

No Right Answer? Sunday School Lesson from Matthew 22:15-22

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October 14, 2014

This free Bible lesson is based on Matthew 22:15-22 on paying the imperial tax to Caesar. It is designed for children's church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry.

If your church follows the Revised Common Lectionary, this teaching plan would correspond to Year A – 19th Sunday After Pentecost, Gospel Reading – Matthew 22:15-22.



Lesson Opening Activity

No Right Answer? – Tricky Questions

Supplies – none

Divide the class evenly into 2-4 teams. Instruct each team to stand in a single file line with their arms flat against their sides. As you read each question, whoever is in the front of each line can 'buzz' in by placing both hands on top of their heads. At that moment the question stops and they must instantly give an answer. If they don't answer or answer incorrectly, another team may try. After each question, the kids at the front of each team move to the back of the line. All correct answers receive a point, and the team with the most points at the end wins.

- How many elephants did Abraham bring on the Ark? – **none, Abraham wasn't at the ark**
- What was Paul's name before God spoke to him? – **Saul**
- What kind of large cat was in the pit with David after he refused to pray to the king? – **David was never thrown into a pit**
- Who gave Joseph the beautiful multi colored coat? – **his father**
- What happened to the holy of holies when Jesus died? – **the curtain ripped**
- How many emeralds did Judas receive as payment for betraying Jesus? – **none, Judas was given silver**

- Name 4 of Jesus' disciples. – **Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon, Judas, & Judas Iscariot (Luke was not a disciple)**
- What did David stand on to make himself just as tall as Goliath? – **David didn't stand on anything**
- What did God use to create Eve? – **a rib bone from Adam**
- How many books of the Bible have John in their title? – **4 (John, John I, John II, John III)**
- What book of the Bible never mentions God? – **Esther**
- How long was Job in the belly of the whale? – **Job was never in the whale**
- What does the word 'manah' mean? – **what is it?**
- What Abraham's wife turn into when fleeing the city of Sodom? – **nothing happened to Abraham's wife**
- What was the goal of the tower of Babel? – **to reach heaven**
- Who says 'cleanliness is next to godliness' in the Bible? – **it's not in the Bible**
- What proof did Thomas need to see to believe Jesus had risen from the dead? – **holes in hands & feet, gash in side**
- How many plagues hit Bethlehem when the pharaoh refused to let the Hebrews go? – **none, the plagues were in Egypt**
- What was the name of the brother of Mary and Martha? – **Lazarus**
- Why did Satan tell Jesus to turn the clouds into bread? – **he didn't**
- When did God create Adam & Eve? – **sixth day**
- How many people were crucified alongside Jesus? – **2**

Bible Lesson – No Right Answer?

How many of you got one wrong? You're not the only one! I did too! Some of those questions were pretty tricky weren't they? Sometimes the right answer is pretty hard to figure out.

When I was in school, there were always trick questions on tests, and I ALWAYS got them wrong. The hardest was when there wasn't a right answer. They really did that sometimes! There would be a question, with a bunch of options for the answer, but the real answer was that there wasn't one! Confusing right?!?

Back when Jesus was on earth, people tried to trick Him with questions all the time. They just REALLY wanted to Jesus make a mistake. What do you think? Do you think they were able to trip Jesus up? Well, lets find out.

The leaders of the church were called Pharisees, and they didn't like Jesus at all. They thought He was a fake! And they REALLY didn't like that people were listening to Him instead of them. They were afraid they would lose so many followers to Jesus that they

could lose their jobs and money.

The Pharisees tried all saying all sorts of things to make Jesus look bad. Some people listened, but not everyone, and Jesus was gaining more and more followers everyday. No matter what they said, it wasn't working; people still believed Jesus.

After a while they ran out of things to say, so they decided to try to get Jesus Himself to say something bad. They were going to ask Him a trick question; surely they could catch Him off guard and get Him to say something wrong.

They tried this a few different times, but Jesus had no problem with His answers. He was right every single time.

So one day they decided to send over another group of people, hoping Jesus wouldn't recognize them. Maybe they could sneak in one of those trick questions without Jesus noticing. So they asked Him, "Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?"

That might not sound like a trick question to you or to me, but Jesus knew exactly what was going on. The imperial tax meant that the Romans forcefully took money from the Jews for themselves. The Romans could do almost anything they wanted, and the Jews had to do everything they said or they were heavily punished.

Now, let's look at our possible answers to this question.

If Jesus said, "Yes, you should pay those taxes," then many of the Jews would get very angry. The Jews didn't like the Romans, and they didn't like anyone who supported them either, so they would easily turn away from Jesus if He showed support for them.

So what do you think? Would that have been a good answer? No, it wouldn't have been. Jesus's followers would stop following and gone back to the Pharisees.

Ok, so let's try the opposite. If Jesus said, "No, you should not pay those taxes," the Jews would have been VERY happy. They probably would have even thought Jesus could make Caesar and the Romans stop. However, this would have sent Jesus straight to jail.

So, what about this one? Would that have been a good answer? Nope, it wouldn't have been either. With Jesus in jail, the followers would have no one to follow, so they would go back to the Pharisees.

This sounds like one of those trick questions I used to always get wrong in school. This was a question with no right answer! No matter what Jesus said, the Pharisees would win. Or so they thought.

Jesus had a different answer for them. He didn't say "Yes", and He didn't say "No". He knew they were trying to trick Him, and He had the perfect answer; one the Pharisees never even thought of.

Jesus asked them to please show Him, and everyone around them, some money. They didn't really know what was going on, but they pulled out a coin. Just like our money, there was a picture of someone on the coin; and on this coin, it was a picture of Caesar, and it even had his name on it!

When you see something with some's name on it, what does that usually mean? That it belongs to that person. So Jesus's answer was simple. He instructed them give Caesar what is his, and to give God what was God's.

The trick question didn't work. It actually just made people listen to Jesus even more! Everyone was amazed with Jesus' wisdom, and His ability to provide a right answer when there wasn't one.

Sometimes there are questions we can't answer. Maybe the answer is too difficult for us to understand. Or maybe we think the wrong answer is the right one. And sometimes, we really just believe there is no right answer. But when we are faced with those tough questions, we just need to remember one thing; Jesus always knows the answer.

Activity A – No Right Answer? – Bible Verse Challenge

Supplies – Bibles

Verse – Matthew 22:20-22

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week's Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand.

he first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.

Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

1. Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.
2. Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until you find the large chapter number you are looking for.
3. Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the correct number is found.

Activity B – No Right Answer? – Letters to Jesus

Supplies – paper, writing utensils, various arts and craft supplies

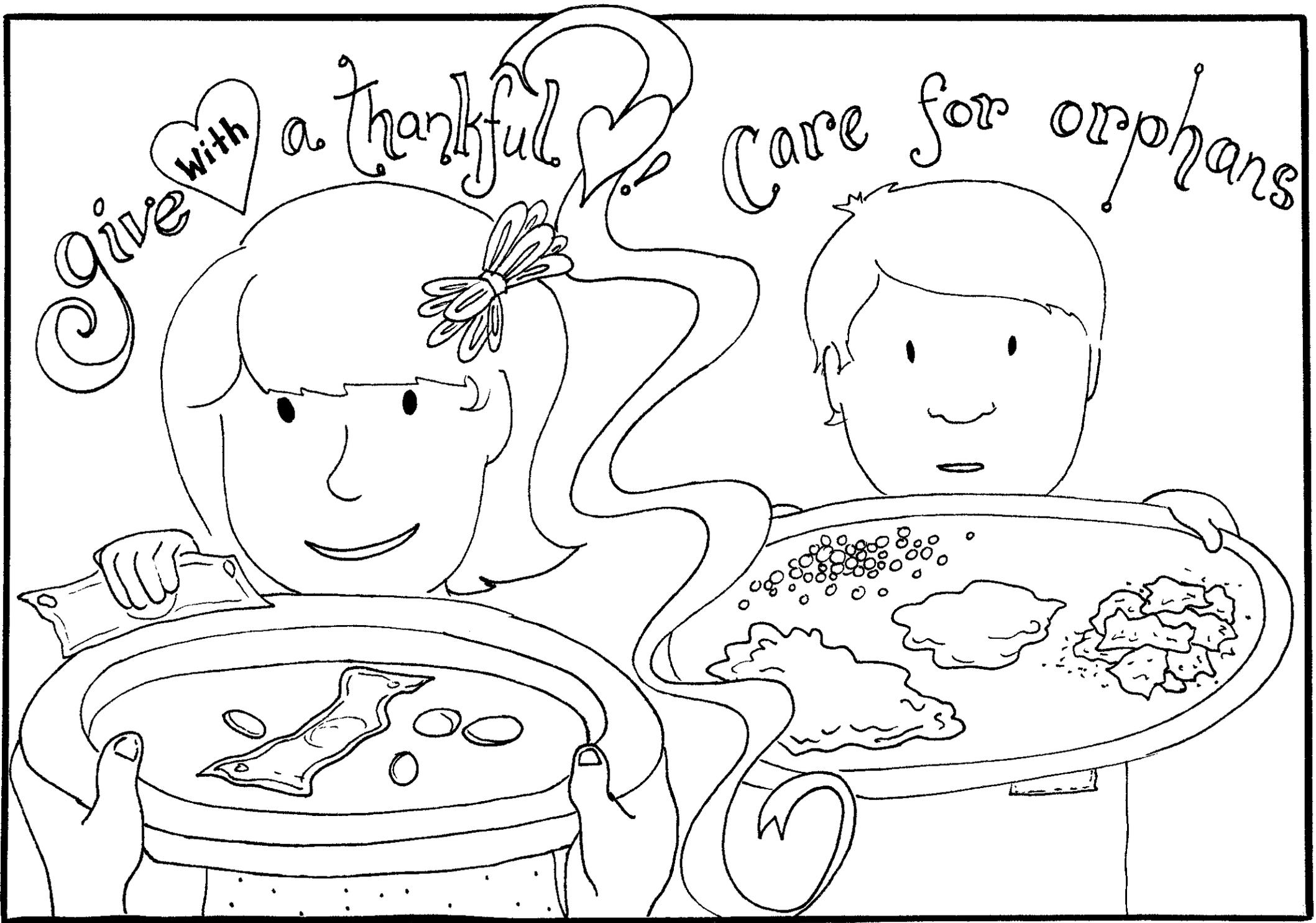
Ask each child to think of a tough question they want the answer to. Then invite them to write a letter to Jesus asking Him that tough question.

*Take it a step further and have the kids place their letters in the offering basket in church. During the following weeks ask some of the clergy to help answer those questions; one-on-one or all together.

Closing Prayer – No Right Answer?

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to ask God to remind them that Jesus know the answer, even when the questions are difficult.

- Don't miss the object lesson demonstration and craft ideas based on this children's sermon.
- Every week we publish our latest children's sermons and Sunday School lessons based on the current church calendar.
- Our free materials are made possible from our sister website the Sunday School Store which sells digital curriculum for children's ministry at half the cost of printed material.



“Give to Caesar” Bible Craft Ideas on Matthew 21:15-22

This week’s Gospel lesson features coins, monetary value, and the idea of living as people made in God’s image, and with the purpose of serving Him. These two (ish) crafts focus on putting Christ first and foremost. We present here a coin collage of sorts (with variation possibilities), as well as a coin bank for collecting prayers or tithes.



Additional Suggestions:

- Use crayons or colored pencils to make a “coin rubbing” on plain paper
- Create a “citizenship certificate” as a reminder of Heavenly relation
- Make a list of what might “belong” to God versus the world. Consider also the difference between needs, wants, and must-haves. You might even turn this into a collage or chart!
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Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

*“Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”
–Matthew 22:21*

I am made in God’s image...I’ll give my life to Him!

Give to God what is God’s...and that’s everything!

Coins for Christ (coin bank caption)

Tithing for what belongs to GOD



Craft one: "Coin Collage"

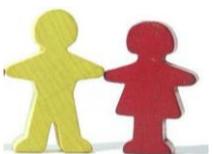
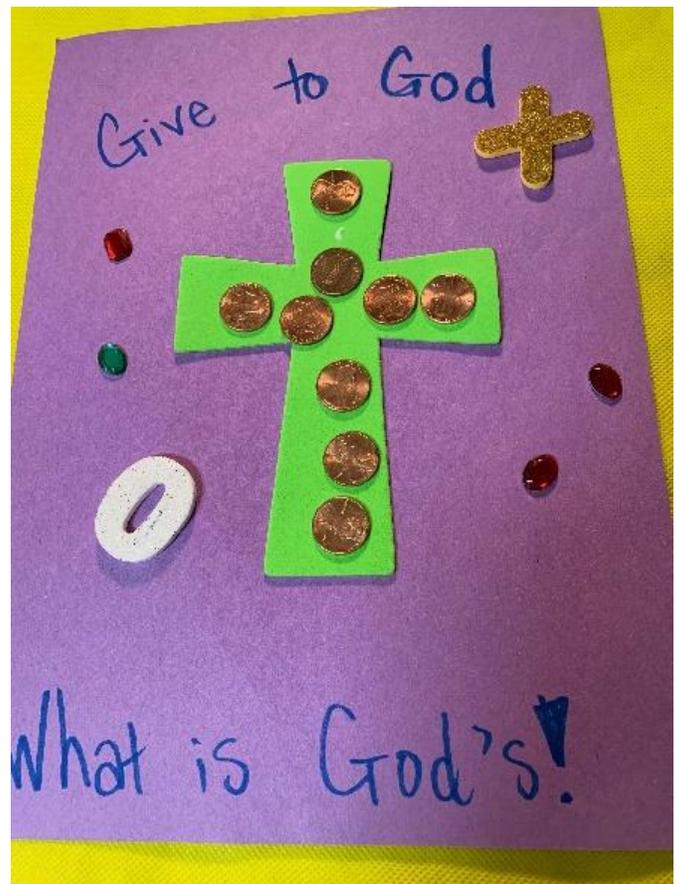
You will need:

- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Coins or fake coins
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue and/or tape
- Pipe Cleaners



Procedure:

1. Decide on a design for the coin collage: trace over a cross, cut out a cross, or simply make another series of lines or shapes.
2. Gather several coins or cardboard/play coins.
3. Decorate construction paper/cardstock with extra markers, verse captions, and/or stickers.
4. Glue coins (fake or real) onto the paper or shape. If desired, attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang.



Craft Two: “Collect for Christ” Coin Bank

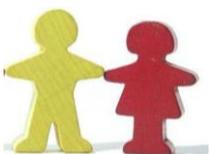
You will need:

- Container (empty can, box, etc.)
- Scissors
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Glue and/or tape
- Decorative materials (markers, crayons, stickers)
- String, pipe cleaner, etc. (optional)



Procedure:

1. Design your coin bank, and designate a purpose for it (tithes, prayer requests, etc.)
2. Wrap paper (construction paper, wrapping paper, card stock) around your container.
3. Decorate your container with stickers, markers, captions, glitter, and more.
4. Cut a slit in the top of the container to collect coins or prayers.
5. If desired, add a handle or ribbon to enhance the bank image. Collect, give, and enjoy!





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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