

Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is

MARK 12:41-44

Put your money where your heart is!

“There is a disease which is particularly virulent in this part of the twentieth century. It is called cirrhosis of the giver. It was actually discovered about 34 A.D., and ran a terminal course in a couple named Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). It is an acute condition which renders the patient’s hand immobile when it attempts to move from the billfold to the offering plate. The remedy is to remove the afflicted from the House of God, since it is clinically observable that this condition disappears in alternate environments such as golf courses or clubs or restaurants.”¹

Actually the disease is really not a motor problem, but a heart problem. The best remedy is to fall in love with God with all your heart, for where your heart is, there will your treasure be (Matt. 6:21 reversed).

Put your money today where your heart is!

Money -- The GNP of the USA 1991 = \$5,000, that’s \$20,000 @, that’s one-third of the world of that Americans spent \$200 Billion on gambling: lottery, Keno, races, and gave \$15 Billion to churches.

Read Mark 11: 41-44. The Truth about Christ. In 1 Sam. 2:3 we see how God weighs actions. In this passage Jesus – watched, - saw motives, - applauded real love for God and then - applied God to everyday life.

The Truth about woman we have - came only for God, and would be lost apart from His plan because - never knew anyone else

Turn to Matt. 6:16-24. Jesus Christ had common themes in His teaching. He kept emphasizing: - devotion, - sacrifice, - discipleship and – commitment.

Now in Mark’s Gospel. The setting (v. 41) is in temple. It is a full temple. Josephus tells us there were 1+ Million people pasover. In the crowded courts were the Brass trumpets where offerings for various sacrifices were to be placed.

The crowds and the offering receptacles being visible led to some individuals making spectacular displays. Some of the proud and rich seemed to say: “see if you can top that”. It is almost like some of our modern - telethons, live aid, etc....

In the midst of all that show there was one silent gift (v. 42). Jesus turns the focus away from empty show and onto one frail and nameless widow. In Christ's day widows were incredibly poor. Sometimes to the point of starvation apart from the kindness of others.

This widow brings the smallest offering allowed by the Law. Two lepta equaled one 30th of a denarius or 1/30th a days wage.

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In 1997 the average factory worker earns \$120 a day. This gift she brought would amount to \$4 today. A reasonable amount. But it was “all she had”. Lepta literally meant “peeled, fine”. She had \$ 4 in our economy to live on for the day.

Unaware Jesus Christ was watching, but fully aware of God, Her Father in heaven was, for whom she came. She showed she loved Him with all her heart, soul, mind and strength.

The lesson is useful in two ways. The Lord encourages the poor, who appear to lack the means of doing well, not to doubt that they testify to their enthusiasm for Him even with a slender contribution. If they consecrate themselves, their offering which appears mean and trivial will be no less precious than if they had offered all the treasures of Croesus. On the other hand, those who have a richer supply and stand out for their large giving are told that it is not enough if their generosity far exceeds the commoners and the underprivileged, for with God it rates less for a rich man to give a moderate sum from a large mass, than for a poor man to exhaust himself in paying out something very small.

The shocking truth (v. 43-44).

- With God the motivation says it all. How you feel about paying bills and taxes doesn't affect how your creditors feel when you pay them. With God anything is something. Just about 3,437 years ago (in 1992) a man named Nashon gave a bowl of cornmeal to God's temple... How do we know? It was so special God recorded it in Num. 7:13. Do you have a quarter, a dollar, a fortune? Give something to God. He never forgets.
- With God the day of reckoning is still future. Luke 12:13-21.
- With God sacrifice is everything. “All that she had”.... Give when you can't and love all the way! God remembers! And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in their service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. (2 Cor. 8:1-5). 1 Tim. 6-8, 17-19.
- With God there is supreme equality....
 - no difference between rich and poor
 - between famous and unknown
 - between educated and not.

All can do great things for God. Are you? As you gave this year:

1. What is your motivation?
2. Did you give Him anything?
3. Are you ready to answer for what you gave?
4. Was it a sacrifice?

Take My Life