

## Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Mark 12:38-44

November 12, 2017

### This poor widow is richer than most. How rich are you?

Are you a people watcher? Insightful: of the culture - learn from the wise

Jesus' last moments in the Temple before his Passion

- He foiled all the traps of his enemies - gave witness to his wisdom/truth
- Took a seat *watching how* - carefully observed with sincere interest
  - ♦ Many rich people - large amounts: dump in - drop in?
- Jesus does care about our offers - but **not the way most think!**
  - ♦ With excitement Jesus calls his disciples (12 & us) over to teach us

### This poor widow is richer than most. How rich are you?

- ❖ It's **not about** the amount. It's **about** your attitude toward the Lord.
  - *Many rich people threw in large amounts.*
    - ♦ Most people would be impressed. *Look how they love the Lord!*
    - ♦ Jesus appreciated their acts of worship.
  - The widow's 2 small coins = 1/64<sup>th</sup> of a day's wage (today: \$.02 - \$.91?)
    - ♦ If about the amount: *O dear lady how sweet of you to give. But it will do you more good than it will help the temple. Here. Keep it.*
      - What would that miss? Her act of worship and more!
  - Jesus' emphasis - proportional giving
    - ♦ The rich gave out of their abundance - unknown %?
    - ♦ She gave out of her scarce resource - 100% of cash on hand!
      - Many would call her foolish. What is she going to live on?
      - Answer: She would live on the Lord - as she had been. As we all do!
- ❖ The giving God delights in is rooted in our relationship with him.
  - Jesus' interest in our giving is a **spiritual matter** - not material!
    - ♦ Jesus owns the universe. He doesn't need our gifts to survive or thrive.
    - ♦ Our vitals: blood pressure, heart rate, temperature speak volumes about our physical health. They don't make us healthy! They reflect health.
    - ♦ Our giving speaks volumes about our spiritual health. How?
      - It is all a matter of what you know and trust about the Lord:
        - his track record or reputation and
        - his promises to you which he will always keep.

- For believers: Living in the Lord - we give. Giving is living in the Lord.
  - ♦ **Living in view of God's Redemption - we give**
    - This poor widow was celebrating Passover - Yahweh redeemed her
    - From Egypt, from Satan, from death - to be one of his beloved.
    - Redeemed in Yahweh is how she saw herself - not poor widow - rich!
    - Thankful for God's saving work - offers gifts reflecting his worth
      - Sacrificial (%) offerings declare Yahweh is priceless!
      - Token (%) gifts reflect a heart that takes God for granted - low value
      - No gifts = *God has no value to me.*
      - It's one of a number of spiritual vital signs - reflecting our health
  - ♦ **Living in view of God's promise to provide - we give**
    - When Yahweh claims you as his - he promises to provide and protect.
    - When Yahweh promises - he never forgets. Faithful 24/7/366
    - First-fruit giving springs out of the truth that Yahweh will provide.
      - A widow, bitter with God over losing her husband, filled with worry how she'll survive, is not a pleasant person to be around. She trusts herself to survive. Taking comes easy. Giving is hard, unless it serves her own interests. No matter how much \$ she has, she's poor!
      - This widow of little means was rich in the life that comes with faith in Yahweh. His track record in the Bible and in her daily life shows it is not blind faith, but wise faith based on Yahweh's reliability. By faith she sees what those who live for this life cannot see. She experienced life to the full even in a life many would consider meager or even empty. She lived without a care, abundant in joy and hope, caring and generous with whatever God gave her.
  - ♦ **Living in view of God's Generosity - we give**
    - Anyone who knows Yahweh, knows **above all** he is generous!
    - Generosity is his reputation. Grace: undeserved superabundant love
    - Since God's generosity has won our heart we long to grow generous
    - God's love is other-oriented.
      - Reborn of that love our focus is out, not in. Showing God's care.
      - Where generosity is lacking the gospel is needed to be freed from the greed and coveting of *me-myself-I*. Freed for full life in Jesus.
- ❖ Many think: "*All the church cares about is my money.*"
  - Seeing the false religious leaders Jesus warned about, we see why...
  - Jesus and his church speak about giving as a matter of a healthy faith.

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