

The Widows Coins

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[0 : 00] And just thanks to all as well who have taken part in the service and have made the service possible. Special thanks to Ian and Celia for choosing the first three worship songs today of the service.

! Thanks to all the service would not happen without the help of many. And so we're very grateful for all of your service today.

I'm going to hand over now to Paul to preach. And before that, Rosie's going to come to bring the scripture reading to us. And then Paul will lead us through to the end of the service.

Thank you, Rosie. The reading is taken from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 21, verses 1 to 4.

In my Bible it says, A poor widow gives all that she has. As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury.

[1 : 07] He also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. I tell you the truth, he said, this poor widow has put in more than all the others.

All these people give their gifts out of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, put in all that she had to live on. Can I just echo what John's already said?

It's great to see you all this morning. Special guests. It's great to see you. Thanks for coming. Join us for snacks, coffee, cake, after, while we share fellowship.

So that's just at the back there, straight after the morning service. And I think it's right for me to say that Celia's birthday today. So give her a hug after.

I like to embarrass people. So that's the embarrassing part done. Okay, let's turn to Scripture, Luke 21. Before we do that, I'm just going to have a word of prayer.

[2 : 22] Let's pray together. Our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, we thank you for your goodness to us. We thank you that we are made in your image. We are precious to you.

So I pray, Lord, as we open this book, this love story, that you would shine from it. That we would learn something from today.

That we continue on our path with you, our loving Heavenly Father. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

So if you've not already, get your Bibles open, get your phones on.

And pray that you don't run out of power. Okay, so we're looking at Luke 21 here. I've titled this A Widow's Heart. So money, money, money.

Must be funny in a rich man's world. Money, money, money. Always sunny in a rich man's world.

[3 : 25] That's Abba, as you can see. 1976. Take you back a wee while. I was four.

I'm not really growing up much. Always sunny in a rich man's world. Do you think so? No. No chance. No chance.

Phrases concerned with money. Money makes the world go round. Money doesn't grow on trees, you know. I'm skint.

I'm broke. They're rolling in it. It costs an arm and a leg. I'm struggling to make ends meet.

We'll have to tighten our belt. Bring home the bacon. Let's save for a rainy day.

[4 : 29] All phrases concerned and to do with money. Now our pastor's not here today. But he was preaching on Luke 20 last week.

And if you look at the end of Luke 20, we read that the teachers of the law devour widows' houses. Not only that, for sure they make long prayers. It's written down there. Craig preached on it last week.

So in general, the teachers of the law cheated the poor. They were supposed to be holy, respectful, but instead they were arrogant, selfish, and uncaring.

And again the text says they will be punished. So here in Luke 21, we read Luke's account.

[5 : 48] As we have already seen in Mark. Mark talks about this too. Mark 12, 41. Onwards.

Have a look when you get home. So here we have a poor widow with only two small copper coins. Our pastor said a denarius is worth a day's work. But in this passage, two small coins, two small copper coins, was worth one hundredth of a denarius.

So we'll work that one out. It's basically roughly worth five minutes of labor.

Five minutes at the minimum wage. Jesus is looking at the rich, putting in their offerings, and sees the widow putting in hers.

[6 : 58] the widow is without the support and love of her husband and any family as well.

The offerings were placed into thirteen containers, wooden boxes, with a trumpet funnel at the top so none gets lost or falls at the side.

And these boxes would be in the temple. They would be in the woman's courtyard! Or the court of the woman.

Phil, this slide, this slide shows the temple and on the right the plus shape is the woman's courtyard.

So the woman would be allowed in but would only be allowed into the right. Women would not be allowed to go any further.

[8 : 07] The bit in gold at the top is the holy place and only males could enter. That just gives you an idea of what this temple looks like.

So during religious festivals thousands of people would come and congregate here and give their money to the temple and it would be for all different sorts of reasons but ultimately for the glory of God.

So the rich put in their gifts and the widow puts in hers. Now us humans normally see who gives the most are the most generous.

One hundred being more than one pound for example. But here we see the widow being obedient to God he called her to give and she did just that.

She gave all she had. she really would feel the impact of giving her all.

[9 : 27] But not the rich people. she may have needed this money to survive to buy even the most basic things food commodities!

things that you and I possibly take for granted. Her giving her sacrifice may have had painful consequences because of her poverty.

so Jesus must have been angry at the teachers here teachers of the law because they were taking advantage of people and I believe Jesus wouldn't like that at all.

They devoured widows houses we read in Luke 20. The teachers were supposed to be taking care of the widows not taking from them.

from the Old and New Testaments widows are supposed to be given special consideration and rightly so.

[10 : 46] Orphans were the same. The rich were really here giving out of their surplus. So in general they knew they had plenty more where that came from.

The rich trusted in themselves rather than trusting in God. So they didn't really feel the effects of giving.

There was no or a very minimal amount of impact on their lives. There wasn't a big amount of sacrifice. So in general here it's not about the amount that's the issue or lesson.

It's about Jesus receiving worship. Giving to God out of love. It's what's in the heart.

The widow gives God everything she has. Trusting that God will see her right in the future and provide for her.

[12 : 02] So it's her actions and attitude that are so great here. A giving heart. True sacrifice. So let's turn this around.

What about our actions? What about our attitudes? is giving in your life at the heart of worship?

As Spurgeon once said, I don't quote him very often, do we give until it hurts? God gave us his son Jesus.

So are we giving enough? Do we give our tenth? Do we give our tithe? Remember that's a minimum. Perhaps we're not giving a tenth.

Remember the widow gave absolutely everything she had. That's a heart of worship. God said, I say this to myself and to you.

[13 : 24] When was the last time you sat down and prayed to God and asked for his leading in your offerings? Guilty.

this question and all the questions I speak about this morning are as relevant to my life as they are to your life.

So three reminders coming out of this text. First of all, God knows your offering. Yeah? He's got your back.

Scripture promises so. God knows your offering. As part of our worship to our Lord and Saviour, we can bring our offerings just as we've done this morning.

Just as it comes out your bank account regularly every month. I should have still been the treasurer with this preaching this morning. We are bringing our offerings to the most high.

[14:41] God wants to use us, use us, use our money, use our time in a way that will worship God. He wants us to be generous. Do you ever put yourself in the scenes in the Bible? I've spoken about this before.

I do it quite a bit. So I'm sitting in that temple in the court of women giving my offering.

But in this case I'm looking straight at Jesus. What would Jesus do? What did Jesus do? You can see Jesus and the rich and the poor widow in amongst probably thousands of people.

But Jesus can see the widow putting her two copper coins in physically. But not only that, Jesus can see her heart.

[15:56] So, do we give? Do we love to give as part of our worship? Are we cheerful givers of our money and time?

Or are we the opposite, hesitant in what we give our heavenly father? Second Corinthians, you'll all know this, second Corinthians nine, six and seven.

The point is this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Each one, each one of us must give as he or she has decided in her heart. not reluctant or under compulsion, but because Jesus loves a cheerful giver.

So, what's our heart like this morning? Cheerful giver, reluctant. Does the Holy Spirit work in your giving, both in time and money?

[17:23] We have to remember everything that we receive, everything that we have, is a gift from God, a gift from the Lord. James 1, 17.

A while back, a few months ago, a certain young girl called Emma, drew me a picture of a motorbike.

And she coloured it in. Now, I know that this picture isn't a Van Goff or a Leonardo da Vinci or Picasso, nothing like that.

But it was a beautiful thing to draw for me. She had the heart to give me that little picture. And I appreciated it greatly.

And I encouraged her, telling her how good it was, and that it was just like my motorbike as well. so as you can see, the picture is on the wall in my garage.

[18:40] That's how much it meant to me, with my helmet and gloves just underneath. So it stays there, it's there now, and I greatly appreciated it.

not very good at turning the pages this morning, excuse me. So Emma knows that this is on my wall, in my garage, but little Emma had the heart to give.

That wee girl's eight years old, but it meant a lot to me. God must surely be happy that we're given back to him what is already his, what he's given to you and me.

And this is done as an act of worship. God sees your offering. Everything we have is a gift from the Lord.

Everything that we have, and every one in our lives, is a gift from God. We're not in control. God is. [20:03] God is in control. He will take care of you. Okay, secondly, God knows your heart.

Only God can really see what's inside your heart this morning. But what does your heart look like to God? Matthew 6, 19 to 21.

Do not store for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasure in heaven.

where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Do we love God, or do we love money? Do we love God, God, or do we love ourselves?

[21:17] Luke 16, 10. Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.

so are our hearts, hearts, hearts, hearts, right with God. Finally, the third bullet point, God weighs the offering.

We've all heard of the phrase, quality over quantity. we can see this here in this short passage. The widow is giving all she has.

It's the proportion of what it means to the giver. What's your emotions in giving this morning? Are they right?

We can't question the motives of other people. on their giving, though. That's up to God to do that. God sees your heart.

[22 : 40] We can't deceive God. So God weighs the offering. I mean, we can be motivated by different things.

We all are. But we want good things. Love, compassion, faith. We've got to try and show Jesus. We've got to try and show love. We must love one another. John 13, 34.

A new command I give to you, that you love one another. as I have loved you, so you must love one another.

And he finishes, Jesus finishes, by this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

[23 : 46] Jesus' own words. so are you truly grateful to God for what he has done for you and for what he has given to you?

Do we honor God by our living and giving? is our giving part of our worship?

We need to remember that. Is giving part of our worship to God? God gave us his love. He gives you it today.

God sent his son Jesus to die on that rusted cross for the forgiveness of your sin, my sin, pinned to the cross, shedding blood for you and for me.

What a sacrifice. Romans 5, 8, but God demonstrate his own love for us in this.

[25 : 09] While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. So, do we give consciously rather, do we give consciously and with planning?

Have we sat down, thought about it, prayed over it and through it? What we give to God deserves priority, unlike the rich people here.

They were giving the leftovers. So, what we give to God deserves priority. He deserves a lot more than our leftovers.

Give to God what he deserves. God says, no one's too poor to give. Look at the lady, look at the widow, two copper coins, five minutes of labor.

No one's too poor to give. It's not about the amount, it's about the participation and the heart. God sees what you give.

[26 : 30] God knows your heart. He sees what you're doing. So, this widow gave everything she had in the first four verses of Luke 21.

Everything she gave. How much money, our money, yours and mine, how much money and time are we willing to give God?

How much of our money and how much of our time are we willing to give God? Let's pray.

Our gracious, our loving heavenly father, God, we thank you for sending your son Jesus, for the blood shed for us, for your body broken for us.

! I pray, Lord, that you would guide us, that you would challenge us all, and that we would honor you by our giving of money and of time.

[27 : 56] We thank you that you gave us your love, and we acknowledge that while we were sinners, you died for us.

So we thank you for your book. We thank you for this love story. We thank you for the Bible. Help us to consider this and pray about it in Jesus' precious name.

Amen. Let's close this morning by singing again. Thank you, Ian.