

THE WIDOW'S MITES

I. Luke 21:1-4

II. Jesus was visiting the magnificent temple of Herod. Luke 20 tells us that His attempt to teach had developed into a series of controversies and challenges. The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders questioned His authority; the Pharisees and the Herodians raised the question of tribute money; the Saducees posed an imaginary situation in an attempt to refute the resurrection; and a scribe asked which was the greatest commandment. Jesus answered them all. The first four verses of Luke 21 explain how Jesus watched the people contributing to the temple treasury. Jesus made a shocking statement about giving in verses 3 & 4. The widow's example in giving has been forever memorialized in God's Word.

Someone wrote: "Over against the treasury Christ sat: Sadly He watched the throng, which came and from abundant store, superfluous gold therein of duty cast: their hearts were cold, untouched by love's pure flame. But she who gave from out her meagre store, abundant love: real treasure brought to Christ, whose love is evermore the same. Yes! From each one has sought. What is the meaning of Jesus' statement about the widow's mite?"

THE WIDOW'S MITES

I. GIVING IS A TRUE ACT OF WORSHIP.

A. True worship always involves self-sacrifice. In the Old Testament, animals were sacrificed as an act of worship. David called on Israel to offer a sacrifice of praise. This little woman gave a sacrificial offering. Jesus said, “She hath cast in all the living that she had.”

B. What did the Lord mean when He said the widow’s mite was more than all the money the rich men gave? It was Sunday afternoon, and the question was asked by a little child of eight, who had large, dark, inquiring eyes, that were always trying to look into things. Mama had just been reading to her the story from the Bible, and now she wanted it explained. Mama thought for a few minutes, and then said, “Well, Lulu, I will tell you a little story, and then I think you will understand why the widow’s mite was more valuable than ordinary mites.

There was once a little girl whose name was Kitty, and this little girl had ever so many dolls, almost more than she could count. Some were made of china, and others were made of wax, with real hair and beautiful eyes that would open and shut; but Kitty was tired of them all, except the newest one, which her auntie had given her at Christmas. One day a poor little girl came to the

THE WIDOW'S MITES

door begging, and Kitty's mother told her to go and get one of her old dolls and give it away. She did so, and her old doll was like what the rich men put into the treasury. She could give it away just as well as not, and it didn't cost her anything. But the poor little beggar girl was delighted with her doll. She had never had but one before, and that was a rag doll; but this one had such lovely curly hair, and she had never seen any lady with such an elegant pink on. She was almost afraid to hold it against her dirty shawl, for fear of soiling it; so she hurried home as fast as she could, to hide it away with her few small treasures.

Just as she was going upstairs to their poor rooms, she saw through the crack of the door in the basement her little friend, Sally, who had been sick in bed all summer, and who was alone all day while her mother went out washing, to try and earn money enough to keep them from starving. As our little girl looked through the crack she thought to herself, "I must show Sally my new doll." So she rushed into the room and on to the bed, crying, "O Sally! See!" Sally tried to reach out her arms to take it, but she was too sick; so her little friend held up the dolly, and as she did so, she thought, "How sick Sally looks today! And she hasn't any dolly." Then, with one generous impulse, she said,

THE WIDOW'S MITES

“Here, Sally, you may have her.” Now, Lulu, do you see? The little girl’s dolly was like the widow’s mite – she gave her all.”

II. GIVING WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVE IS AN ACT OF LOVE.

A. Jesus is interested in the motive for giving. This woman gave from a heart of love. There is no gift of value that could impress Jesus because He already owns everything. But when we have given what we have from a heart of love, the Lord is pleased. It is love that converts a gift into grace. It is love that makes it a blessing to the recipient. You may give a coin to a beggar in such a fashion as you might fling a bone to a dog. While it ministers to his physical necessities, it may wound his soul. On the other hand, real sympathy that while it does not go far to minister to his bodily wants, brings healing to his soul.

B. One writer said, “Not what we give but what we share, For the gift without the giver is bare, who gives himself with his alms fill three, himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me.”

THE WIDOW'S MITES

III. GIVING IS AN ACT OF LOYALTY

A. The giving of this poor widow expressed her loyalty to the house of God. She recognized the importance of being loyal to the place where she received her spiritual nourishment. Malachi the prophet speaks of bringing the tithe into the storehouse. The storehouse is where we receive our spiritual nourishment (Malachi 3:10).”

B. Return on invested money:

\$1 spent for lunch lasts five hours.

\$1 spent for a necktie lasts five weeks.

\$1 spend for a cap lasts five months.

\$1 spent for an auto lasts five years

\$1 spent for a railroad lasts five decades.

\$1 spent in God's service lasts for eternity.

(based on facts 38 years old)

CONCLUSION

A touching incident has been told of a sixteen year old girl who was a chronic invalid, and whose mother was a pleasure-loving woman who could not endure the idea of being much with her shut-in daughter. While the mother was traveling abroad in Italy, she remembered the coming birthday of her daughter, and

THE WIDOW'S MITES

sent her a rare and wonderful Italian vase. The trained nurse brought it to the girl, saying that her mother had sent it so carefully that it came right on her birthday. After looking at its beauty for a moment, the girl turned to the nurse and said, “Take it away, take it away. O mother, mother, do not send me anything more; no books, no flowers, no vases, no pictures. Send me no more. I want you, you.!”

Don't give Christ things, only things. He wants you. “Son, daughter, give Me thy heart.” That daughter wanted her mother. She wanted her presence, her companionship, her love. Christ wants you. He wants you first of all. He wants your yielded heart, your confidence, your trust, your union with Him. He wants your love, prompting you to give the best possibilities you have. He says, “I want you, you!” Your heart fully given, He knows all else will follow.