

YOUTH LESSON/ACTIVITY TWO

AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

by Rev. Ronny Nowell

*NOTE: This lesson/activity is written as part of a three-lesson set related to Week of Compassion and the special offering emphasis. They can be used for three consecutive weeks, or in a more consolidated format.

Age Grades 6-12

Supplies M&Ms or similar small candy envelopes with [this label](#)
Bibles
Pens and paper

Overview

To help youth begin to think about what, why and how they give (or don't give), and to help them consider being more intentional with what they have to offer.

Activity

You'll need enough M&Ms or other small candy or items for each student to have a handful.

Have students pair up, sitting across a table from each other, facing and set as if they were going to arm wrestle. The candy for each person should be on the table in between them (somewhere in reach). (Don't tell them to arm wrestle, just get them into that position!)

Say we are going to play a game¹ and the goal is to get as much candy as you can. Each time your partner's hand touches the table you get a piece of candy (DON'T EAT IT YET). You have one minute to get as much candy as you can. GO.

After one minute, stop the game and ask for a count of who has the most candy.

Then say we are going to give you a minute to strategize and then we will play again.

¹This is an activity familiar in youth ministry practices. Original source and reference is not available.



photo: OGMP/Adam Frieberg

Usually at this point someone in the group will figure out that if they work together and just go back and forth with their hands, they will get the most candy! Others will likely want to change their stance, grip or even partner with other teams.

This is a fun way to teach that when we share and work together everyone is a winner.

Teaching

Through Week of Compassion, families find stable housing and restored community after tornadoes in Kentucky or hurricanes along the Florida Gulf Coast. Children are cared for and kept safe as their parents gather resources to reclaim normalcy following fires on Maui. Women in South Sudan receive life-saving health care that allows them to return to dignity and wholeness with their families. Elderly and disabled persons left most vulnerable during war are given shelter, nutrition, and community in respite centers at the border of Ukraine. Refugees and asylum seekers find new opportunity and true hospitality in the U.S. as local congregations help them explore new neighborhoods, learn new languages, and find new hope.

² From the Week of Compassion Special Offering Resources

LUKE 21:1-4

THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them, for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

She gave a very small gift, but it is the one that Jesus praised. Sometimes we feel like we have very little or even nothing we can give, but Jesus sees all the gifts and uses them all to make a huge difference.



Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Jesus praised her small gift instead of the larger gifts of others?
 - Was it the size of the gift or the size of the faith that made the difference?
 - It says 'she gave all she had to live on'. What do you have? What gift large or small could you give to make a difference?
 - What happened in the M&M game that showed all our gifts working together to make a difference?
- Could you give even a small gift to Week of Compassion to help meet needs around the world? Could you ask others to join you in giving what they have to help?
 - This year (2024) Week of Compassion celebrates its 80th Anniversary. If everyone asked friends and family to give just \$0.80 or maybe even \$8 a person in honor of that milestone we could raise a tremendous amount of money. That money then will be used to meet needs in the United States and all around the world after natural disasters. Would you be willing to take one of these envelopes and pray about what you have to give – and then ask your friends if they will join you and also give?
 - Pass out the envelopes
 - Make sure everyone knows when they are due back.
 - Make sure people know how to make out checks (to the church, to send one collective check, or to Week of Compassion directly).
 - Consider making cards with the [Giving QR Code](#) to hand to donors, or thank you cards to hand out too.

Plan a time of celebration and dedication on the day that the envelopes are due back. Thank you for preparing your students for a lifetime of selfless giving and making a difference.



photos: 1 OGMP/Adam Frieberg; 2 Week of Compassion