

Introduction

One of the privileges that I have is to occasionally talk about money. God has a lot to say about our finances. Let me ask you a couple questions.

- How many believe that prayer is important? I believe that prayer is vitally important. Jesus said that My house shall be called a house of prayer, and we are given a lot of instruction in the Word of God about prayer. In fact, there are approximately 500 verses on prayer in the Bible. BUT did you know that there are about 2000 verses giving us instruction about money. We have four times as much instruction in the area of our finances than in prayer. Obviously, our understanding and use of money is important to the Lord.
- How many of you believe faith is important? Faith involves everything we do in the kingdom. It is extremely important and there are 750 verses instructing us about our faith. Yet, this is roughly a third of the number of verses on finances.

In the New Testament one in every six verses make some reference to money. In the gospels there are thirty-eight parables, and sixteen of them revolve around money. Many of them deal with covetousness. One in every four verses in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John speak about our finances. The gospels contain more warnings concerning the misuse of money than any other singular subject. Jesus taught more about money than any other subject.

Many pastors shy away from talking about money. Some avoid it because they don't want to offend people. I believe that a Biblical understanding and view of finances is very important and God's people need to be taught about finances. When God tells us in Malachi to test Him in our giving, and that if we will give He will pour out His blessings and rebuke the devourer for us, I think the blessing and protection of God is something God's people need to hear. I believe that we should love and honor God with our lives, and part of that honor is with our finances. Again, it is important for me to teach people to honor God with their finances. So, I count it a privilege to teach on money. Since I am doing a lot of book series, I speak about money when the passage deals with money. Going through the books of the Bible will give a pastor plenty of opportunities to teach on money.

Our passage today is about a poor widow who put in a small offering at the temple. On that particular day Jesus was watching carefully and saw what many rich people were putting in the treasury. He also saw what this beggarly widow put in. Then, He used this as an object lesson to teach His disciples and all of us about God's perspective about money.

This morning I want to talk about God's perspective on giving, and then I want to do something a little different. I want to look at the poor widow's perspective on giving. I am going to give six possible reasons that the poor widow did what she did. Jesus has brought her to our attention and I believe there are some important lessons that we can learn from her life. All of these reasons may not be her reasons. Again, this will be speculative. However, all the reasons that I am going to give about why this woman gave everything are Biblically sound principles and I am going to use her as an example to bring out these points.

1. God's Perspective on Giving
2. The Poor Widow's Perspective on Giving

(Mark 12:41-44) “And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the people were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. {42} A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. {43} Calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, “Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; {44} for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.”

1. God's Perspective on Giving

The thrust of the passage is the comparison of the poor widow's offering and the offerings of the rich. It begins with Jesus observing how the people were putting money into the treasury at the temple. From a human perspective, this goes against what most of us have been taught. We have been taught that when it comes time for giving, the right hand should not know what the left hand is doing. Therefore, we are not to observe or gaze at people as they give. Their gifts are unto God. In Matthew 6:2-4, Jesus said that when we give to the poor, we are not to sound a trumpet so that people notice our giving. We are not to do things so that we can be honored by men. He said that when we give to the poor, we are to do it in secret so that the Father sees what is done in secret. The main idea here is that our giving, like our prayers, are between us and God, and they are not done to make us look good.

(Matt 6:2-4) “So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. {3} But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, {4} so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”

My grandfather on my mother's side believed very strongly in not letting the left hand know what the right hand was doing. My understanding is that he always put cash in the offering box and did not attach his name to it. He did not want anyone in the church, including the leadership, to know what he was giving. For many years, when we itemized our giving, our giving was a tax deduction. Today, there is a generous standard deduction, and for most people there is not a reason to itemize their giving. There is nothing wrong about what my grandfather did. He had a conviction about it and he was faithful to live by his conviction.

From a church's perspective, they need to give account for what has come in. They need to receive the offerings, count the offerings, use the money wisely, and give account for the money. Whether a gift is anonymous or identified with a person, it is not a major issue. For bank loans, they often require the church to let them know how many giving units they have, and without identifying the givers in the church, it would be difficult to comply with that requirement. In being a good steward of the church's money, a budget is important. Knowing how much will be coming in really helps to prepare a budget. Some churches ask for pledge cards to be filled out by their members. My grandfather would not sign any pledge cards. He kept his giving secret.

But in this passage, Jesus is carefully watching what people are giving. Jesus sat down opposite the treasure and was observing the giving. The Greek word is *theoreo* (Strong's G2334), which means to gaze, look intensely, consider, or discern. He did not just happen to see what people were giving; He purposely sat opposite the treasury and gazed at their giving. He was close enough that He could see that the widow gave two *leptos* or small coins that were worth about a penny.

We should not do what Jesus did. We are not to try and see what everyone is giving in the church. That is not something God wants us to do, but it is something that God does. He looks at our giving. In Genesis 4, God looked at the offerings by Cain and by Abel. He had regard for Abel's, but He had no regard for Cain's offering. Abel gave his very best and it honored God. God looks at our offerings.

(Gen 4:3-5) "So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. {4} Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; {5} but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell."

In Malachi, He rebuked the nation of Israel because of their giving. They were not presenting the whole tithe, and they were not presenting their best. How did God know this? He knows everything, and He knows about our giving. He knows when we honor Him and when we do not honor Him. In Malachi, we are given some promises of things that God will do when we tithe. God needs to know about our giving so that He can honor His promises to us. God looks at our giving.

(Mal 3:8-12) "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. {9} "You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation *of you!* {10} "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test 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 a blessing until it overflows. {11} "Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast *its grapes,*" says the LORD of hosts. {12} "All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land," says the LORD of hosts."

In Acts 4-5, we have the account of Barnabas, Ananias, and Sapphira. We know what Barnabas gave because it is recorded. We also know that Ananias and Sapphira were not honest about what they gave, and the Holy Spirit revealed it to Peter. God was watching their giving. So, it was okay for Jesus to observe their giving. Jesus is Immanuel, God in the flesh, and He was watching the giving. I believe that the main reason He was watching was to use this as a teachable moment and give some instructions to His disciples and us about God's perspective on giving.

(Acts 5:1-3) "But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, {2} and kept back *some* of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet. {3} But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back *some* of the price of the land?"

There are two points that I want to bring up about Jesus' observations. First, in comparing the two gifts, He said that the two leptos or coins were more than all the money that the rich people put in. Then, He explained why. The offerings of the rich were out of their surplus, but the offering by the poor widow was all she had to live on. It was everything to her. The principle here is that God looks at our offerings in light of what we have to give. It was not the amount, but it was the sacrifice that was made.

In 1 Kings 17, Elijah met a poor widow in Zarephath who was gathering sticks to prepare her last meal before dying. He told the widow to get him some water and she served him and got him some water. Then, Elijah told her to bring him a piece of bread. She answered that she had no bread and only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil. She was gathering a few sticks to cook what she had left and then was going to die. Elijah told her not to fear, but to give him a little bread cake first and then to prepare some for herself and her son. He said that the flour bowl would not exhaust and her jar of oil would not empty. The poor widow gave all she had to God and God continued to provide for her. This widow's offering was just like the widow in our text. She gave everything she had, and God had regard for her offering.

(1 Kings 17:10-16) "So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, "Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink." {11} As she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand." {12} But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die." {13} Then Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring *it* out to me, and afterward you may make *one* for yourself and for your son. {14} "For thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.'" {15} So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for *many* days. {16} The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah."

2. The Poor Widow's Perspective on Giving

What was it about this poor widow that led her to give everything she had to the Lord? Our text does not tell us, but I want to put forth a few possible reasons. While these reasons may not be her reasons, they are all Biblical reasons for this kind of giving.

A. Love.

It was an expression of her love. In John 3:16, we see that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. God gave out of His great love for us. Many times giving is an expression of love.

(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

There are many people whose love language is giving. Karen has a sister whose love language is giving. She has given Karen jewelry and clothes for many years. These gifts are expressions of her love for Karen. I have a sister whose love language is giving. She is always giving to other people. She used to collect things from the trade shows she went to and she would bring them to our children when they were growing up. They would love these flashlights and things she picked up at the shows. She would buy toys at garage sales or clothes and give them to the children. She gives as an expression of love to others. This poor widow may have given everything to God as an expression of love to God.

B. Honor.

A second reason that she may have given everything was to honor God. God tells us in Proverbs 3:9-10 to honor Him with our wealth and the first of our produce. Honor is not always a compliment, badge, or trophy; many times, it is money, as in Proverbs 3.

(Pr 3:9-10) "Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce; {10} So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine."

In 1 Tim 5:3-4, Paul commanded us to honor widows. He was not talking about having a banquet to honor them. He was talking about giving them money to live on, and this was a way to honor them.

(1 Tim 5:3-4) "Honor widows who are widows indeed; {4} but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God."

A little later in the same chapter Paul told churches to honor elders that ruled well and worked hard at preaching and teaching. He is not talking about a card in pastor appreciation day. He is talking about making sure they are well paid. We honor widows, pastors, and God with financial offerings and provision.

(1 Tim 5:17) "The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching."

In Malachi, God said, "A son honors his father and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor?" He told them that they were not honoring Him by giving Him their defiled and lame and sick for offerings. They were not giving their best to Him, and it dishonored Him. This poor widow gave everything she had to the Lord and it honored God. It honored God so much that Jesus singled her out and made her to be an example for all of us. Our lack of giving God our best dishonors God.

(Mal 1:6-9) "'A son honors *his* father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?' says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, 'How have we despised Your name?' {7} "You are presenting defiled food upon My altar. But you say, 'How have we defiled You?' In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is to be despised.' {8} "But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts. {9} "But now will you not entreat God's favor, that He may be gracious to us? With such an offering on your part, will He receive any of you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts."

One of my goals has been to teach every church that I pastor to honor God. Karen and I try to honor God with our tithes and offerings. We want to be an example. According to Randy Alcorn, the average church member only gives 2.5%, which does not honor God. I want to help church members be like this poor widow, who gave generously and honored God. Are there churches that honor God with their giving? Yes. There are many churches that honor God with their giving. The Connection Church is not a big church right now, but it is a church that honors God.

The Apostle Paul pointed out the churches in Macedonia. He said that they gave according to their ability and beyond their ability in a great deal of affliction and deep poverty. Not only that, they begged to participate in the support of the saints.

(2 Cor 8:1-4) “Now, brethren, we *wish to* make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, {2} that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. {3} For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, {4} begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,”

C. Sowing and Reaping.

Perhaps the reason that this widow gave was that she clearly understood the principle of sowing and reaping. The more you sow the more you reap. She sowed everything that she had so that she could reap more.

God established this kingdom principle at creation. After He destroyed the earth with a flood, He told Noah that “while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” He reaffirmed the principle of sowing and reaping. We sow seeds and we reap in the harvest.

(Gen 8:22) “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”

Paul taught this principle in 1 Corinthians 9:10-11. He said that the plowman ought to plow in hope and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. He said that those who sow spiritual things should reap material things.

(1 Cor 9:10-11) “Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher *to thresh* in hope of sharing *the crops*. {11} If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?”

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he taught about this kingdom principle again. He not only talked about sowing and reaping, but he added some additional thoughts. He said that the amount that we reap depends on the amount that we sow. If we sow sparingly, we will reap sparingly. If we so bountifully, we will reap bountifully. Perhaps this poor widow understood the principle of sowing and reaping, and she sowed all the seed that she had in anticipation of reaping more.

(2 Cor 9:6-7) “Now this *I say*, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. {7} Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Jesus taught this principle and in Luke 6 He said, “Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.” If you sow bountifully, you will

reap bountifully. You and I set the standard of return. This widow set a high standard; she sowed everything that she had in anticipation of reaping by the same standard.

(Luke 6:38) "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, *and* running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

A few years ago, Karen and I had lunch with a pastor and he was telling us about a poor woman in his church. This poor woman brought an offering to the church, and he told her to keep it, that she needed it more than the church. I was horrified when I heard the counsel that this pastor had given. I would have received the offering on behalf of God. Then, I would have done a couple of other things. First, I would have prayed for her finances. I pray the Malachi blessing on our church members. I ask God to pour out a window of blessing on them. I pray that God will rebuke the devourer. I would have prayed for the woman. Second, the church is a storehouse, and part of our tithes are to take care of the orphan, widow, and needy. I would have made sure that the church blessed her, and probably with much more than she gave.

The Corinthians were not the only church that Paul taught the principle of sowing and reaping. In his letter to the Galatians, he told them, "do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." This kingdom principle of sowing and reaping does not just apply to our finances; it applies to all areas. If we sow to our flesh, we will reap from the flesh, which is not a good thing. If we sow into the relationships around us, we will reap good relationships with others. We will reap the things that we sow, so we need to sow good things.

(Gal 6:7) "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."

D. Eternal Perspective

A fourth reason this widow may have given everything is that she knew that life on earth was temporal, and she was storing away her riches in heaven. She was investing in the kingdom of God where moth and rust do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Notice what Jesus said in Matthew 6:19. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal." Perhaps this widow understood this principle and this is why Jesus used her as an example to teach all of us about giving.

(Matt 6:19) "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal."

In Paul's first letter to Timothy he told him to instruct the church of Ephesus about this principle. He said, "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy." He told Timothy to "instruct them to do good, be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future." He wanted the Ephesians to store up treasures in heaven, not here on earth. Perhaps this widow understood this and wanted to make a large deposit in heaven. Remember that Jesus said that she put in more than all the wealthy people. Her two leptos were a rich deposit in the kingdom of God.

(1 Tim 6:17-19) “Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. {18} *Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, {19} storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.”

E. Stewardship

Perhaps this widow understood the principle of stewardship. She understood that everything belongs to God and she was just a steward of it. In Psalm 24:1, David wrote, “the earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.” God created the earth and it belongs to Him. Many people today do not acknowledge God or that He created the heavens and the earth, and that they belong to Him. Many people are stingy with “their” money, because they think it is “theirs.” This woman was free to give because she was not holding on to something that did not belong to her.

(Ps 24:1) “The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.”

If you understand the principle of stewardship, that God is the owner of all things, and that everything that we have comes from Him, we can then acknowledge and give thanks to Him for everything that we receive. In Romans 11, Paul said, “Who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.” I think this widow understood that these two leptos had come from God and she gave them back with a heart of gratitude.

(Rom 11:35-36) “Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? {36} For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.”

Paul understood and taught this principle. He told the Corinthians that he and Apollos were just servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. He understood that it was not just money, but his ministry was a stewardship.

(1 Cor 4:1-2) “Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. {2} In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.”

Peter taught that we are stewards of the gifts that we have. Money is a gift, but Peter was really talking about our spiritual gifts. We are stewards of our gifts and need to use them to serve one another. Our finances are just one area of stewardship.

(1 Pet 4:10) “As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

How important is our stewardship of money? In Luke 16, Jesus taught about stewardship. He taught that we need to be faithful in little things. If we are faithful in little things, we will be faithful with much. Second, He taught that we need to be faithful with the use of unrighteous wealth. Third, He taught that we need to be faithful with what belongs to another. In looking at this poor widow, she was faithful with little. She was faithful with her two leptos. She was

faithful with what wealth she had. Third, the money did not belong to her; it belonged to God, and she was faithful with what belonged to others. Jesus concluded by saying that we cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve God and wealth. This woman was making a very clear statement that her master was not wealth, but God. I believe that in the resurrection, this poor woman will be put in charge of much, because she was faithful with little. How important is stewardship? It is extremely important, especially for leaders. If we are not faithful with money, why should God entrust the true riches to us, which is people.

(Luke 16:10-13) "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. {11} "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true *riches* to you? {12} "And if you have not been faithful in *the use of* that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? {13} "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

F. Spirit-led

There are lots of people who give to specific causes. If the cause is something that they are passionate about, they open up their pocket books and give. I have seen some people who were passionate about missions. When we would give a missions' offering, they would sow very generously. Other people might give toward a benevolence fund. Other people might give generously toward a building fund. God puts passions in us for different things, and we strongly support those things.

We find an example of this in Exodus. They took an offering for the tent of meeting and the garments and supplies. Moses recorded that everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought the Lord's contribution for this work.

(Ex 35:21-22) "Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came *and* brought the LORD'S contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments. {22} Then all whose hearts moved them, both men and women, came *and* brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and bracelets, all articles of gold; so *did* every man who presented an offering of gold to the LORD."

In our text today, the scene is in the Women's Court, which was one of three courts in the temple. The Women's Court was on the eastern side, and it contained the Temple treasury where people donated their money. The treasury boxes were put in the Women's Court because they were accessible by everyone. The temple treasury was not a single treasury box; there were thirteen treasury boxes in the wall. These boxes were called shopheroth, or trumpets, because they were shaped like trumpets. These thirteen chests were narrow at the mouth and wide at the bottom, shaped like trumpets. There were actually eleven treasure chests of the Temple for the voluntary offerings of money, and then also two at the Gate of Susan, for the half-shekel tax.

Each of these trumpet shaped boxes are clearly marked with what the offering was to be used for. The treasury boxes were for designated offerings. We do a similar thing by designating on our checks or on an offering envelope what the money being given is to be used for. Some people give offerings above their tithes, and they designate it for the benevolent ministry, facility,

missions, or other area ministry. Instead of designating, they put the various offerings in the appropriate trumpet-shaped offering box.

Here is how scholars say the boxes were appropriated.

- Trumpets 1 and 2 were appropriated to the half-shekel Temple-tribute of the current and of the past year.
- Trumpet 3 was for women who had to bring turtledoves for a burnt and a sin offering. They would drop the equivalent value in money into this box.
- Trumpet 4 similarly received the value of the offerings of young pigeons.
- Trumpet 5 was for contributions for the wood used in the Temple.
- Trumpet 6 for the contributions used for incense.
- Trumpet 7 was for the golden vessels for the ministry. If a man had put aside a certain sum for a sin-offering, and any money was left over after its purchase, it was cast into Trumpet 7.
- Trumpets 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 were destined for what was left over from trespass-offerings, offerings of birds, the offering of the Nazarite, of the cleansed leper, and voluntary offerings.

We do not know which trumpet the poor widow put her money in. But, if she had something specific in mind, she could have purposely given towards that cause as her spirit had moved her.

Conclusion and Applications

This morning, we have looked at Jesus' perspective on the offering made by this poor widow. We have also looked at some possibilities for the widow's perspective about why she put in all this money. As we come to a close, I want to look at one more perspective, your perspective. I want to ask some questions about your giving. These questions are not meant to condemn, but are reflective questions for you to ponder. Your giving is unto the Lord, not to me or anyone else.

- From God's perspective, as He observes your giving, what would He say about your giving? Are you giving sacrificially?
- From the widow's perspective, is your giving motivated by love? Are your offerings an expression of love to the Lord?
- Are your offerings given to honor the Lord? Do your offerings honor the Lord? Are you giving your tithes? Are you giving offerings above the tithe? Are you giving your very best to the Lord?
- Are you sowing into the kingdom of God? Are you sowing sparingly or bountifully?
- Are you storing up treasures in heaven, or are your treasures here on earth? Where are your treasures? How is your kingdom bank account looking?
- Are you being a good steward of your finances? Do you determine how your money will be used, or are your finances under Lordship of Christ? Does your giving reflect that Jesus is Lord of your life?

- Do you give to special causes that the Lord has put on your heart? Is your giving led by the Spirit?

Let's pray!

Introduction (Mark 12:41-44)

1. God's Perspective on Giving (Matt 6:2-4, Gen 4:3-5, Mal 3:8-12, Acts 5:1-3, 1 Ki 17:10-16)

2. The Poor Widow's Perspective on Giving

A. Love (John 3:16)

B. Honor (Pr 3:9-10, 1 Tim 5:3-4, 5:17, Mal 1:6-9, 2 Cor 8:1-4)

C. Sowing and Reaping (Gen 8:22, 1 Cor 9:10-11, 2 Cor 9:6-7, Luke 6:38, Gal 6:7)

D. Eternal Perspective (Matt 6:19, 1 Tim 6:17-19)

E. Stewardship (Ps 24:1, Rom 11:35-36, 1 Cor 4:1-2, 1 Pet 4:10, Luke 16:10-13)

F. Spirit-led (Ex 35:21-22)

Conclusion and Applications