

Lesson 12 / August 23, 2009

The Power of a Penny

for use as

STEP 1 

Lesson 12
Focus:

Give generously to
each other.

Lesson 12
Bible Basis:








2 Corinthians 8–9

Students will discover that they really can make a difference in the world when they are able to share what they have.

Supplies needed:

- (Optional) device with Internet access like a computer, laptop, or smartphone and/or mp3 download of a radio story
- (Optional) *Three Cups of Tea* (this book is available in three versions: for adults, for older kids, and for younger children as a picture book)

Discuss:

-  **How many of you have a jar at home where you, your parents, or your whole family puts coins?**
-  **How much money do you think might be in your change jar?**
-  **Do you use the money for anything special?** (*e.g., some people use it for a travel fund or entertainment fund*)
-  **How often have you been walking along when you've spotted some money? What type of money do you usually see on the ground?**
-  **When you see money lying on the ground, do you leave it or pick it up?**
-  **Some people think pennies are just a nuisance, or maybe not really worth anything. What is your opinion—what do you think pennies are good for?**
-  **Have you ever heard of an organization called Pennies for Peace?**

Watch the Pennies for Peace video now. You can find the video at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3n5yYUCQp_o].

Alternatively, you can find other stories about Greg Mortenson's Pennies for Peace organization at the organization's website, [<http://www.penniesforpeace.org/>]. Under the “Media and Press” tab you'll find TV and radio stories. The radio story called “Freemont Pennies” is an excellent story of kids saving their pennies—nearly \$30,000 worth. If you have time, you

Lesson 12
Memory Verse

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

—Galatians 6:10

might consider watching both the video and listening to the radio story. If you have one of the books available, pass it around for children to look at. If you don't have Internet access in your classroom, simply familiarize yourself with Pennies for Peace and give a short presentation on the organization.

Discuss:

- ▶ **What went through your mind as you heard this story?**
- ▶ **Does it surprise you that kids just like you are able to raise a lot of money? Why or why not?**
- ▶ **How do you think Greg Mortenson felt when he kept trying to raise money but wasn't getting anywhere?**
- ▶ **How do you suppose he felt when he received his first big gift—the 62,000 pennies—from his mother's elementary school?**
- ▶ **Have any of you ever participated in a fundraiser of some sort, such as the Relay for Life or maybe gathering supplies for a food pantry?**
- ▶ **How did it make you feel to be part of something (such as the Relay for Life)?**
- ▶ **If you could help raise money or collect items for someone or something, what would you choose and why?**

Money is just one way we can give to others. Let's find out about the giving done by some people living about 2,000 years in a place called Corinth.

[Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *Upper Elementary Teacher's Guide*; your Step 4 appears below.]

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The Power of a Penny

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STEP 4 

Lesson 12 Focus:

Give generously to
each other.

Lesson 12 Bible Basis:

2 Corinthians 8–9

Lesson 12 Memory Verse

Therefore, as we have
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Supplies needed:

- paper
- pen or pencil

Ask your students to write a letter to members of the congregation. The letter will challenge congregation members to match the students' own donations of pennies. Before class, give some thought on how you would like to structure this activity. You can use the class offering for this week, plan to start the collection this week and finish next week, or contact students before this week's class so they come prepared. Whatever you decide, ask your pastor if he would make an announcement about the project. If time permits, perhaps you can also have an announcement in the church bulletin, or take a minute with your students to explain the project during your service's announcement time.

Students can either bring as many pennies as they want, or you can suggest that every person bring the same number of pennies as their age.

How powerful do you think a penny can be? We are going to try an experiment to find out the answer to that question. We're going to write a letter to the congregation and ask our church's members to match our donations of pennies. First, we should decide what we would like our pennies to be used for.

Students will need some direction so they do not get bogged down with this decision. If your Sunday school or church does not have a designated charity, give them two or three organizations to choose from.

Now, let's think about what our letter should say. Appoint someone to act as the secretary and write down what the class decides. The letter should tell about why your students are tackling this project, where and when the pennies should be turned in, and provide information on who the money will go to.

Once the letter is written, end with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, by giving Your Son to die, You have given far more generously than anyone else ever could. But You want us to give generously too. Help us to give generously and cheerfully of our time, our money, and our talents. And help us to inspire others to give generously. In Your name we pray. Amen.

(David C. Cook is not affiliated with and does not endorse any website listed on these pages.)