Powerfully Teaching
Your Children
Gospel Principles

Lesson Plan: “The Windows of Heaven”

Objectives:

- Emphasize that President Snow was inspired to counsel the Saints to pay an honest tithe.

- Talk about how the Lord will pour out blessings to those who pay an honest tithe.

Each lesson contains 5 timed activities:

(Choose the activities that fit your family’s schedule. Additional resources are provided as extra time may be available.)

Reverence Time: Song, prayer, scripture and video clip
Lesson Time: Lesson summary and points to ponder
Story Time: Story
Activity Time: Object lesson or activity
Treat Time: Prayer, theme related recipe & music video

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Sing Together: Children’s Songbook #150b “I Want to Give the Lord My Tenth.”

If you wish to have an online music file to accompany you visit: http://www.lds.org/cm
(Note: Navigate to the Interactive Church Music Player where you can listen to and print Church hymns and children’s songs.)

Prayer:

Scripture Time: Malachi 3:10

10. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Video Clip: Watch chapter 25 from the Modern Prophets, Lorenzo Snow DVD. (Video clip is also provided for viewing online.)
Lesson Summary:

What existing principle did the Lord reveal to President Snow to help the church members and the church solve their financial problems? (Discuss ideas.)

“President Snow had promised that if the people would pay their tithing and plant their crops, it would rain and they would have food for the coming year. ... During the hot, dry weeks that followed, the people of St. George paid their tithing, planted their fields, prayed, and watched the cloudless sky for rain. ... Two months after the conference, it began to rain. The crops grew in abundance that year!” Diane Nichols, Friend, Sep 2001 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.

How much of our increase or income are we to give back to the Lord? (One-tenth.)

“And after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord.” (D&C 119:4)

Does the Lord promise blessings to everyone who pays their tithing? (Discuss ideas.)

“To those who faithfully and honestly live the law of tithing, the Lord promises an abundance of blessings. Some of these blessings are temporal, just as tithes are temporal. But like the outward physical ordinances of baptism and the sacrament, the commandment to pay tithing requires temporal sacrifice, which ultimately yields great spiritual blessings. ... The temporal and spiritual blessings of tithing are specifically tailored to us and our families, according to the Lord’s will.” Robert D. Hales, Liahona, Nov 2002 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.

What are some of the blessings our family has received by paying tithing? (Discuss ideas. Besides individual blessings emphasize: churches to meet in, missionary work, temples, etc.)

Can children help accomplish the Lord’s work by paying their tithing?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “I will always be grateful for a father and a mother who, as far back as I can remember, taught us to pay our tithing. ... We never felt that it was a sacrifice to pay our tithing. We felt it was an obligation, that even as small children we were doing our duty as the Lord had outlined that duty, and that we were assisting his church in the great work it had to accomplish.” Tambuli, May 1991 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.
**Points to Ponder:**

**Why is it important to pay an honest tithe?** (Discuss ideas.)

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say: Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.” (Malachi 3:8)

Malachi preached strongly to the Levitical priests who had turned from the ordinances. They had also become poor stewards. He reminded them that to rob those for whom the tithe offering served was the same as robbing God.

When we honestly and generously support the Lord’s work and the poor through our tithes and offerings so do we love and serve God. (Matthew 25:34-40)

**Does our faith increase when we pay an honest tithe?**

“It is important that you live the law of tithing now because it will strengthen your faith and prepare you for trials later on.” H. Bryan Richards, *New Era, Apr 2007 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.*

**How is tithing used?** (Discuss ideas.)

“Under the direction of the Lord’s prophet, these funds are then gathered and used to fund the growth and development of the Church throughout the world. Examples of the use of tithing funds are the construction of temples, the financing of the worldwide missionary effort, the building and maintenance of meetinghouses, and other worthy purposes.” Daniel L. Johnson, *Liahona, Nov 2006 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.*

**How does paying an honest tithe affect our relationship with the Lord?** (Discuss ideas.)

We serve the Lord by generously supporting His work and help for persons in need. As we reflect on the generosity of the Lord’s forgiveness to us we become moved to generously and cheerfully give out of love and not out of mere obligation. (2 Cor. 8:8-9, 9:6-7)

**Quote:**

“The Lord allows us to use everything on this earth. He only asks us to return one-tenth. Tithing is a token of gratitude, obedience, and thanksgiving—a token of our willingness and dedication. ... Paying tithing increases our love for the Lord.” Yoshihiko Kikuchi, *Liahona, May 2007 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.*
Libby listened to Sister Farr bear her testimony. “Last month I had pneumonia and when I checked my account balance there wasn’t enough money to pay my tithing and buy the antibiotic that my Dr. prescribed,” Sister Farr explained. “But, I knew I couldn’t afford to miss out on the blessings I’d receive from paying my tithing. The very next day I received a rebate check in the mail for the exact amount of my prescription.”

Libby thought about the necklace she wanted to buy Mom for Mother’s Day next week. It cost twelve dollars and ninety-five cents and so far she had only saved nine dollars.

“How am I ever going to earn enough in just one week?” Libby wondered. “Maybe,” she thought, looking down at the tithing envelope in her hand that held one dollar, “I’ll be blessed just like Sister Farr.”

After Fast and Testimony meeting Libby walked to the front of the chapel to give the Bishop her tithing. “I just know Heavenly Father will bless me with the money I need for Mom’s necklace, now!” she thought.

When Monday came Libby checked the mailbox, but there was no mail for her. “Maybe it’ll come tomorrow,” she thought before taking the mail into Father.

“Hey, Libby,” Father said. “Tate’s not feeling well. How would you like to earn five bucks for cleaning out the dog run for him?”

“No way,” Libby said. “You couldn’t pay me enough to do that job!”

Libby checked the mail again on Tuesday, but still no mail for her. “Here, Mom,” she said, handing her the mail. “I didn’t get anything again today,” she said disappointed.

“Your birthday’s not for two months, Libby. I don’t think Grandpa will be mailing your birthday card this soon.”

“Mom, it’s not a birthday card that I’m waiting for, but I can’t tell you what it is ’cause it would ruin the surprise.”

“Hmm. This surprise wouldn’t have anything to do with a certain holiday that’s coming up. Would it?”


“By the way,” Mother added. “Grandma called and wants to know if you’d like to help her weed her garden after school tomorrow. She’ll pay you five dollars.”

“Mom, don’t you remember?” Libby asked. “You said I could go to Kaylee’s house after school tomorrow.”
“Maybe Kaylee would like to earn some money, too. She could go to Grandma’s tomorrow with you.”

“We’ve already made plans, Mom. We’re going to play dolls in Kaylee’s playhouse.”

Libby continued to check the mail every night after school. When she hadn’t received a check in the mail on Friday, she became angry and threw her books on the table.

“I paid my tithing and I haven’t been blessed one bit,” Libby grumbled.

“Count your many blessings, name them one by one,” Mother sang.

“I haven’t got any blessings,” Libby protested. “And if I don’t get my blessing by tomorrow it’ll be too late!”

“And what blessing is that?” Mother asked.

“I’m suppose to be blessed with a check in the mail, ’cause I only have nine dollars and I need twelve dollars and ninety-five cents—plus tax by tomorrow to buy your Mother’s Day gift.”

“Libby, you know Heavenly Father always keeps His promises. And He promised that if you pay your tithing, He’ll ‘Open you the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.’” Mother quoted, Malachi 3:10. “But He didn’t promise to send us money in the mail.”

“But, Mom. When Sister Farr paid her tithing, Heavenly Father blessed her with money in the mail.”

“Oh, Libby,” Mother said. “You should never expect Heavenly Father to bless you with money. Blessings like Sister Farr’s do happen, but they are the exception, not the rule. The problem isn’t that you haven’t been blessed, but that you’re expecting a blessing that Heavenly Father knows isn’t the best thing for you.”

“Why?” Libby asked.

“Because, if it were that easy we wouldn’t need to have faith. Everyone would pay their tithing and we wouldn’t learn anything by paying it,” Mother explained. “Libby, most of the blessings we receive from paying tithing are spiritual, not material. Like the blessings of going to the temple, learning to sacrifice and having a church to worship in. The list is never ending. And sometimes,” Mother added, “blessings come in the form of opportunities.”

“What do you mean?”

Mother lovingly put her arm around Libby, “Did Heavenly Father bless you with any opportunities to earn any money this week?”

Libby frowned, “I didn’t want to clean out the dog run or help Grandma pull weeds. It’s not Heavenly Father’s fault I can’t buy you the gift I wanted,” Libby realized. “It’s mine.”

“Libby. I can think of another blessing Heavenly Father has given you this week,” Mother added. “He’s blessed you with the opportunity to learn from your mistake.”

“And He’s also blessed me with the opportunity to repent and be forgiven!” Libby exclaimed.

“And that’s the best gift of all,” Mother agreed.

by Margie Nauta Lee

Preparation
1. Print out the artwork.
2. Glue the box artwork to cardstock.
3. Optional: Cover box and windows artwork with self laminating sheets.

Activity: (Younger children will need help from an older sibling or parent.)
1. Ask: Why do we pay tithing? (Discuss ideas.) President Hinckley said, “We did not do not pay tithing with the expectation of material blessings, although we can testify that we have been so blessed. The Lord has opened the windows of heaven and poured out his blessings in marvelous measure.” Gordon B. Hinckley, Ensign, Dec 1989 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.
2. Explain: Paying tithing takes faith, discipline and budgeting.
3. Ask: When establishing a budget or after receiving an increase, what is the first thing we should do? (Pay tithing.)
3. Explain: “The Lord may provide to those who pay tithing the ability to use money wisely and the joy of sharing and giving. Obedience to the law of tithing, like obedience to other commandments, also helps us feel the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives.” Lesson 29: Preparing for Exaltation: Teacher’s Manual © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.
4. Explain: Everything we have belongs to the Lord. “I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine” (D&C 104:14).
5. Ask: How much of what the Lord gives us does He require us to give back? (one-tenth.)
6. Explain: When the law of tithing was first introduced to the Latter-day Saints tithing was paid in kind. Today we pay tithing with money. Use the pictures to help children understand the precept of giving back one-tenth of our increase to the Lord. Show how much the Lord allows us to keep for ourselves and how little He expects in return.
7. Explain: “The greatest blessings from paying tithing are spiritual, and not material” The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988]
8. Ask: What are some of the spiritual blessings that we receive from paying tithing? (Discuss ideas. Emphasize that the blessings of the temple are only available to those who pay their tithing.
9. Help each child assemble a “The Windows of Heaven” tithing bank using the instruction found on the following page to help them learn to always pay their tithing first so that the Lord “...will open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” (Malachi 3:10.)
The Windows of Heaven Tithing Bank

1. Cut along dotted lines.

2. Fold along solid lines on windows with artwork facing out. Glue together leaving tabs free.

3. Insert window tabs through dotted lines on the block with the scripture. Press tabs open on the inside of the box and tape to box. (See diagram.)

4. Fold along solid lines of box with artwork facing out.

5. Place glue along white tabs of box. Fold sides of box up, matching tabs and glue in place. Reinforce seams with tape on the inside of the box.

6. Tuck gold tab on lid (block with the coin slot) into the assembled box to close.
“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse ... saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” (Malachi 3:10)
Approximate Time: 90 minutes

Cheddar Pennies

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes  
**Chill Time:** 1 hour  
**Bake Time:** 20 minutes

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.  
Lightly grease a large cookie sheet.

2 cups sifted all-purpose flour  
1 pinch salt  
1 pinch cayenne pepper  
1 pinch garlic powder  
16 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese  
1 cup butter, melted

Mix together the flour, salt, cayenne pepper, and garlic powder.  
Stir in the Cheddar cheese and melted butter to form a firm dough.  
Chill for 1 hour.

Let children participate by rolling the dough into ropes as big around as a penny.  
Slice into 1/4 inch thick circles.  
Place slices onto prepared cookie sheet one inch apart.  
Bake for 20 minutes until the bottoms of the pennies are lightly toasted and the tops are firm.

**Treat Time:** Roll play by having Father be the Bishop and Mother the employer. Have Mother pay each child ten Cheddar Pennies. Help children figure out how many of their Cheddar Pennies to give to the Bishop for tithing. Have Father thank the children for paying their tithing and tell them about a few of the many things that tithing provides for the church.