

The Scribes & the Widow

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! Mark chapter 12, we're going to conclude this day of teaching of our Lord. This morning, so Mark chapter 12, we are marching through this book, I guess going into our 14th month in Mark. Don't you feel accomplished? So, Mark chapter 12, we only got a few more months, but I'm going to begin reading in verse 38, and I'll read to 44.

Mark chapter 12, verse 38, this is the Word of God. And in his teaching, Jesus said, And beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and like greetings in the marketplaces, And have the best seats in the synagogues, and the places of honor at feast, Who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense, make long prayers.

They will receive the greater condemnation. And he sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the people putting money into the offering box.

[1 : 51] Many rich people put in large sums, and a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny.

And he called his disciples to him, and said to them, Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box.

For they all contributed out of their abundance, But she, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

May God bless the preaching and the hearing of his Word. In his excellent book, Life Lived Backward, or Living Life Backward, author David Gibson, Makes a striking point about reading the Bible.

He says, and we have for you, he says, You can measure whether you find the Bible delightful, not by how often you read it, Or by how much of it you read, and not by whether you find it easy or difficult to read, But by whether you approach the Bible expecting to be surprised.

[3 : 14] I love that. You know, sometimes we read the Bible because it's the thing we're supposed to do, And we read it to find the things we're supposed to find. And so those things that we're supposed to do, we're supposed to find. Maybe a few things to believe, and a few things to do.

But when we really begin to see what the Bible's all about, We read it expecting to be surprised. And each week as we walk through the Gospel of Mark these past 13 months, I've often found myself surprised by what we've seen.

Surprised at the vivid details of each encounter retold in Mark's Gospel, Which we see right here.

Two wonderful examples of the vivid details. Surprised at the deep emotions of Jesus Christ.

You ever wonder about the emotional life of Jesus? Well, we see it in His compassion, in His anger, in His joy. Surprised at the continual dullness of the disciples.

Right? That's why we can all relate to Peter, Because we've got a block of wood on our shoulders.

You know, we just don't learn the lesson quickly. And in fact, each week I found myself approaching the week expecting to be surprised again.

[4 : 26] And these verses will not disappoint us this morning. These verses are loaded with surprise. Jesus is teaching in the temple. The center of Jewish religion.

The place they went. They sojourned to. Pilgrimage to. And this is His final teaching in the temple. And His final teaching there is not what we would expect.

Jesus tells us to look closely at surprisingly two very different people. The high and mighty scribes and the poor and lowly widow.

And the one He commends is equally surprising. In the end though, Jesus doesn't just tell us to look closely at them. Jesus turns the tables, as all of Scripture does, to look closely at us.

Will we be like the scribes who put on a show? Will we have the appearance of godliness, like 2 Timothy says, without its power?

[5 : 28] Or will we be like the poor widow who put everything on the line for Jesus Christ?

Complete devotion to God. Will our lives be marked by sincere faith and true devotion that's evident in the way we walk and the way we pray and the way we give and the way we do everything else?

Or will it be marked by something else? And Jesus makes surprisingly clear these verses are not hypothetical. After death, there will come a judgment day. And the way of the scribes will lead to condemnation, He says.

But the way of the poor widow is the only way that will lead to life. The question for all of us is will we live a life that Jesus commends on judgment day?

Alan Chappell in his book says, The highest responsibility of every human being is to love God wholeheartedly. This is the most important issue I face.

We've got a few issues going around. This is the most important one you face. Do I, do you, know and love the God who made me and before whom I will stand on judgment day?

[6 : 33] And where we're going is devote yourself sincerely and completely to God. Devote yourself sincerely and completely to God.

And we're going to see that in these two pictures. So we're just going to take them one by one. These two windows into faith or the lack of faith.

And so the first one we see is the scribe. So we see this window into the scribe. Jesus begins by warning everyone. So his last teaching in the temple, he begins by warning everyone gathered about the scribes.

Beware. So there's no mystery about what he's doing. Beware is his opening word. Beware of the scribes. Now we already learned very much about these guys. They're a group of men devoted to studying the scriptures, interpreting the scriptures and teaching the scriptures.

They're the conservatives. They got all the issues buttoned down and they're ready to teach you about them. They're well known. They're supposed to be well respected in the community.

[7 : 36] When a scribe walked by, you were to stand and greet them. Kind of like all rise before a judge or something like that. In fact, they were very judge-like in discerning where the scripture applied in complex cases.

But Mark has already told us that the people don't like him. When Jesus arrives, the people flock to him. Probably because he's more fun to hang out with, you know?

Why do you eat with tax collectors and sinners? Well, he says in Mark 2. But when Jesus begins to teach, they realize they like the way he teaches a lot better than them because Jesus teaches with authority, not like the scribes.

And Jesus doesn't like their teaching either, as we saw last week. But in this warning, after repeated confrontations throughout the gospel of Mark, as the last showdown, Jesus alerts us that it's not just their teaching that's off.

It's their life. They're a charade. Now, let's just walk through these verses a little bit.

[8 : 46] He says they like, see that word, they like to walk around in long robes. Now, unfortunately, in the first century, blue jeans had not been invented. So I would not have anything to wear.

But unlike the people in the city who wore long, colorful robes, the scribes wore long, white robes with tassels on the end to make very clear that we are the white-robed people.

We're the ones set apart. And it says they like greetings in the marketplace. You know, they not only like to be seen, they like to be seen for who they are. They're not ordinary people.

They're scribes. They like to be noticed. And they like to be addressed as rabbi, teachers, what Jesus tells us in Matthew 23. They're the people who don't want you to forget that they have letters before their first name.

You've encountered those people. They're people who don't think their garbage stinks. They have the best seats in the synagogue.

[9 : 51] That's just kind of the next thing. So he's just layering down these characterization. They're really indictments. They have the best seats in the synagogue. Really, that's the first seats.

That's the word there. The synagogues, like our sanctuary here, they were filled with seats all facing one direction, but different than ours.

The synagogue had one row of seats that faced the other seats. And those are the seats they liked. So they could look out on everyone else, but also so that everyone else could look out on them.

One, actually one of our presidents, President Woodrow Wilson, once described a certain minister as the only man he knew who could strut while sitting down. Presumably, it's in a more traditional church where the ministers sat up there, and this is not meant to be a criticism of sitting up there, but they could strut while sitting down, and the scribes are just like that.

Not surprisingly, they take the first seats in the feast as well. The first thing Jesus is saying about them is they're proud. They want to be seen.

[11:06] They want to be noticed. They want to be respected. They want to be praised. Pride is the mindset of self and the focus on self-exaltation.

In his excellent book, *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis says, according to Christian teachers, beginning with Jesus Christ, the essential vice, essential bad habit, the utmost evil is pride, unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that are mere flea bites in comparison.

Pride leads to every other device. It is a complete anti-God state of mind. So you see this pride, they're consumed with the way they look, the way they appear.

You know, the way they think, you know, you know, they're consumed. So often we can, we can begin to get like that. I mean, let me just assure you, no one is thinking about you more than you.

So have no worries. When you enter the room, no one's thinking about you.

But that's the way the proud mindset goes. And if my pride is focused on my exaltation, it's not surprising that my pride begins to be in competition with everyone around me.

[12:17] Some of that you heard in Mandy's testimony describe our hearts so well. And as described so, it's not enough to have a seat at the synagogue. God, we have to have the best seat. It's not enough to have a seat at the feet. We have to have the best seat or the seat of honor.

So too, in our lives, it's not enough to be on the team. I must be a starter. It's not enough to be in the band. I must be a soloist. Not enough to make an A. I must make a grade higher than the person beside me.

It's not enough to add my voice. I must have the last word. In the end, though, pride hides the hook. In trying to become big, we become smaller and smaller and smaller.

That's what these guys saw in the scribes. Stuart Scott said, the world's smallest package is a man wrapped up in himself. Self-important men.

Jesus indicts it. But he continues. If all the focus is on what exalts us, then before long we'll be willing to do anything to maintain the appearance, an appearance that should be exalted.

[13:31] Anything to prop up our image. That's how pride leads to every other device, every other sin. They devour. Did you see that? That's kind of striking.

It's all these positive things. Or not positive, but they're external, not evil things. They like to walk around. They like greetings. They like the best seats. They like places of honor.

Then they devour widows' houses. Literally, they eat up widows' houses. What in the world does that mean? Well, scribes are not allowed to be paid for their work.

They have to have a trade. But they're known to pray on those who come to worship. Known to say, Hey, I'll pray for you. You scratch my back, I scratch yours.

You know, I'll pray for you if you bless me. And that's how it goes. For a pretense, then they make long prayers. They pray on widows, and then they pray long prayers for them.

[14:31] So you see the duplicity. You see, they're hypocrites. That's what Jesus is getting at. You know, they're proud, and they're hypocrites. They're hiding. They got dead men's bones in their heart, is what Jesus said.

All their devotion, all their study is just a charade. They're mercenaries. They're hired guns. They're hypocrites. They're in it for position praise and payouts. Like Pats fans cheering for the bucks. They're imposters. You know? Don't accept them back, patriots. But why does Jesus include this indictment?

You got to understand, Jesus has already confronted the scribes. He's not confronting the scribes anymore. So why does he include this indictment? Jesus is warning us.

Beware. Beware. Several months ago, my wife and I went to Yellowstone for the first time. In preparation, I bought a cheery book called *Death in Yellowstone*.

[15:39] Sounded like a, you know, a barrel of laughs. Actually, not funny. But you know, Yellowstone's known for its thermal activity. The geothermal activity in Yellowstone is amazing.

Recently, they just measured 1,000 feet underground. They measured a temper of 459 degrees, enough to bake a, whatever you want, you know?

Enough to bake dinner. And 1,000 feet below ground. On the surface, Yellowstone includes numerous, these thermal pools.

All over, many of them at boiling points. And so Yellowstone includes a maze of boardwalks so that you can walk around and get close, feel a bit of the heat of the pools, but stay far enough away to be safe along these boardwalks.

I mean, it doesn't really look that scary at times. You see these signs like caution, hot, galahente, you know, stay on the boardwalk. It's not going to end well if you jump off.

[16:45] Now Yellowstone, or the death in Yellowstone, the book I was reading, chronicles deaths of all sorts over the years in the first national park. But more than anything, it chronicles deaths of those who failed to read the signs.

One of the saddest stories is an 18-year-old man who visits Yellowstone with his friend and his dog, and the dog jumps into the pool. The dog quickly begins yelping.

The man sits down, takes off his shoes, and begins moving towards the pool. And there are people around who say, don't go any further. Don't take another step. And he dives in, heads first, to save the dog.

The dog's a man's best friend, but that's not the way you want to do it, you know? And 12 hours later, he's dead. Although the park is filled with warning signs, the book, Death in Yellowstone, is 350 pages because most people, many people, perhaps, don't read them and don't heed them. In this last teaching, Jesus gathers them and he gathers us this morning to say, in a word, the takeaway, I think here, is beware, those who perform godliness for public praise will receive condemnation.

[18:00] Beware, those who perform godliness for public praise will receive condemnation. First and foremost, this passage is a warning to me. It's a warning to anyone who wears the cloth.

It's a warning to anyone who teaches godliness, those most vulnerable to performing it. That's why James says, not many should become teachers for they'll receive a stricter judgment and we see that's directly the teaching of Jesus right here because they will receive a greater condemnation. What he means is, there's degrees of condemnation in hell and those who practice and perform godliness and teach others will receive a greater degree of condemnation and agony.

But it's a warning to all of us as well. Do you remember Matthew 6? Jesus says, don't give or pray or fast to be seen. Give and pray and fast in private and your Father who sees you in secret will reward you.

Earl Roberts, Pentecostal preacher once said, if there's no picture, it didn't happen. And we can live that way.

[19:11] A little gift here, a little prayer here, always trying to get some credit, trying to get some applause around us. We can live like that such that the things that we do in devotion to God that are meant to be secret and our Father in secret who sees us will reward us.

They begin to things, be things that we use to jockey position with one another. But he's also warning us just about pride. You know, sometimes I think with pride we limit it to the ostentatious, you know, to the self-righteous, to those who put on a show, who strut around, who live in big houses.

But we may be the most arrogant culture in the history of the world because we are one of, if not the, most self-focused cultures in the world.

We're a culture that says, you be you. Nothing matters, man. Do your thing. We go to restaurants that say, you're away.

You know, you go to Pepo's today and you can have 30 different ways of making your Tex-Mex. I mean, you know, you can have it just the way you want because you're so important.

[20:25] So come in here and get it the way you like it. And then we go to a coffee shop and we find the same endless options saying you have it your way. And that's just the tip of the ice work. How is this culture of endless customization according to our preferences shaping the way we think about life, the way we think about God, the way we think about the church and the way we think about the Christian life?

It tells us you've got to be true to yourself. You've got to do what makes you happy. No one has a right to tell you what's wrong for you. But that is deeply arrogant.

It's heinous. Deeply wicked. You be used. A deeply wicked thing taken to the extreme. Now, I understand they'll try to be somebody else, you know.

But taken to the extreme, it's deeply wicked. It's an anti-God state of mind. And that's what pride says. I'll have what I want when I want it and how I want it.

And so, in this church, we're not going to rail about anger. I mean, we are going to rail about anger, but we're not going to rail about lesser sins in a lot of ways, if I can put it that way.

[21 : 37] We're not going to rage against unchastity and all these type things. We're not going to rage against pride because that is the mindset of the devil. That's the mindset of an anti-God mindset.

And that's the mindset that leads straight to death and destruction. As Jesus says, they will receive the greater condemnation. Proverbs 14, 12 says, there's a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

So devote yourself sincerely and completely to the Lord. Beware of the scribes. Point two, the widow. So just kind of very basic. We've seen the scribe.

Now we want to see the widow. After warning us not to be like scribes, Jesus tells us to be like the poor widow. I love these little details. And look at it.

Verse 41, and he says, you know, so he teaches about that. Then he says, and he sat down. Now I think that's so cool. Of course he sat down.

[22 : 35] He's been teaching all day. And remember, this is question day. All these questions are coming at him. He finally gets a break, gets a chance to sit down.

But his teaching doesn't stop for long because he looks up and he begins to see people bringing their offerings. So he's sitting across from the treasury, across from the offering box.

And people would come in, the worshipers would come in and bring an offering for the upkeep of the temple, its garments and its sacrifices and vessels and all these things.

And so many rich people came in and put in large sums. So many rich came in and they put in large sums, most likely all coins.

And so you'd hear them rattle. You know, here's something you throw in five. You know, just kind of all rattling, making sure everybody knew. But then one poor widow comes in and puts in two small copper coins.

[23 : 31] And the contrast couldn't be more drastic. Many rich put in large sums, but a poor widow can put in two small copper coins.

Many rich, one widow. Many are called, few are chosen. Many rich, one widow. Many rich, one poor widow.

Many offering large sums, one offering two small coins. And then Jesus calls his disciples over to him. He says, truly, truly, verily, verily, in the KJV, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box.

What would the guy say from Princess Bride? Inconceivable! What are you talking about? This is absurd! We saw what they put in.

Oftentimes, priests would count what they put in. Tally it up, you know? And everybody would know. The rich put in large sums.

[24 : 42] This widow put in two copper coins. The coins were two leptis. They were worth less than one hundredth of a denarii.

Less than one hundredth of a day's work. Fifty cent? How could she have given more than all those contributing to the offering box?

And Jesus explains verse 44, for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

Alistair Begg says, this is the fable of the chicken and the pig. Do you know the fable of the chicken and the pig? I didn't know it either until this week.

The pig and the chicken, they decide they're going to go into business together. You know, pigs, chickens, seems like a good deal. Chicken says, why don't we go into business together? Pig says, what kind of business?

[25 : 44] The chicken says, the bacon and eggs business. Now, they both have something to bring, but the pig says, not so fast.

I'm not going into the bacon and eggs business. For you, that would be a contribution. For me, that would be a sacrifice. Do you see, Jesus gathers the disciples around.

He's saying, the rich made a contribution, but that poor widow, whose house had just been ravaged and devoured by these scribes made a sacrifice.

As Alex DeBette goes on to say, the rich gave what they wouldn't miss, the poor widow gives what she couldn't afford. The rich gave what they wouldn't miss, the poor widow gives what she couldn't afford.

And there's, there's where you get the just devastating, amazing, so challenging. It teaches us, giving is not a matter of addition, but of proportion.

[26 : 50] Giving is not a matter of addition, but of proportion. On the one hand, it should encourage us that those who have little money still have enough money to please God very much by cheerfully giving to Him.

On the other one, on the other hand, it's a warning to those who have lots of money, historically speaking, nearly everyone in this room. It's not enough to just give a little more money than those around you.

It's not enough to give just a little more than we gave in the past. Jesus alerts us. The whole scene is alert. Jesus sits down opposite the treasury box as they bring in to alert us that Jesus doesn't just sit opposite the treasury.

He doesn't just see what's thrown in the basket. Jesus sees everything that's kept out of it. Jesus is warning us that giving is not a matter of addition, but a proportion.

So when the amounts increase, giving should increase all the more. Randy Alcorn, God prosters me not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving.

[28 : 13] Giving is not a matter of addition, but a proportion, not a matter of amount, but of sacrifice. And we all must do business with this. I know giving's not as fun to talk about as evangelism and a few other things.

Prayer. But we, this is a passage where we all have to look down the barrel and say, how's my life? Jesus is saying, he's saying, beware of the scribes, but be aware of the sacrificial devotion of this poor widow.

The takeaway for us right here is be aware those who practice godliness for private sacrificial devotion will receive honor. Be aware those who practice godliness for private sacrificial devotion will receive honor.

Unlike the scribes who perform, who posture, who put on godliness on display, let's show our devotion to God privately.

Practice it privately. I mean, this aligns straight with a certain amount. You know, we go in our clear closet, we do what we see, we splash water on our face when we fast so that others might not see so that they might not steal our reward from God because we're living to serve the God who sees us in secret.

[29 : 45] But not just privately. Jesus is calling us to practice godliness sacrificially. Now somebody asked, does this passage teach that riches are bad and poverty is good?

Does it teach we must have to give everything away in order to have a relationship with Jesus?

Now, no, it does not teach that riches are bad. It does teach that they're dangerous.

But there's plenty of people who are rich who give sacrificially. But it keeps the ante up, which is not the way we tend to think.

But it doesn't, on the other hand, it doesn't teach that poverty is good. It doesn't teach like a St. Francis of Assisi type mentality. Go and sign off all that you have and live for Jesus.

There's plenty of people who are poor who are selfish and stingy. Here it is. Jesus is not asking you to give away everything you have. Jesus is asking you to give away enough to show you, show him, he's all you need.

[30 : 49] Jesus is not asking you to give away everything you have. Jesus is asking you to give away enough to show he's all you need. That's what this is. How much will it take? How much will it take?

Now we're not having a building fund today. This is about, this is about God. It's about you doing right. How much will it take before it's clear to you, clear to your heart, clear to your family that Jesus is all you need? It's sobering.

Jesus is asking you to give enough to show that you're completely devoted to him. Sincerely devoted to him.

Nearly every study of Christians in America say that we give on average two to three percent. That's devastating. Does that show we're devoted to God?

Or does it show that we're devoted to new cars, new houses, new clothes, new adventures? Scripture would say, do you give?

[32 : 00] Is tithing a fixed part of your income? Is it stuff you just kind of hope you get to? Or is it fixed? If you don't give to support the church and the advance of the gospel, how can you really say you're devoted to God?

Do you give sacrificially? Do you give more than ten percent? Did your giving increase from last year? This time of the year is a sobering time of the year. I get all my stuff come back in and go back to my CPA and see exactly what I gave last year.

I don't know that number. I'm going to know very soon. I'm not trying to beat you up, but I am saying you can repent right now and you can start over.

Say, Lord, I want money to a zero-sum budget or something like that. I want money to say, I love you. Everything I do with this currency so often gets into my soul.

I want it to say loud and clear, I treasure Jesus Christ. Let's do that. But don't miss the honor. Now, it's striking.

[33 : 17] Like, you see this contrast that Mark's holding together. Jesus is bringing together those prominent scribes who perform godliness for public praise. Jesus condemns. The prominent scribes who perform godliness for public praise, Jesus condemns.

He says, you already got your reward. You will receive a greater condemnation. They already receive the reward. They receive the just punishment for their pride and hypocrisy, but this poor, nameless widow who practices godliness for private, sacrificial devotion, Jesus calls over the disciple.

Did you see it? Did you see what she threw in? The one who came and gave all that she had. He gave everything that she had. Jesus says, look at her.

Be like her because that's who will be honored in the new kingdom that is coming. In the end, it's not riches that Jesus condemns and it's not poverty that Jesus commends. It's true sacrificial devotion that Jesus commands and celebrates.

That's what he honors more than anything else. Years ago, I read a story about one of President Bush's visits to Walter Reed Military Hospital outside D.C.

[34 : 37] to give a soldier from Iraq the Purple Heart. One of his aides writes, the hardest days of the presidency were when President Bush went to visit the wounded or families of the fallen.

He regularly visited patients at Walter Reed Military, National Military Hospital near the White House. One morning, she writes, I accompanied the president.

The president was scheduled to see 25 patients that morning and we started in the intensive care unit.

The president was briefed on the first patient we'd see. He was a young Marine who'd been injured when his Humvee was hit by a roadside bomb.

At his bedside were his parents, his wife and his five-year-old son. Outside the room, the president said, what's his prognosis?

[35 : 45] Well, we don't know, sir, because he's not opened his eyes since he arrived. But no matter what, Mr. President, he has a long road ahead.

We had to wear masks because of the risk of infection to the patient. I was worried that they might be mad at him and blame him for their loved one's situation as so many families do.

But when we entered the room, I was wrong. The family was so excited to see that the president had come and they gave him big hugs and thanked him over and over. The Marine was on a ventilator.

After the president visited with the family for a bit, the president turned to a military aide and said, let's do the presentation. The wounded warrior was being awarded the Purple Heart given to service members who suffer wounds in combat.

Everyone stood silently while the military aide in a low and steady voice presented the award. At the end of it, the Marine's little boy tugged on the president's jacket and said, what's the Purple Heart?

[37 : 00] The president got down on one knee and pulled the boy closer and said, it's an award for your dad because he was very brave and courageous because he loves his country so much.

I hope you know how much he loves you and loves your mom. And he hugged the boy. Suddenly, there was commotion from the medical staff as they moved toward the bed.

The Marine had just opened his eyes. The medical team says, hold on guys, I think he wants the president. The president jumped up and rushed over to his side and cupped the Marine's face in his hands and he locked eyes with him.

And after a couple of moments, without breaking eye contact, breaking eye contact, he said to the aide, read it again. And so we stood silently as the military aide presented the Marine with the medal for a second.

time. The president had tears dripping from his eyes onto the Marine's face. As the presentation ended, the president rested his forehead on the Marine's forehead for a moment.

[38 : 20] Now everyone was crying, including us. And for so many reasons, the sacrifice, the pain, suffering, the love of country, the belief in the mission, and the witnessing of relationship between a soldier and his commander-in-chief that the rest of us could never fully grasp.

these scriptures remind us that our commander-in-chief, Jesus Christ, promises that all who devote themselves to him will receive the great reward.

in an encounter that can only be described as that special relationship between a disciple and his Lord, he won't miss anything you left behind.

Maybe you've lost family. maybe you've lost friends. Maybe you've given up promotions to stay devoted to the cause of Christ.

He will not miss a single sacrifice, not a single act, not a single cup of water, not a single prayer, not a single coin given away to him.

[39 : 51] and he will not break eye contact when he looks you fully in the eye and says, well done, good and faithful servant. All that for those who deserve only his wrath.

So Jesus says, beware of the scribes, but be aware of this widow. Be aware that there's a road to life.

Don't be like them, but be like her. Be like her. Follow her. And sometimes we think, following her, what does it mean to be like hers?

I mean, I have to just give away everything I have. No, that's not what it's saying at all. What it's saying is admit that Jesus is all you need. Admit that Jesus is all you want. Admit that Jesus is all you have.

Come to him, all you weary and heavy laden. He will give you the rest now and the rest eternal in the life to come. It's really, it's a summation of all he's been teaching in the temple on this day.

[40 : 58] Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. I don't care about money, but render to God the things that are God. Render your life to God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Why? Because he's an undivided God. He deserves undivided devotion. Devote your life to him sincerely and completely for he alone is all that matters.

Seek first the kingdom of God. All these things will be added unto you is what it's saying. So come to Jesus. Lay it all down.

Push over everything into his corner and say, give me my life back to serve you. Devote yourself sincerely and completely to God.

May God help us. Father in heaven, we offer ourselves sincerely and completely to you. We don't want to play games.

[42 : 02] We give to you our life. Whether we've followed you for one year, one month, one day, or twenty years.

We say, take my life, Lord. Let it be an offering to you. Take my eyes, take my mind, take my hands, take my feet, take everything about me that I would live for you and you alone.

For all I have is Christ and all I want is Christ to follow him more and more for your glory. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

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