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Giving To God

FOR THE LEADER

Aim

To teach the Junior Soldiers that God loves a cheerful giver and we ought to give regularly to God's work. During this session the Junior Soldiers will:

- understand that we are all stewards not owners of our gifts;
- learn the term 'tithing' and what it involves;
- consider that our giving shows how much we love God.

Bible Base

Malachi 3:10
2 Corinthians 8:1 - 15

Christians realise that every asset, every talent, every character strength is a gift from God. Everything we have is a gift from God. Because God is generous toward us, He desires that we learn to give back to Him. Those who tithe regularly prove God's faithfulness and blessing toward them as He continues to provide for them. The Bible says that Christians are stewards – they look after God's property. Peter says in 1 Peter 4:10, 'Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God.'

Jesus expresses the need for us to recognise that all gifts are from God and are given to us to serve others. (Luke 12:13 - 21; 16:19 - 31)

The above verses remind us that everything – money, ability, time – must be used for God, and that this is done by using it for others, because loving others is the way we show we love God (1 John 4:19 - 21). The writers have proved the truth of God's promise in Malachi 3:10, 'Bring the full amount of your tithes to the Temple ... Put me to the test and you will see that I will open the windows of heaven and pour out on you in abundance all kinds of good things.'

This biblical principle of stewardship is practised by many Christians. From the beginning of The Salvation Army, soldiers have been taught the value of complete stewardship and the blessings that follow.

Poorer areas have been helped by the generous giving of those in more comfortable circumstances and new work has been developed with the generous giving of time to fund raising.

We would hope that this session will help the Junior Soldiers to understand the blessings that flow from becoming a 'cheerful giver'.

Today at a glance

Section	Timing	What you need
Tuning in • 'If I had a million dollars...' OR • Offering game.	5 - 8 mins	➤ If you choose the second option have paper, pens, whiteboard/chart ready.
The main thing • Spending money. • Bible search. • Tithing. • What is a cartridge? • What happens to the money? • Alms. • Those who gave all. • What should you do? • Activity sheets.	5 - 8 mins 8 - 10 mins 2 - 3 mins 2 - 3 mins 1 - 2 mins 2 - 3 mins 2 - 3 mins 2 - 3 mins 10 - 15 mins	➤ Bibles. ➤ 2 large sheets of paper, pens. ➤ Enough copies of activity sheets 3:1 (1) or (2) for each Junior Soldier.
Tying it in	1 - 2 mins	

PROGRAM

Tuning in

1. This game is best played with a group of 4 - 6. If you have a larger number, put them into smaller groups each with a leader.

The leader starts by saying 'If I had a million dollars, I would buy ...' (what is bought must start with A). The next player says 'If I had a million dollars, I would buy ... (repeating the A word) and ... (saying something starting with B)' and so on.

We all think we are poor and dream about what we would do if we were rich. But God says that we should share what we have. Giving to God and to those in need is a Christian duty.

Or

2. Have an offering bowl/bag out the front. Have the Junior Soldiers form groups or do this individually depending on the size of your group. Call out some items either from around the hall or that they have brought with them. The first person/team to have the item in the bag wins. Use a chart/whiteboard to record the scores. The winner is the team/individual with the most points at the end.

In this game we raced to be first to put an item in the bowl/bag. What we put in the offering bag/bowl on a Sunday is a way of thanking God for all the blessings He gives to us.



The main thing

Spending money

Have two sheets of paper ready to write on. Ask the Junior Soldiers to suggest ways their family spend money. E.g. clothes, toys, food, TV, petrol, etc. Write these on the sheet (keeping the centre of it clear). Then tear each idea off separately. Ask the children if they have forgotten anything. God has been forgotten – giving to Him hasn't been mentioned.

Now, take the second sheet of paper and write 'Giving to God' in the centre. The emphasis here is that we should give to God first.

Now take the torn off pieces of paper and place them around God as the centre. The visual image should be clear – money for God should be put first.

Bible search

Divide your Junior Soldiers into three groups to read and discuss one of these passages. When their passage is then described, they respond by reading the verse aloud.

Making the first Tabernacle: Exodus 36:3

The widow and her mite: Luke 21:4

The early church: Acts 2:45

One passage was about gifts to help build a house for God's worship. Who had that passage? Read it aloud to us. (Exodus 36:3)

Another passage was about someone who had very little money but Jesus said it was a big gift. Who had that passage? Read it aloud to us. (Luke 21:4)

When we give to others who are needy, we are giving to God. Who had that passage? Read it aloud to us. (Acts 2:45)

Giving money to God is one way we show our love for Him.

We can't give all of our money to God because we have to buy food, clothes, homes and other things to help us live. So how much should we give?

Tithing

Read Genesis 28:22. Jacob talks about 'a tenth', or a tithe. This means one tenth of our weekly earnings is given to God. If I earned \$100.00 a week, how much would my tithe be? (\$10). What if I earned \$20 a week? (\$2)

In many corps, soldiers and friends make a promise to God that they will give a certain amount weekly to their corps for His work. This is known as 'planned giving'.

What is a cartridge?

Perhaps you've seen people putting envelopes into the offering. The envelope contains the person's gift of money, usually a tithe, for God. It is placed in an envelope so people around cannot see how much is being given and so the giver is not tempted to 'show off'.

In The Salvation Army the envelope is called a 'cartridge'. When the Army took its military name, many terms changed to reflect that military style. A 'cartridge' was used to fire a gun. The 'cartridge' given at the Army made possible the fight against sin and wrong.

Still today the regulation reads, 'It is a rule that each soldier and recruit shall be supplied with small envelopes called cartridges. He is expected to put into one of these, each week, his contribution towards the funds of the corps, and to hand in the same at the soldiers' or other meetings. One of the conditions under which he joins the band and songster brigade is, 'He must fire his cartridge regularly'.'

The Corps Officer or Sergeant-Major used to say 'Fire your cartridge' and it meant that people would give their offering to God.

What happens to the money?

The giving of our tithe or cartridges is a definite way of contributing to the ongoing work and mission of the corps. A good soldier keeps this commitment to give regularly even if he/she is unable to attend the meeting.

Alms

Giving a tenth of their money isn't the only offering Christians can make to God.

It was the custom in the time of Jesus for Jewish people to give money to needy people. These were called 'alms' and were not part of the tithe. Some people today make extra offerings to help people in need. Jesus said, 'When you help a needy person, do it in such a way that even your closest friend will not know about it' (Matthew 6:3). This was because some people wanted everyone to know how generous they were.

Those who gave all

We have heard how Jesus praised the widow who gave her 'mite', because although it was only a small coin, it was all she had. There have been many thousands of people who have given not only their money, but their lives back to God and they have worked as Salvation Army officers, ministers or missionaries. Some of these people have been very wealthy Christians.

C.T. Studd was one such person. He came from a wealthy family and as a young man had a very happy life. Among other successes, he was a famous Test cricketer, but he knew that God wanted more of him than that, so he became a missionary in China. Although he inherited many thousands of dollars, he gave it all to God and lived simply among the poor people. Like the widow in the Bible, C.T. Studd gave all he had.

What should you do?

Giving to God is an important part of our worship. We give to show we love Him. Junior Soldiers should think about what they can give to God. When you get money to spend on yourself, you should think about what you are going to offer to God. The amount is not important, but your attitude is. God is pleased when we give cheerfully and thankfully.

Christians are to be good stewards of everything they have. 'Steward' means that we don't own it but are looking after it for someone else. So we have to be wise about how we use everything we have because God really owns it all. We are stewards of our money, our time, our words, talents and possessions. All that we have has been given to us by God. We are His stewards. We need to think about the best way we can use the things God has given us so that He will see we have wisely used all that He trusted to us.

(Have the Junior Soldiers complete their activity sheets.)



Tying it in

We must try to remember that everything we have was given to us by God. He really owns it and has lent it to us for the short time we are here on earth.

Let us think about Paul's instruction:

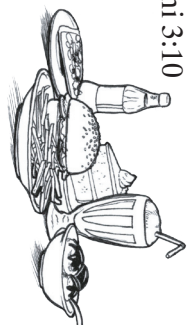
'Every Sunday each of you must put aside some money, in proportion to what he has earned, and save it up, so that there will be no need to collect money when I come.'
(1 Corinthians 16:2)

Giving to GOD

In this space make coin rubbings to show how much you get to spend each week.

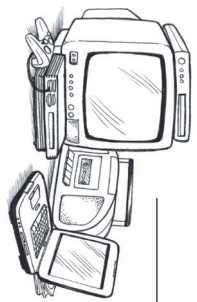
(To make a coin rubbing you put the coin under the paper and then rub a pencil over the place where the coin is. You will find that a picture of the coin will appear.)

Now put a red circle around the coins that show how much you should give to God each week.

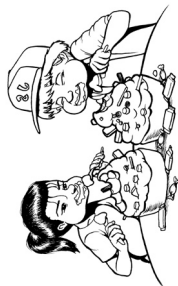
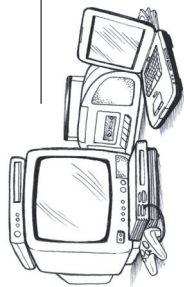


Malachi 3:10

BRING THE
FULL AMOUNT
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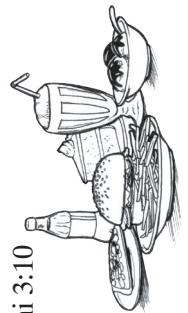


Giving to GOD



BRING THE FULL AMOUNT OF YOUR TITHES TO THE TEMPLE

Malachi 3:10



Some questions to think and talk about:

- ① What should the money we give to God be spent on?
- ② The Bible says that the tithe we give to God should be one tenth of all we receive. Does this rule apply to every Christian?
- ③ Why do we take up a collection in every meeting?

Imagine you have just finished your first week in your first part time job. Here is the amount you earned:

\$100.00

Think of how you will spend / save the money. You may want to use it for:

- clothes
- food
- holidays
- sport
- recreation
- giving

Write beside each heading how much you will spend / save. Check how much it adds up to! Now split the \$100 note to show how you spent it and label each area.