

The Cooperative Program

How Southern Baptists
Work Together

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Our passion.



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The Cooperative Program

How Southern Baptists Work Together

Purpose: Through this lesson, children will learn Christians in Southern Baptist churches work together to tell people everywhere about Jesus.

Bible Verse: *“They all gave a lot because they are rich. But she gave even though she is poor. She put in everything she had. That was all she had to live on.”* (Mark 12:44)

Supplies needed for this lesson:

- masking tape
- gold-foil wrapped chocolate candies
- Bible
- large sticker dots (at least four colors)
- coin currency inside plastic eggs or small containers (one for each child, various amounts)
- paper (for “Application—Older Children”)
- balloons (for “Application—Younger Children”)
- pencils
- crepe paper streamer or rope (for “Application—Younger Children”)



CREATIVE STAFF

Sarah Murray, *editor*
Cassidy Ashley, *copy editor*
Bruce Watford, *art director*

CONSULTING STAFF

Heather Keller and Keith Gates,
missions consultants
Jon Jeffries and Kelly Perry,
content and marketing hub managers
Sandra Wisdom-Martin,
executive director/treasurer
Connie Dixon, *president*

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Opening

Grow for the Gold!

Supplies

- masking tape
- gold-foil wrapped chocolate candies

Before the session, create a ten-foot line on the floor with masking tape. Place the gold-foil wrapped chocolate candies about 30 feet from the line.

1. As children arrive, instruct them to stand in a line behind the masking tape. Say: *Today, we're going to work together to reach our goal: golden candies!*
2. Explain to children they will hook their arms together to create a giant chain to reach the candies. Each child will hold the hand of another until they are all holding hands. They should stay standing, but stretch to reach their goal! The last person in line must keep his or her feet on the starting line at all times. If the candy is still out of reach, they need to think of other ways to stretch the line (for example, lie down and hold one another's hands or feet, etc.). Add children to each team as they arrive.
3. After children have worked together and reached the candy, allow them to celebrate by eating a piece. Discuss the activity: *How did you work together to reach your goal? What is a goal Christians share?*
4. Say: *Let's learn more about how Christians—specifically Christians in Southern Baptist churches—work together to follow God's command to share the good news about Jesus with everyone!*

Note: You may need to vary the distance to the candy from the line, depending on the number of children in your group. Or, form two groups that reach for two different bags of candy.

TERMS TO KNOW

Christian—a person who believes in Jesus Christ and follows His teachings.

Southern Baptist Convention—a body of like-minded local churches cooperating together to reach the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.



Story

The Widow's Offering

Supplies

- Bible
- large sticker dots (at least four colors)
- coin currency inside plastic eggs or small containers (one for each child, various amounts)
- paper

1. Say: *What are things you can buy for two pennies?* (Pause for answers.)
2. Say: *Two pennies are not worth much. But from God's perspective, two pennies can be worth more than other greater amounts. God sees what two pennies can do in His kingdom.*
3. Read aloud Mark 12:41–44, or ask volunteers to help you read:

“Jesus sat down across from the place where people put their temple offerings. He watched the crowd putting their money into the offering boxes. Many rich people threw large amounts into them. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins. They were worth only a few pennies.

“Jesus asked his disciples to come to him. He said, “What I’m about to tell you is true. That poor widow has put more into the offering box than all the others. They all gave a lot because they are rich. But she gave even though she is poor. She put in everything she had. That was all she had to live on.”

4. Say: *The poor widow gave because she wanted to take part in God's work through giving.*
5. Ask children what they think God's work is. (Reconciling people to God—making them friendly again—through Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.) Ask children how Christians can help people be reconciled to with God. Your discussion should include by telling people about Jesus, praying for people, supporting missionaries who share the gospel, etc.
6. Say: *But there are so many people in the world. And we are just one church with just a few people.*

As you prepare to lead the Story activity, please take a moment to review the “younger” and “older” suggestions (pp. 4–5) to use with this section. Use these instructions to create an engaging story time that fits the needs of your group!

That seems like a huge job. I like how you worked together a few minutes ago to reach the candy. Do you think working like that with others would help make sure more people know about God?

7. Distribute a different color sticker dot to each child to place on his or her shirt.
8. Say: *Let's pretend each of you are a Southern Baptist church. The different colors of your dots mean some churches are old, some are new, some are big, some are small, and some are full of people who speak a different language. Even though you are different, you all give money through the Cooperative Program to help do God's work.*
9. Show children the plastic eggs with the coin currency inside. Guide them to choose an egg.
10. Tell children to open their eggs and look at the money inside. Point out that all the amounts are different—some have more and some have less.
11. Ask children to bring their different amounts and pile it in the center of your meeting space. Say: *Each of you are a different church, and you each had a different amount of money. You have now all just given to the Cooperative Program.*
12. Explain: *In the Cooperative Program, churches work together by giving their money to share Jesus with the world, near and far—God's work! When the churches work together through the Cooperative Program, they can do more than what they could do alone: It helps send and support missionaries. It provides them with training and resources. It helps with all kinds of mission and ministry projects that help others.*

Application—Younger Children

What Does the Cooperative Program Provide?

Supplies

- CP Draw-a-Line (p. 7)
- pencils
- balloons
- crepe paper streamer or rope

Before the session, make copies of “CP Draw-a-Line” (p. 7, one for each child). Create a volleyball-style net in your room by attaching a crepe paper streamer or rope between two chairs. Inflate at least two balloons. Mark each one with the words “Cooperative Program.”

1. Say: *Let’s find out more about where the money goes that churches give through the Cooperative Program.*
2. Give each child a “CP Draw-a-Line” activity page and a pencil. Say: *On the left side of the page you’ll see a list of things Cooperative Program dollars go to fund or buy. On the right are pictures. Draw a line from the word to the correct picture.*
3. When children are done, discuss the items on the page. Ask them how they think those things could be used to share Jesus with people or help them. Ask if there is anything they don’t understand, or maybe that surprises them.
4. After the discussion, divide children into two teams. Guide children to stand with their team on either side of the “volleyball net.” Say: *It takes teamwork to keep the Cooperative Program going. Let’s pretend like we are all churches, working together to keep this balloon (hold up balloon)—the Cooperative Program—going. Players on one side of the net will hit the balloon over the net to the other team, who must hit it back. Try to keep the balloon from hitting the ground. When a player hits the balloon, try to also say something from the “CP Draw-a-Line” list, which are things the Cooperative Program helps fund. Teams, if a player can’t think of something, help them out!*
5. Play as time allows.



Application—Older Children

The Case for Working Together

Supplies

- pens or pencils
- paper
- electronic device (*optional*)

1. Ask children to work together to help separate the pile of money into nine smaller piles.
2. When they are done, have them sit back down.
Say: All the churches that give through the Cooperative Program meet together each year to decide how the money should be spread across each state and then on to the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board.
3. Explain that at the state level, money can go to (point to each pile of money as you go down the list):
 - evangelism training and events (*to spread the gospel*),
 - volunteer mission teams (*to spread the gospel*),
 - missions education resources for churches (*discipling students, like you!*),
 - ministry centers (*to help with immediate needs*),
 - plant churches,
 - state Baptist colleges and universities (*name one in your state or region*),
 - and church camps and conference centers (*name one in your state or region*).

Then explain, on a worldwide level, the money is distributed to (point at the last two piles):

- seminaries (*where people are trained to lead others to do God's work*),
- and to missionaries (*International Mission Board and North American Mission Board*).

Tip: Name examples of each of these listed that might be familiar to children.

4. *Say: Wow! That is a lot of ministry we can get done when we all work together!*

5. Divide children into small groups of three or four. Give each group paper and pens or pencils.
6. Encourage children to work with their group to write a commercial encouraging churches to give to the Cooperative Program. Help them think about the reasons giving is important, and how they could communicate that to a church. Depending on time, allow children to share what their group wrote.

Option: With parent permission, record the commercials and show them on your church's social media or during worship services during the month of October for "Focus on Cooperative Program." You can also send them to children@wmu.org to possibly be featured on WMU, SBC social media pages!



Prayertime

Cooperative Prayers

1. Hand each child a coin from the piles. Say: *Remember the widow who gave two copper coins—all she had—to help God’s work.* Ask them to think about one way you discussed the Cooperative Program helps do God’s work.
2. Tell children you will pray in a circle. You will start the prayer by asking God to help churches give what they can to the Cooperative Program.

- Children will continue the prayer by saying, *So churches can . . .* and then say the one way they learned the Cooperative Program helps do God’s work. When they say their prayer, they should place their coin in a pile in the center of the circle.
3. When every child has prayed and placed their coin in the center of the circle. Close by saying, *Amen.*



CP Draw-a-Line

The Cooperative Program helps fund ministries, seminaries, missionaries, and more!
There is so much Southern Baptist churches can do when they work together.
Some of the things are pictured below. Draw a line from the word to the picture!

Camps



Bibles



Food



Schools

Churches

Repairs

Bicycles

Houses

Radios

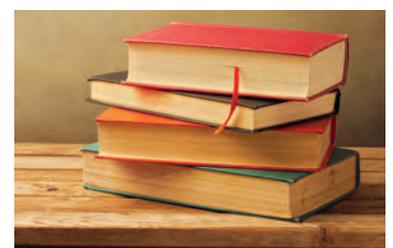
Hospitals

Medicine

Books

Missionaries

Teachers



Hey leader!

We are so glad you are interested in the Cooperative Program and Children's Missions Discipleship! Here are some other ways you can help children and other members of your church learn more about the Cooperative Program and get involved in missions!

Organize a field trip to a group funded by the Cooperative Program. Some ideas include a local seminary, Baptist college or university, Baptist student ministry, camp or conference center, or Baptist ministry center. Take a tour. Pray with the staff or faculty. Thank them for the work that they do to share God's love with others. (Contact your local Baptist Association for specific groups in your area.)

Support a volunteer mission team that is participating in an upcoming trip. Contact the team to find out ways to partner with them through prayer, financial support, donated items, or by making handmade items (keychain/bracelet/etc.) that teams can distribute as they serve. Invite the mission team to report back on their experience.

Ask your pastor to talk about how your church gives its money through the Cooperative Program. Share a video with your congregation, available at vimeo.com/showcase/cpvideos. Have children make special offering collection plates to be used during worship. You can do this by wrapping a container with map paper. Paint or print out the Cooperative Program logo onto the collection plate.

Recognize children for giving to missions through the Cooperative Program and/or learning about the Cooperative Program with the **Cooperative Program Badge/Patch!** Get them today at wmustore.com.



Do you want **more** children's missions discipleship?
Check out *Missions Journey: Kids* at wmustore.com!

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God's mission.
Our passion.

Family Missions Focus:

The Cooperative Program

In our lesson today, children learned Christians in Southern Baptist churches work together to tell people everywhere about Jesus.

Bible Focus:

Read Mark 12:41–42 with your child. Ask your child why he or she thinks the woman in the story gave so much of her money to the church. Discuss ways your church helps people in your community, and also ways your church works with other churches to help people in your community.

Practice saying together: “They all gave a lot because they are rich. But she gave even though she is poor. She put in everything she had. That was all she had to live on” (Mark 12:44).

Ministry Focus:

Contact your state Baptist convention and ask for a list of ministries in your area that are a part of the Cooperative Program. Find out what needs those ministries have and how you may pray as a family for them as well as support them through your time, talents, or money. Discuss ways you could

encourage your church to help the ministry with any needs they have.

Missions Focus:



Take a family trip that will focus on missions. Families are welcome to partner with a state WMU or local Baptist association to meet the needs in that community. For more information, visit wmu.com.

Attend a missions camp in your state or region.



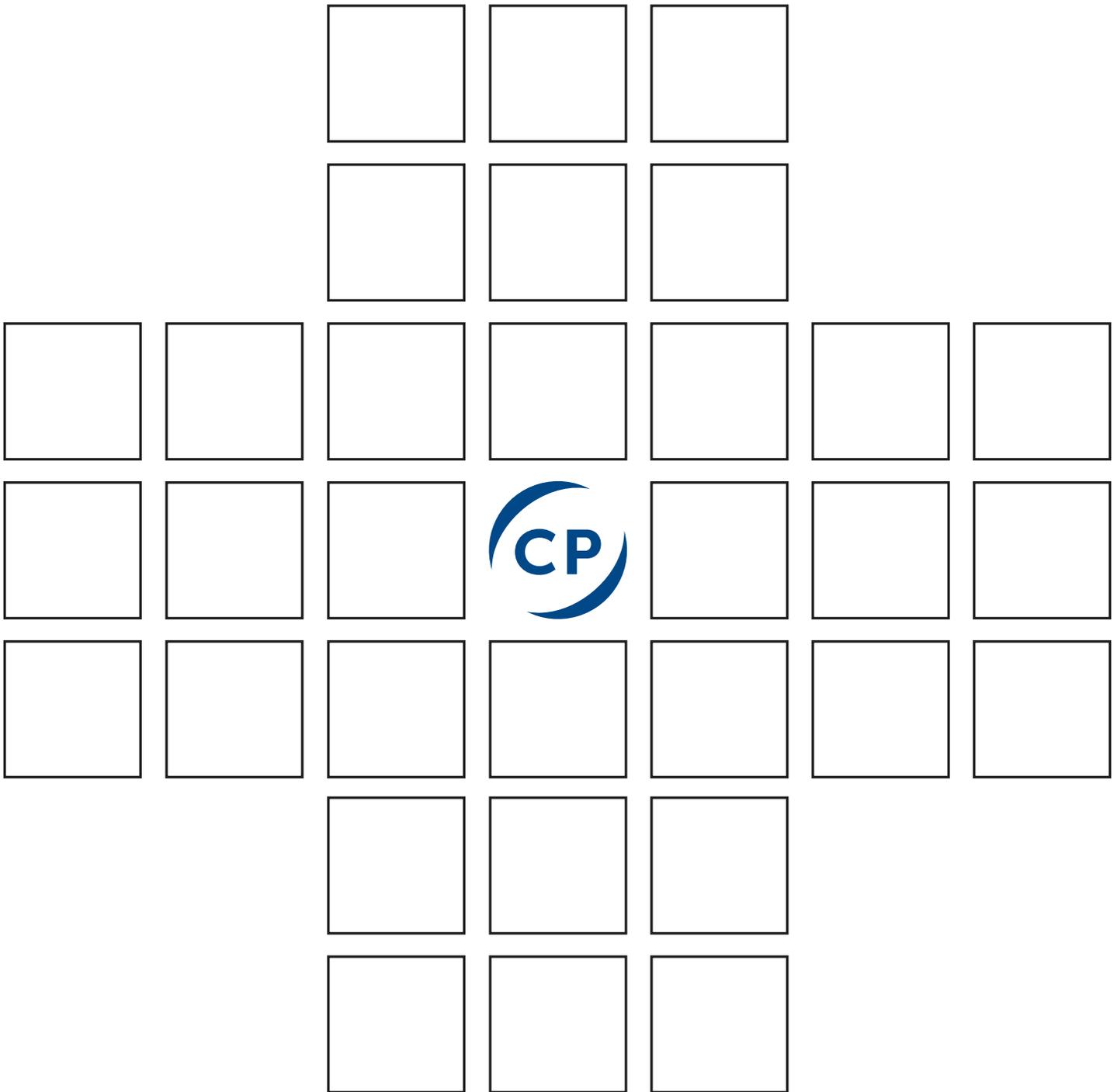
There are children and student mission camp opportunities at Baptist camp and conference centers.

Help your child learn about tithing. Discuss with your child the concept of tithing (1 Corinthians 16:2) and how that money is used to help the church as well as the Cooperative Program. Let them see how your family tithes. Work with your child to create a list of age-appropriate chores they can do to earn money, and help them set aside an amount for a tithe.



Coin-Jump Puzzle

Directions: Set up your board game by placing a dime or other small coin in each square. Leave the middle space empty. To play, jump pieces in any direction to the open spaces. When a coin has been jumped, it can be removed from the game board. The goal is to remove all coins except for one.



When you are finished playing the game, count up all the coins used and give them to your church to give to missions through the Cooperative Program. Remember . . . we can do more TOGETHER!