

May the Lord be in you to guide you with His Holy Spirit. Amen.





"God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Cor 9:7:

**FELT WALLETS
OR PURSES**

