

HOW WE ARE ROBBING OURSELVES?

TEXT: Mark 12:41-44:

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.



Jesus, as was His custom, had gone to Temple (church). The church that was of that day was at a low end spiritually. Many of its members were leading lives that were mean and unholy. Its services were often quite cold and dead. But Jesus never took the position that He could worship just as well outside the church. He believed that He could meet God in the church in spite of all the hypocrites. It never occurred to Him to try to improve the spiritually-impoverished church of the day by merely letting it alone. He made it his business of attending, and instead of getting something, He was found giving something to the meeting that always changed the whole atmosphere of the service.

On this particular occasion, Jesus selected a very special pew over against the treasury. He took this seat for a very definite reason. There was to come an offering to be placed in the treasury that was to bless His heart. He knows the givers before they will ever come to the meeting. Since He is the same yesterday, today, and forever — and you may be sure is just as regular in church attendance — He has seen the spirit and purpose behind every gift and whether or not we have robbed God in our offering.

- 1. Jesus is deeply interested in the offering we bring because, when rightly given, it is an act of worship.**

Do you know that when we open our hearts to go with our gifts it is confessing that He is owner of all; that we are acknowledging the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof? Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the fruits of thine increase. It is honoring God, as we thus open our hearts and hands to give. We open them to receive. Giving is an act of worship for it hereby shows whether or not the value of our giving has become a God to us.

2. **Jesus is interested in the offering because our attitude toward giving is a test of our love to Christ.**

**If we are like Him,
we will have His
nature.**

If an opportunity to give to Jesus bores you; if it offends you; if you are eager to ride through this world on a pass; then, whatsoever may be your profession, the chances are very great that you do not know Him; that you know only about Him whose very nature is giving. If we are like Him, we will have His nature.

3. **Our offering is a test of our faith.**

James 2:5, 20-26:

⁵ Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?

²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that Faith without works is dead?

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar

²² Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for Righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

²⁴ Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

²⁵ Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so Faith without works is dead also.

4. **Jesus is vastly interested in the offering because He realizes the tragedy of our failure to give.**

He knows that such failure indicates we are selfish, and we often lose what we have by our failures to enjoy it. The selfish, self-centered spending is often painful, but the slippery, cold hands of death often wrench it from his clinging fingers.

Jesus speaks of the rich farmer floating over his possessions. The next day he was as empty-handed as Peter and John at the temple gate before a beggar man. Whose shall these things be which thou hast provided? Many suppose that gain is godliness, but they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, have veered from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

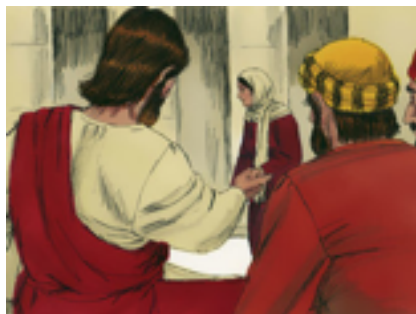
1 Timothy 6:9-10:

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Jesus is still sitting at the treasury and watches the rich and poor as they give.

While Jesus looked with gladness upon this multitude of



givers, He saw one giver that thrilled Him above all others. He saw a poor widow drop in two copper coins that make a cent. At this, Jesus fairly shouted out to His disciples:

Mark 12:43: Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.

He knows how much we earn; how much we put Him first in our giving. The widow cast in more than they all. How absurd. Such seems ridiculous. Her gift was great, in the Spirit of Devotion. Love to Jesus makes everything we do seem so little as



compared to what He has done for us. Love to Jesus is the true spirit of worship and is shown in our giving.

The gift was great because it was filled with the true Spirit of the Cross. How did Jesus give? He gave His all. He gave until He had nothing left. Who being in the form of God, He emptied Himself and became like unto man for the death of the Cross.

Philippians 2:6-8:

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

⁷ But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

This offering became great only after it was given, and Jesus esteemed it so important that He has this event repeated twice in His Holy Word.

In conclusion, this experience Jesus had in the temple tells us that giving is a matter not to be treated haphazardly. To give the Lord a few odd coppers is but the collection from a thankless heart. For our giving is measured not by what we give, but how much we have left. I speak in no manner of condemning any of you in what you have done as unto the Lord out of your hearts, but to you who are robbing your own selves by not giving in the spirit that Jesus shows how to give.

1. Tithes

2. Time

3. Talents

4. Thanksgiving

Giving to Jesus, without a heart of love, makes a gift so little.

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