

Mark 12:41-44

The Widow's Two Mites

Today we find ourselves once again in Mark Ch. 12

A) I remind you that we are in this section of scripture that marks the last week in the life of Jesus Christ

B) **GREATEST WEEK IN HISTORY!** –

- 1) **Cross** – pay the price for our sins
- 2) **Resurrection** – to give life to all who would believe in him

C) **Passover week** - We noted in our study last week here in Ch.12 – Jesus – **just like the Passover lambs in Israel, was inspected by the Priests.**

Cc) Jesus the Passover lamb – was inspected by the religious leaders.

D) **A series of questions and test** – meant to trap him and defile him.

- 1) But he passed each test with flying colors.

Jesus would conclude that exchange with this indictment of these religious leaders! Mark 12:38-40

“Then He said to them in His teaching, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, 39 the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, 40 who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

Jesus says watch out for these religious leaders – who **Parade around like Peacocks** – wanting to be seen by men!

A) And who devours widow's houses! – **THESE GUYS EAT WIDOWS HOUSES!**

B) In other words they **take advantage of widows** – they exploit widows

C) Why do they do that? – They didn't see any **value** in the widow

- 1) Saw only **vulnerability** in the widows.

D) Jesus concludes by saying: **KNOW THIS** – their condemnation is going to be great –

- 1) They are not going to get away with this.

As we move into our text today: It shouldn't surprise us that Jesus is going to use a widow to teach a very important spiritual lesson! Mark 12:41-44

41 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. 42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a Quadrans. 43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; 44 for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

Jesus is still in the area of the temple courts and he makes his way over into the area of the treasury and takes seat!

A) In the temple treasury there were thirteen brass treasure chests called trumpets

B) Because they were shaped like **inverted horns**, narrow at the top and enlarged at the bottom

C) This is where people placed their offerings!

D) **So Jesus sits down opposite the treasury!**

Apparently Jesus liked to people watch!

A) Love to people watch.

B) One of the things I love about Europe – Cities built around walking streets

1) Restaurants on the walking street where you can sit and watch people!

C) **Go to Disneyland** – more fun than riding rides – ALWAYS REMINDED

1) God has a sense of Humor! - LOOK AROUND – PEOPLE ARE FUNNY!

Jesus was a “people watcher.”

A) **Here in this story we see that Jesus takes note of a poor widows offering!**

B) **NOTE: The focus here is not really on WHAT she gave but it is on HOW she gave!**

C) **Jesus noticed how people GAVE!**

1) He wasn't only watching their actions, but He was taking note of their motives.

Now if you are visiting or new to church- or have not been in a while.

A) I just said **the dreaded word** for you – GIVE –

B) That is the knock that some people have with the Church – All they want is your MONEY!

1) That is all that church is about!

C) Well I just want to go on the record here this morning: **Fact! GOD DOES NOT NEED YOUR MONEY – HE IS DOING FINE!**

D) **AND WE DO NOT WANT YOUR MONEY!**

1) PC – God guides... God provides! –

E) **Sit back and relax!** We have **already passed the offering bags** and they are not coming out again!

This subject is one that has causes a lot of people to become uncomfortable!

A) **Crazy lady!** – Her and her husband counseling – tithe – He wanted to give more – she wanted to give less –

Aa) **Talked Bible says about giving -- Dwell with her understanding**

1) I would encourage you to not do anything that your wife is not comfortable with.

B) **True there are a lot of ministries** – especially those on the TV who misrepresent God thru this subject!

1) Like the religious leaders that Jesus condemned in v. 40 – **They too have a tendency to prey on poor widows –**

C) **Lonely ladies** – with big hearts who love God and yet are vulnerable.

1) For this I have no doubt those hucksters will be **SEVERLY JUGDED!**

That type of abuse of God's word for personal gain is disgusting

A) And that type of abuse by the church has caused others to go to the opposite extreme – **NEVER TALK ABOUT IT!**

B) Creates ill informed believers – robs them of a blessing and stunts their spiritual growth!

C) We have to be careful that we are not guilty of that as well!

1) **Over sensitive – hinder God's people of hearing the truth** – because we don't want to offend.

Here at CV - we teach through the Bible Chapter by Chapter – verse by verse

A) Come to a passage that deals with giving.

B) WE ARE NOT GOING TO SHY AWAY FROM THAT sensitive - Hope you appreciate that!

When it comes the subject of giving - Here is the thing that we all need to realize – the Bible says that God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9:6

A) IN other words if your heart in Giving is not right – if it is a drudgery – burden – God says – **DON'T GIVE! – Heart right first!**

B) He wants your giving and YOUR SERVICE TO BE A RESPONSE TO HIS LOVE FOR YOU!

C) Valentines or wife's birthday – Bummer got to take her out!
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1) Why bother – Right? –**NO HE IS TAKING ME OUT TO AN EVEN MORE EXPENSIVE PLACE.**

D) That might be your wife's heart – but it is not God's heart – **God says I want giving to be a Joy! Cheerful is hilariously**

1)– Response! – Love -

Question: If God doesn't need our money – Why does He ask us to give?

A) Great question – I am so glad you asked it! – We didn't – anyway.

B) Here is the answer: Giving is not God's way of raising Funds – It is His way of raising Kids!

C) This morning I want to give you **three ways that God uses giving to grow His kids**

1) Three ways God uses giving to grow us into mature believers

#1 Giving builds trust!

A) That is really the focal point of this story!

B) As Jesus noticed how people Gave –

C) He noticed the rich who came – how did he know they were rich?

1) Might have been the way they were dressed! – Stood out – Designer **robes from Italy – From Rome – Versace – Gucci**

But it was probably due to the fact that the currency of that day was all coins!

A) So they came bearing their Sack of coins – sometimes the rich even hired people to carry it for them. - Wagonload

B) When they poured it into those brass coffers – **it made a lot of noise.**

1) People probably took notice – oooed and awed – maybe clapped

C) But this is what Jesus noted about how they gave – they gave out of their abundance.

1) Although their gifts were large it really didn't cost them much of anything.

For example: A billionaire can write a check to charity for a million dollars – People think -wow! He gave a million dollars!

A) **Relatively speaking** not a big deal – the million dollars is a drop in the bucket to a billionaire - **POCKET CHANGE.**

B) But along come this widow –Jesus, and everyone else who happened to see her, knew that she was a **poverty-stricken widow** because widows wore distinctive clothing, which in her case were probably worn and tattered

C) But she does something here that **made his heart applaud**

This woman gave from her poverty – She gave of her all! Why?

A) She was willing to trust God for her **PROVISION.**

B) She actually could have kept one of the coins for herself – but by giving them both – she was saying: 1) **God I am trusting you to take care of me!**

C) Point of this Passage – Her giving revealed her trust in God for his Provision.

D) GOD IS ALWAYS TEACHING US LESSONS ABOUT TRUST

God instructed the Kings in Israel –not to multiply gold, silver and horses

A) Why? Something wrong with those things? –NOPE

Aa) God wanted the confidence of Israel to be in His PROTECTION AND PROVISION.

B) Not in their MATERIAL WEALTH or their MILITARY MIGHT!

C) Jesus said a lot about having the faith of a Child – Child like faith that says – “Dad I know that you got me!”

D) Kids face when he is on the side of the pool – ready to jump in first time – scarred – 2nd time Joy!

1) Aaron – Huge smile – loved to that – further..

Or when a Child is LEARNING TO RIDE A BIKE

A) Dad is hold on – ok - I got YOU – They SMILE – peddle – I am riding

B) Ok - I am going to let you go – trust me! – Smile leaves for a moment! – Replaced by look of terror

C) Dad gives a reassurance - It is going to be ok – right here – I got you – ok - nods – let go

1) Running alongside – they start to fall you catch them

D) Pretty soon – THEY ARE RIDING – SMILING – EAR-TO-EAR

So when God says give – He is actually saying: trust that I have got you – that I will take care of you.

Not going to let you fall

A) In fact it is concerning this subject of giving that God says test me!

B) It is the only time in the Bible – only thing that God says – PUT ME TO THE TEST!

C) Malachi Ch.3 this was God’s indictment to the nation of Israel!

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed you?' In tithes and offerings.

A) The nation was holding back from the Lord – their first fruits & their special offering – that which was the Lords in the First Place.

B) We are stewards of all that God has given us. He asked for a tithe –

1) Tithe = 10% - You keep 90% and use it – steward it – give me 10%

C) Now this is a Heavy thought that is being stated here that if I am not giving the tithe I am actually robbing God /

1) Because it is His money anyway. {Doesn’t belong to me

D) But I worked hard for it – I earned it – {The Bible says that every good and perfect gift is from above.

1) God is Sovereign He is the one who got you that Job – that sale – He is the one blessing your efforts

Notice the result of not tithing v.9. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation.

A) **Haggai Contemporary of Malachi.** / Ch. 1:6, 9 describes what this curse was

6 "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes."
"You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the LORD of hosts? "Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house." Haggai 1:6, 9

B) Listen to the way the **Living Bible** reads: "You put your money into pockets filled with holes"

1) Ever feel that way? Holes in pockets

Now watch what the Lord says next – **Malachi 3:10**

10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. **Malachi 3:10**

So the Lord says – **TEST ME** – only place in the entire Bible where the Lord says – TEST ME / put me to the TEST

A) Bring your tithes into the Storehouse / **Storehouse is the Place of congregational meeting** {Church / Place of meeting & dispersing

B) God says: **You put me to the test – Precious child – I am wanting you to learn that you can trust me –**

1) I will provide for you. I will take care of you.

C) Big lesson: **You can never out give God!**

1) God says put me to the test –

D) Consider this Promise: Proverbs 3:9-10

"Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; 10 so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine."

Not suggesting that we give to get! – Not the point at all!

A) But there is a Biblical Principle – see throughout the Bible – taught in many Places – **THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING!**

B) The law simply states: **That we reap – what we sow!** Same kind

1) Apple seed = apple tree – not an orange.

C) Flesh = Destruction - / Spirit everlasting life!

D) So reap what you sow – but also reap **HOW** you sow!

1) Sparingly – reap – sparingly - / bountifully – reap bountifully

Now whenever the subject of tithing comes up there are always those who object and say- wait a second – Tithing is an OT principle.

A) The Tithe or the giving of 10% of the first fruits of your increase is a part of the law!

B) People who say that need to study their Bibles a little bit more.

C) Give you a few **Fast Facts on Tithing:**

1ST Tithing predates the Law: - Genesis 14 Abraham and Melchizedek.

A) Lot Abraham's nephew is living in Sodom – (horrible place to raise a family)

B) Sodom gets raided by these enemy kings – and LOT is taken captive.

C) Abraham hears about it – and instead of saying – **TOO BAD SO SAD – Lot should not have been living** there in the first place.

1) ABRAHAM GATHERS HIS SERVANTS AND EMBARKS ON A RESCUE MISSION!

D) **God was with Abraham and his servants** – they defeated the armies of the enemy and rescued lot and the inhabitants of Sodom.

1) In the victory Abraham – also gathered a great deal of spoil – treasures from the enemy.

When Abraham returned from the battle – he is met by the mysterious king Named Melchizedek.

A) Melchizedek is the King of Salem – the Priest of the most high God.

B) Only other person in the Bible who holds the titles of both King and priest is Jesus

C) **Christophany** – an appearance of Jesus in the OT in a Bodily form.

1) Hebrews 7:1-18 “The greatest” -

C) We are told in **Genesis 14:20 that Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe of the spoil!**

1) Where this word tithe originated from = tenth.

D) So the first thing we note is that **Tithing predates the law. Genesis 14:20**

2nd Tithing is seen in the New Testament as well actually commended by Jesus!

A) Matthew 23 Jesus is rebuking the religious leaders for their neglecting of love and Justice.

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the

weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”

Matt 23:23

B) Notice what he says there about their tithe: **He says you pay the tithe of mint and other spices – he says: “These you ought to have done.”**

C) In other words Jesus commends them for tithing – but rebukes them for neglecting – Justice, mercy and faith.

D) So tithing – Predates the law / Jesus commended it

The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 16 instructed 3rd Tithing

1 Corinthians 16:1-3

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”

A) The Corinthian Church had made a promise to take up an offering for the church in Jerusalem – struggling.

B) Paul says: **When you gather on the first day of the week – that is the time to bring what you have laid aside for the saints.**

C) So the idea of the tithe – predates the law, commended by Jesus in the NT and was encouraged by the Apostle Paul as well.

Again some have used this passage to argue – wait Pastor Rob – Paul doesn't say to give a tenth –

A) He just says – let each one of you lay aside something – storing up as he may prosper – So that means we can give whatever we want!

B) True it could mean that! – But it also could mean that Paul is saying **don't limit yourself to the tithe**

C) If you have prospered don't be afraid to give more!

D) That I think is more consistent with the rest of scripture on this subject.

Again here is a Biblical principle that we need to realize!

A) **YOU HAVE BEEN BLESSED IN ORDER TO BE A BLESSING!**

B) God is a giver and He wants His kids to be givers as well!

1) Becoming more like him as we learn to be givers – **not self absorbed**

C) So Giving is God's way of raising Kids – because #1 Giving builds trust

#2 Giving gives us an opportunity to partner with God in His mission!

A) In 2 Corinthians chapter 8 Paul is commending the Corinthian Church for the fact that they abound – in faith, love, in diligence and speech.

B) **In other words they had grown a lot** – from the time of Paul's first letter where he had to rebuke them on so many fronts.

C) But now he is commending them for their faith, and love and diligence and knowledge.

D) But he adds this exhortation about giving: **"See that you abound in this grace as well!" 2 Corinthians 8:7**

D) I find it interesting that Paul would refer to giving as a grace!

1) **Grace = undeserved favor!**

But why would GIVING be considered an undeserved Favor?

A) Think of it this way – God who doesn't need us to do His work/ to accomplish His ministry on earth.

B) But He says to you & I - I am going to let you partner w/ me in my work!

1) **One way is thru your giving**

C) You have been blessed in order to be a blessing to others

Example in the Feeding of 5,000 – it was passed out / not appeared

A) Jesus could have done that – but he wanted his disciples to participate in the process – **BUILD THEIR FAITH – SEE HIS GLORY!**

B) So God gives us the opportunity to give of our resources, our time, our talents, our energy – SAME REASON- Build **our faith – See His glory**

C) He takes the little that we have – uses it to do a lot!

God is so smart – He knows that our affections are connected to our pocket books! So Jesus declared - Matthew 6:19-21

19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Now that last phrase is Key – Where your treasure is your heart will be also

A) Not an indictment – just a fact – bird's fly – fish swim – where your treasure is your heart is going to be also

B) Stocks – **You were not interested** – suddenly invest – now you are interested – little announcements on your computer screen - signals

C) God is Smart - He wants our hearts to be in His Kingdom - Happens **when we invest there**

D) So Jesus isn't interested **in getting our finances** but He is interested in capturing our hearts –

1) When He captures our hearts – everything else falls into place!

So Giving is Gods way of raising kids because:

#1 Giving builds trust / #2 Giving allows us to partner with God in His mission.

#3 Giving protects us from the enemy!

Abraham in Gen 14 gave a tenth to Melchizedek – all that he had

A) Afterwards out came the king of Sodom – wanted to bless Abraham – Sodom means perversity – So the King of Perversity

B) The **King of Sodom comes & says to Abraham give me the people - take what you want no strings attached/**

1) Lie always strings attached - but we read in v. 22

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, 23 'that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'; Genesis 14:22,23

C) The implication is this because Abraham had given to the Lord his heart followed & he was protected from the ensnarement of the world

D) Because He gave to the Lord – **Abraham heart was in the right place – he had the right perspective** – when the King of Perversity came along.

See it is all about the heart! – Brings me back to this poor widow

A) Here we wish we knew more. This woman's beauty of soul makes us wonder where she lived and how, and what had been her suffering.

B) She no doubt approached the trumpets quietly, almost stealthily, head bowed, hoping to draw no attention to herself.

C) Though she did not know Jesus was watching, she knew that God saw her, and that was whom she came to please

Here story teaches us that:

- Jesus takes note of our giving!
- He is not so much interested in what we give as how we give!
- Our giving can be an indicator of our Love for God and our trust in God

A) **He is a father who takes care of his kids!**

B) Giving starts with our hearts – Hearts given to the Lord in response to Him giving His life for us – His Sacrifice

C) We close today by celebrating what the Bible describes as **HIS INDESCRIBIBLE GIFT!**

Communion!