

Explore: Spiritual Currency

A rich young ruler asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus' response left him feeling sad—he thought he had done all of the right things by following the Ten Commandments from his youth. What did he lack? Jesus gives a clue in his first statement: “Why do you call Me good?” In following the law, the young man had missed the point. He had faithfully done the commandments for *his own* sake, not for the Lord's. This activity explores how motivation lies at the heart of whether deeds are truly good or not—whether they lead to a heavenly eternal life.



Materials Needed

- 2 double-sided “spiritual currency” coins (see next page)
- copies of the *Spiritual Currency* for all students (see following pages)
- *Spiritual Currency Teacher Copy* (see following pages)

Preparation Ahead of Time

- Cut out and fold the two coins. Write “I look great!” inside one, and “I’m a servant of the Lord” inside the other. Tape the coins shut in a way that they can easily be opened again.
- Think of a simple physical task, such as moving some books or emptying a trash can. Set up a situation so that two students may fulfill the same task simultaneously or in quick succession.

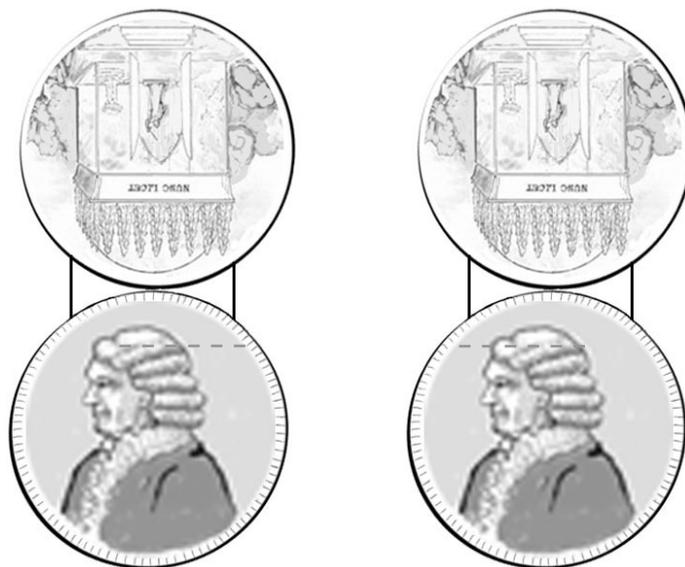
Introduce the Activity

1. Ask for two volunteers. Explain the task and let the students know that they will get paid for what they are doing. Explain that as they have done the same job, they will receive the same wage.
2. When the task is complete, give each student a “spiritual currency” coin.
3. Start a discussion with the class about whether the students did the same task. E.g.
 - Did the students do the same job? Why or why not?
 - How might the tasks be different, even if they appeared to look the same?
4. Ask the volunteers to open their taped coins and reveal the motivation statement inside each one. If these had been their real motivations, would their actions still be the same?

Activity

1. In worldly language, riches and poverty describe how much money a person has—what a person is “worth”. Spiritual riches and poverty relate to how many true and good ideas from the Word. Jesus said, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” Jesus’ message is about spiritual riches.
2. *Distribute copies of Spiritual Currency.*
3. The young man in Mark 10 believed that the spiritual riches he possessed were his. Obeying the commandments was his accomplishment. He was proud of this! This table lists attitudes that are similar to the young man’s. Attitudes like this make it hard to enter heaven. Think of a spiritual antidote to replace each attitude. A few have been done for you. Antidotes are cures or remedies for some illness—in this case dangerous spiritual attitudes. The antidotes for such attitudes are something that gives a different perspective.
4. *Have students complete the chart individually by filling in the antidote boxes. The Spiritual Currency Teacher Copy offers suggested antidotes you can use if the students are struggling to come up with ideas.*
5. *Ask volunteers to read a few selected antidotes and discuss the answers as a class.*
6. *Finish the activity by reading the quotation at the bottom of the Spiritual Currency page together. Ask the students how different motivations affect the quality of actions.*

Spiritual Currency Coins



Spiritual Currency

This table lists attitudes that make it hard to enter heaven. Think of a spiritual antidote to replace each attitude. Write the antidotes in the boxes. A few have been done for you.

Attitude	Antidote	Attitude	Antidote
People will like me.	People will like the Lord.	I'll be rewarded in heaven.	My reward is being of service to others.
If I do this, I'll get something I want.	Service is an opportunity.	My mother will stop yelling at me.	
I'll be free when others have to work later!		I will get credit for my hours of service.	
It will look good on my resume.		I'm required to do this—I don't have to like it.	
The sooner I get it over with the better.		I'll get a better leadership position.	
I'm doing this because nobody else will.		I'm the only one who works around here.	
People will see how reliable I am.		I want a pay raise.	
It's my job.		I'm better than everyone else.	
I don't have anything better to do.		I hate this!	

Intention is what gives all of a person's actions their true character. If the intention is to do good things for the sake of reputation, in order to acquire important positions or else monetary gain, the good that a person does is not good because it is done for the sake of self and so also originates in self. But if the goal is to do good for his fellow citizen's, country's, or church's sake, and so for his neighbor's sake, the good a person does is good since it is done for the sake of good itself, which in general is the real neighbor, and so is also done for the Lord's sake....

see *Arcana Coelestia* 9210

Spiritual Currency Teacher Copy

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People will like me.	People will like the Lord.	I will be rewarded in heaven.	My reward is being of service to others.
If I do this, I will get something I want.	Service is an opportunity.	My mother will stop yelling at me.	I'm hoping to make my mother's life better.
I will be free when others have to work later!	Taking my turn really helps get things done!	I will get credit for my hours of service.	I'm doing this to be useful.
It will look good on my resume.	Other people don't need to know that it is me doing this.	I am required to do this—I don't have to like it.	I can look for joy in what I'm doing.
The sooner I get it over with the better.	I will enjoy every minute.	I will get a better leadership position.	By improving my skills, I can be of greater service.
I am doing this because nobody else will.	Thank You, Lord, for this opportunity.	I am the only one who works around here.	The Lord gives me the power to do everything.
People will see how reliable I am.	I can always rely on the Lord when I need Him.	I want a pay raise.	My reward is having the opportunity to be useful.
It is my job.	It is the Lord's work.	I am better than everyone else.	The Lord is better than anyone else.
I don't have anything better to do.	This opportunity is the best thing that has happened to me.	I hate this!	I am committed to doing this act of useful service.

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