

First Baptist Church SF

November 5, 2017

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:38-44

38 As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, 39 and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honour at banquets! 40 They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." 41 ¶ He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. 42 A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. 43 Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. 44 For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Congregational Prayer: The Lord's Prayer: "Our Father" Our Father, Which Art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever. AMEN

Message: "The Mighty Mite"

INTRODUCTION:

- Bernie's underwear story. A wee bit of material changed his

life

- It is often the little things in life, like the little piece of fabric of one's private clothing, which shape us, change us, and cause us the most fun or frustration.
- Today's story is about a little gift - a gift which seemed so small, that many did not notice it - many, that is, except Jesus.
- Let's go to Mark 12 and look at the story of the Widow's mite from the eyes of the widow, the eyes of the disciples, and finally the eyes of Jesus.

Part (1): THE WIDOW:

- A small figure quietly approaching the boxes in the temple. In her hand she clutches the last of her money,
- And she gave it all away. Then she slipped quietly into the crowd, not expecting a mention of her or her gift.
- This woman gained the joy from serving God. She found

comfort in attending to and waiting upon God. In giving, she undoubtedly saw God's glory, and felt the strength that bringing a gift to God can bring.

- What do we do with the detail that this was the last of her funds (v. 44)? What do we do with the truth that gave the only money she had to God?
- Now she stepped out in faith. Now she has to rely on God entirely. Now she will find herself being utterly dependant upon God. She now had to rely on God to *"Give her that day her daily bread,"* just as Jesus taught when he taught us to pray.
- It is her faith that we are to imitate - a faith that transcends fact. A faith that looked beyond herself and her needs. She had a faith that God would provide. This widow had a faith that her last was anything but - that God would provide into her future.

- Those small coins meant a great deal - to her. To those in the room, they meant nothing, as did she, in their eyes. But she did something truly magnificent: she gave her gift to God in love and with faith. It meant that she could no longer go out and spend her mites in the market. It meant that she could not get some food or oil for her lamps, or something to keep her warm on a cold night, but it meant more to give what she had away.
- She gave her all to God

Part (2) THE DISCIPLES

- The temple was large - the disciples were with Jesus in the outer court of the temple. All people were allowed here, including the outcasts (widows, orphans, women, tax collectors). Along the long wall were thirteen metal boxes - each in the shape of a trumpet turned upside down. Into these boxes the worshippers would deposit a free-will offering

before going into the temple. Think of the noise as the money tumbled into those metal boxes!

- What were the disciples thinking of as they sat in the temple that day? Were the disciples impatient - Jesus had a large target on his back -the religious leaders were out to get rid of Him, and maybe them as well? Were they ready for Jesus to start a riot and overthrow the Romans, as many supposed a Messiah was to do? Were they delighting in the loud noise of the wealthy? Did some of the disciples believe, as did most people of the day, that wealth was given only to those whom God favoured? Were the followers of Jesus afraid of the Romans coming and arresting them without reason? What were the disciples thinking?
- Then, suddenly, Jesus calls them over to Him - and He points out... a widow. What would you think now? Jesus points her out to draw attention to an act of unselfish and honouring

love as she gives her only money. How would the disciples understand the words of Jesus when He said that the widow gave more than anyone else (v. 43)?

- The disciples must have been blown-away - they got a glimpse of the world through God's eyes: it is not the amount that you give to God that counts - it is the loving intent behind it. It is not the size of the offering, but the person giving from a pure heart to God. It is not the value of the gift, but the meaning behind it which really matters to God.
- The disciples learned that the little gift of the widow was the great gift of loving faith.

Part (3) JESUS:

- On Monday of Holy Week Jesus cleansed the temple (Mark 11:15). On Tuesday He fielded trick questions from the Pharisees and Sadducees who were out to trap him (Mark 11:27-33). Finally, On Wednesday, He sits in the court yard,

and watches the people, and Jesus sees a genuine act of faith - pure and simple, delightful and humble.

- And when Jesus sees her, He knows her story. He watches with fascination - there is no pomp, no display, just a widow, her enormous faith and her little gift.
- This giving is in great contrast to the corruption and hypocrisy of the temple leaders who have confronted Jesus all week. When they give at the temple, they come with as many people as they can, and they make certain to give their gift in a loud manner, and with everyone noticing. But Jesus does not see their act as a true act of giving. Instead He recognizes a pure act of sacrifice - a Holy act of worship.
- Amid the clamour of the wicked dishonouring to God in His Father's house, here is real act of devotion to God.
- And now Jesus turns to the cross. It was time. This widow showed a gift-giving sacrifice, and now Jesus would soon

give His life on the cross as the ultimate sacrifice, THE true sacrifice.

- The widow shows us what God wants of us today. We are called to offer ourselves to God. We are to give of ourselves, offering all that we have for Jesus - out of pure love, just like the widow.

CONCLUSION:

- Your gift, your sacrificial gift to God may appear to be small, *but what* do you have to offer to Jesus as we come to this table of remembrance today? Do you have your gifts and talents: give them to Jesus. Do you have some coins which represent a lot to you, give them to Jesus. Do you have your very soul which you may think is not worthy of God: give it to Him.
- No matter what you have, give it all to Jesus Christ - come before him secretly, privately, and whole-heartedly and give

your all to Him in love, in honour, and in devotion.