

Important Lessons on Giving

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[0 : 00] Take your copy of God's Word and turn to Mark chapter 12. Mark chapter 12 and we'll begin reading in verse 38.

! We'll back up just a bit to cover the verses, some of the verses we looked at last week, and then continue into the passage for this morning.

Mark chapter 12, verse 38. This is the Word of the Lord. As he taught, Jesus said, Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.

They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely. Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury.

Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

[1 : 21] They all gave out of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, put in everything, all she had to live on. Well, it's still Tuesday of Passion Week.

Our Lord has been teaching in the temple courts each day. And they're his enemies. The religious leaders of the Jews have repeatedly attacked him with questions meant to trip him up and get him into trouble with the crowd.

But each time Jesus speaks with such wisdom that exposes their ignorance of the scriptures such that they are embarrassed before the crowd.

And now the commentary is that no one dared to ask him any more questions. So in his last words to the crowd, Jesus now asks the Pharisees a question.

And it's a question from Psalm 110 about the Messiah. What kind of a person will he be? Not just merely David's son, a human being, but David's Lord, a divine being.

[2 : 38] And they're left without an answer. And so Jesus finishes his words to the crowd with a loving warning about their religious leaders.

They're not safe guides for you in the scriptures. And they're also full of self-seeking pride, hypocrisy, and greed. Devouring widows' houses and for a show making long prayers.

So he closed his warning saying that these false shepherds in Israel will be punished most severely. Because they were meant to guide you to Messiah and through Messiah to heaven at last.

And instead they are rejecting the Messiah and leading their followers to hell. Their damnation will be severe. Now, this appears to be Jesus' last visit to the temple.

And the two forms of religion that he finds here could not stand in starker contrast. There's the false religion represented and epitomized by the priests who are turning the very place of the worship of God into a cattle market.

[3 : 53] And also, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees are the ones using their position for financial advantage over vulnerable widows devouring their house.

That's the false religion he finds in the temple. But he also finds true religion there. And it's represented by this poor unnamed widow who gives away all that she has.

And for it, receives high praise from the Lord Jesus Christ. So I'm preaching today on the unpopular topic of giving.

And I do so without apology because it is the gospel of Luke that brings us to this topic and it's Jesus' own words that are teaching the lesson.

You who have been here any length of time realize that we are not always harping here about giving. And that's because we haven't needed to.

[5 : 02] That the body of believers here love the Lord Jesus and his cause. They love the gospel. They want to see the glory of God made plain all around the world by the preaching of the gospel and the salvation of sinners.

And so they have faithfully maintained the work of the gospel in this place and all around the world. We invest in the training and the sending out of church planters in many different nations. We also invest in relief for the poor and the needy. So may God be praised for what you are doing, Grace Fellowship Church.

But there is always need for more money. Much more could be done if the funds were available. And so may the Lord open our hearts this morning and open our bank accounts that we might excel even yet more in this grace of giving.

Now there are many reasons why this topic is unpopular. There is the abuse of money by the churches. The wealth of the Roman Catholic Church is beyond being estimated.

[6 : 18] And there are many Protestant health, wealth, and prosperity preachers flaunting their wealth as if it were a sign of godliness and asking widows and elderly people on fixed income.

You need to... If you would be blessed by God financially, well, you need to plant a seed of faith.

And you can do that right here in my pocket. That's the abuse of this topic of money.

And it's nothing new. We see these religious leaders of Jesus' day devouring widows' houses.

Jesus. And perhaps the very money that these rich people are pouring into the temple on this Tuesday will be the money that these rulers count out 30 pieces of silver just a day later to offer to Judas to betray him.

And then they'll need some more money for those false witnesses at Jesus' trial later in the week.

And then once he's risen from the dead, well, they'll go back into the treasury and find large sums of money to pay off the soldiers to say that his disciples came and stole his body away at night.

And if this word gets to Pilate, we've got more money to satisfy him. The abuse of money is often the excuse and the reason we don't like to hear about giving.

[7 : 51] But a more important reason and one that lies closer to home is that the sinful heart loves money and doesn't want to part with it.

And the Lord's teaching on giving challenges us at that very point. So, Jesus in our study of the Gospel of Mark brings us to important lessons on giving.

We see that before Jesus leaves the temple for the last time, in verse 41, he sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury.

Now, this would have taken place in the court of the women where women had access. It's probably also the place where Jesus did his teaching in the temple courts.

It was more the outer courts where all the people could gather. And we're told that in this court of the women, there were 13 trumpet-shaped receptacles to receive the offerings of the worshipers.

[9 : 02] offerings for the ministry of the temple itself, offerings for the poor and the needy. And that is exactly where Jesus perches himself so that he has a bird's eye view as people are giving their offerings.

And that brings us to our first lesson on giving. Jesus has a watchful interest on the offering box.

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The Greek word here for watch, that Jesus was watching, is more than a casual glance. It's a word that means to look at, to behold, to gaze at.

And the tense in which it's given denotes a continuous action. Jesus is intent on what is being done here at the offering box, carefully observing as people put their money in.

I want to ask you, is that your view of Jesus? Was that your view as you walk by the offering boxes today? Did it make any difference in the way that you gave or didn't give?

[10 : 21] You say, oh, he's not interested in something so earthly as money. Oh, really? Our text says otherwise, doesn't it? These words were written down to teach us that the Son of God, no less today than he was in the days of his flesh, had a watchful interest, has a watchful interest, in the offering box.

So these lessons on giving were meant for us as much as for the 12. And that's why the Holy Spirit had Mark and also Luke record this incident in the temple. This event and Jesus' words about it give

us an important window into the heart of the Son of God.

He has a watchful interest that keeps an eye on your giving. There's two reasons I'd like to bring up why that is so.

First of all, because giving of your money to the Lord is a part of your worship. It is a part of your worship. As Jesus takes his walks among his golden candlesticks, his churches there in Revelation, that means he's here with us, with his people who are gathered in his name.

He's here. Does he watch you as you sing? Yes. He watches you. He listens to you, but he's watching you to see whether you're singing with all your heart, to see if you're singing with your understanding, the words that you are putting upon your lips.

[11 : 55] Are you singing with joy? Are you singing with reverence for this great king who sits upon the throne that we worshiped together this morning? Does he watch you as you pray, as the brothers lead us in prayer?

Are you praying? Is he watching to see what you're thinking of and whether you're praying along? Does he watch you as you're hearing the word of God read and preached?

Is he watching your thoughts, where they're going under the ministry of his word, whether you're receiving it as from the Lord himself, whose word it is?

Well, it's no difference in your worship with tithes and offerings put into the offering box. As we'll see, Jesus is not just looking at how much you put in, but also how much you leave out.

He's looking to see whether it's giving generously or sparingly, cheerfully or reluctantly to the Lord or to be seen by men in faith or in unbelief with gratitude and love for all that he's done and given to you.

[13 : 15] He's watching your heart and not just your hands. So your giving matters to Jesus because it's a part of your worship of God.

Are you viewing it that way? Does it make a difference in what you give and how you give? But there's a second reason your giving matters to Jesus.

And he has this watchful interest in your giving. And that's because it truly reveals your heart. Your giving says a lot about you. Matthew 6, 19 to 21, Jesus says, Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break through and steal.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. That's why he has an interest in your giving.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. According to Jesus, you can follow the trail of my treasures right home to my heart.

[14 : 36] You can know my heart by looking at what I do with my money. Our checkbook, our credit card, our debit card statements, our tax forms, our investments, our giving statements, they reveal our hearts in ways that we cannot hide because our heart sticks close to our treasures.

whether we set those hearts on things above or things below, whether we're storing up treasures in heaven or on earth.

How rich are you in eternal things, in things that will last after your last breath, or are your treasures on the earth eternally out of date with eternity?

How rich are you in eternal things versus temporal things? This is why Jesus has a vital, watchful interest in our giving and you should too.

It's something we need to hear and it ought to affect our giving because He's watching. That's the first lesson. So Jesus is in the temple and He's perched there and He's watching carefully as people give.

[15 : 59] What does He see? Well, the end of verse 41 says, many rich people threw in large amounts. That's what He saw. Now, when we hear this word rich people, we think of Bill Gates and Warren Buffett.

Don't compare yourself with them or nobody's rich and yet many of you are rich. Most of us are rich. Compare yourself with the third world. We are rich and many of the rich people threw in large amounts and we say, good for them, good for them.

Those, Matthew Henry said, those who are rich ought to give richly. Paul says to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6, 17 to 19, command those who are rich in this present world to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous and willing to share.

In this way, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. So to whom much is given, much will be required.

[17:17] That's the principle here. The rich have tremendous opportunities to advance the cause of Christ, to extend the kingdom of God at home and abroad.

And freely you have received, therefore, freely give. Generously you have received, therefore, generously give.

There's a principle there between what we receive. The amount that we receive is to affect the amount that we give. That's called proportional giving.

Giving. Based upon your income, that principle is seen clearly in the tithe. The tithe means just a tenth. That's what the word means.

And so, did you earn \$100? Well, your giving is to be based on the amount of your income. And so there was a tenth. \$10 to be given. Were you given \$200?

[18:19] Then \$20. You see how there's a proportion of what we have received to what we ought to give. It was there in the tithe. But Paul speaks of it as well in 1 Corinthians 16, 1 and 2.

Now about the collection for God's people. Do what I told the churches in Galatia to do. On the first day of every week, that was the Lord's day, the day of worship, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income.

In relation to, in proportion to his income. Saving it up so that when I come, no collection will have to be made. It will already have been set aside. You know, it's interesting that surveys show that the more money a person makes, the lower percentage is their giving.

The best givers are those who make less money. They give a higher percentage of their giving than the rich do. You would expect just the opposite, wouldn't you?

Freely, you've received. freely give. That was the case 2,000 years ago in the temple.

[19:31] The rich threw in large amounts. But, verse 42 says, a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins worth only a fraction of a penny.

Now, in those days, there was no paper money. So, all money was coinage from different metals, precious metals. And, she puts in two leptas.

A leptin was the coin of least value that was being circulated in Palestine. It would be like our penny. What can you buy for a penny anymore?

I just read this week they're going to quit making it pretty soon because he can't do anything with a penny. It's bothersome. It's just noise in your pocket. Well, in this day it was all coins.

And, this coin, a lepta, or the leptos, was made of very thin copper. You probably could have bent it very easily.

[20:36] It was just a flimsy thin piece of copper. And, Mark tells in Roman money money that it was just worth a fraction of the Roman penny.

As a young boy on vacation in Florida, I remember we were in a service and the preacher said, well, we're going to take up an offering and I want it to be a silent offering. You know what that meant. No coins, just the paper. Well, there was no paper. And so, that meant that when the rich threw in their money, you could hear it jingle.

And I doubt that anybody in the temple heard when those two thin pieces of copper hit the pile. But Jesus heard.

And his response was exuberant joy and pleasure. And those two leptas from this poor widow, he says, was more than all the others.

[21:44] Verses 43 and 44. Calling his disciples to him, he said, I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth, but she out of her poverty put in everything, all she had to live in.

And this brings us to our second lesson from these verses. Not only does Jesus have a watchful interest on your giving, but secondly, the giving that he finds most pleasure in is self-sacrificing generosity.

Self-sacrificing generosity. Now, this ought to be of great interest to any Christian. What brings pleasure to our Savior? Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 9, we make it our goal to please him, whether we're at home in the body or away from it.

So what's your goal today as you're here worshiping? Well, it's to please the Lord, to bring pleasure to God. What's your goal tomorrow in whatever you're doing?

It's to please the Lord. What's your goal going to be a thousand years from now when you're away from the body here and with the Lord? And maybe in your resurrection body, it's going to be to please the Lord.

[23 : 04] What's your goal in giving? To please the Lord, to bring pleasure to Him. And Paul says in Ephesians 5, 10, then find out what pleases the Lord.

If that's your goal, you've got to have a way to get there. So find out what ways please the Lord.

Where would you find that out? You can't hold a conference with Him.

Well, you find it out here. He's got a whole book and it's in our language and it tells us what pleases Him. I trust that's why you're devouring this book, why you're reading it every day, why you sit under the ministry, the teaching of it, and Sunday school, and preaching.

You want to know what pleases the Lord. That's your goal in life. life and the afterlife in all that you do.

And here in Mark 12, just three days away from Jesus being nailed to a cross, we find something that He takes great pleasure in, the self-denying sacrificial generous giving of this poor woman.

[24 : 15] And He shows His delight in her by calling His disciples to Him and praising her to them. five times before in Mark's gospel, we've seen or read the account that Jesus called His disciples to Himself.

And every one of those five times, it was for something important. And it's no different here. He's calling His disciples.

Evidently, they had strayed away a bit, meandering in the crowd, and Jesus is resting there, perhaps on the stairs, leading up from the court of the women into the court of the men.

And so He calls them, Peter, James, John, Andrew, all of you, come on over here, you've got to see this. There's something important for you, I don't want you to miss it.

And He points her out to them, and with pleasure He says, I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

[25 : 22] Now I ask you, is this your view of Jesus? That He takes such pleasure in this widow's giving, heaping words of praise on her?

Or do you think of the Lord Jesus as one that's so very hard to please? That He's very weak on praise and on taking pleasure in His people?

Well, hear the Lord in heaven boasting to Satan about His servant Job. Come here, Satan. Have you seen my servant Job?

There's no one on earth like Him. He's blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil, and He still maintains His integrity even though you incited me against Him to ruin him without any cause.

That's the Lord's pleasure in His servant remaining true to Him, wholly unto the Lord even when He's lost everything. Or again, the Lord Jesus is walking along and this Gentile centurion comes up and has a dying servant that He loves so much at home and He comes and Jesus is going with Him to His home to heal this servant.

[26 : 48] And this centurion, the Gentile says, Oh Lord, I'm not worthy for you to come under my roof. Just speak the word and my servant will live. And Jesus doesn't say, okay.

No, He stops and He says to the crowd, I have not seen such faith like this in all of Israel. Come and look at this. Behold this. Here's something worth looking at.

Considering, I wouldn't be surprised if the Lord Jesus even now would be saying to His angels, come here and look at this woman, sorely afflicted, tried, and yet she's still praising me, she's still coming to the worship, she's still saying good things of me, she's still trusting me.

Look at that man, he's giving sacrificially to the Lord, look at that, taking pleasure in His people. And here He does that with this widow's giving that was so pleasing to Him that He calls the twelve to Himself and rivets their attention upon her and what she has just done.

And Jesus uses this formula that we've bumped into many times in the Gospels. I tell you the truth. You remember, Jesus often precluded, introduced something that He was about to say when it was very important and often very hard to believe.

[28 : 16] It's so good that you couldn't hardly, so I tell you the truth. Get ready for something important and something staggering. I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

Now the many gave large amounts of money. She put only a fraction of a penny, something that was an insignificant amount by man's calculation, and yet it was priceless to Jesus.

It was precious to Jesus. Oh, the big donors, they're the ones receiving honor, wined and dined, names on plaques and buildings, but Jesus honors this widow's gift as greater than all the others. Now either Jesus is confused, or else he has a different way of calculating the value of gifts. That man's evaluation is not like God's evaluation.

In his calculation, he's not only considering how much was given, but also how much was not given. Not just how much was put in, but how much was left over that was kept.

[29 : 33] they all gave out of their wealth, their abundance, their surplus, and they had a lot left over that they kept. But she, out of her poverty, put in everything, all that she had to live on with nothing left over.

And it is that sacrificial factor that calculated in Jesus' mind as more and bigger, than all the other gifts.

To give sacrificially involves a cost. It involves a loss to self. You know, that was true of the Old Testament sacrificial system. You had to bring a bull, a lamb, a goat.

That's money. That's money in the Old Testament way of viewing value. And it costs something to bring a sacrifice.

David in 2 Samuel 24 had sinned by counting the people. And the Lord sent a plague and killed 70,000 of them.

[30 : 45] They were dropping like flies and the prophet told David to build an altar on the threshing floor of Arana and to make a sacrifice so that the plague on the people might be stopped.

Well, now Arana was out there threshing his grain with his oxen. And David tells him what he must do. And Arana says to him, here, take it.

Here's my oxen for the sacrifice. And here's the threshing sledges and the oxen yoke as wood for the fire. I'll give it all to you. Take it. And David said, no, I insist on paying for it.

I will not sacrifice to the Lord, my God, burnt offerings that cost me nothing. That cost me nothing.

There was far more costly sacrifice in the widow's offering than in the big donors. They gave out of their surplus. They didn't give until it hurts, as we say.

[31 : 49] She gave all and kept nothing for herself. And that sacrificial element gave the Lord great pleasure and a high value to her gift.

Now, there were other elements in her giving that were also pleasing to the Lord, and let me just mention them. There was, secondly, her faith. For her to give all that she had to live on meant that she was entrusting herself to her God.

She was casting herself upon his promises to take care of the widow. Like Psalm 146, 9, the Lord sustains the fatherless and the widow.

You know that runs throughout the law. Jesus himself said, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these other things will be given to you as well. What other things?

Well, the things that the world's rushing after. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear? All of that. You seek me first. And so she took the Lord at his word.

[32 : 50] That's what faith is, isn't it? You take the Lord at his word. Hebrews 11, 6 says, without faith it's impossible to please him. because he that comes to God must believe that he exists and that he is the rewarder of those who earnestly seek him.

And so her offering greatly pleased the Lord because there was the ingredient of faith in her gift. As she gave it all, she was trusting the Lord to take care of her.

And that element is taught in the giving of the first fruits in the Old Testament. Proverbs 3, 3 and verse 9, honor the Lord with your substance with the first fruits of all your produce.

So that means give to the Lord right up front. Don't wait till the end of the harvest and then give whatever's left over after you've spent. No, you give him the first fruits and then you trust that the remaining of the harvest of the income will be enough to sustain your needs.

You see, there was faith involved in giving the first fruits and whatever your pay period is to give right up front to the Lord and then trusting that the remainder of the money not given will meet your needs.

[34 : 19] You see, the element of faith was there in the giving of the first fruits. And as the Lord has a watchful interest in our giving, he's not only watching to see how sacrificial it is, but also whether we're giving in faith, in an unseen God who is watching, faith that sees him as the giver of all that

I've got.

That's unseen. That's faith. Whatever I have and however it's come to me, it's come to me from his hand and whatever I need, I will receive from his hand as my loving father who feeds the birds and won't starve his boys and girls.

So there's faith in her giving and that is greatly pleasing to the Lord, believing that Jehovah Jireh, my provider, will supply all my needs so I don't need to clutch my money to myself out of fear of the future.

I'm not saying we don't save for the future, but there's a difference between saving and preparing for the future and fearing and therefore clutching. Are you giving first fruits by faith or leftovers by unbelief?

So the Lord is watching our giving. He's noticing not only how much we gave but how much we kept for ourselves. That's the element of sacrifice. He's watching for the element of faith so pleasing to him that without it you can't please God in anything you do.

[35 : 57] And lastly, he's watching how much heart is in it. Man looks on the outward appearance. How many dollars given? The Lord looks on the heart. What he saw here in this lady, this poor widow, thrilled him.

When the Apostle Paul writes to the church at Corinth about giving, he says in 2 Corinthians 9, 6, and 7, remember this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly.

Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he's decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly, not under compulsion. Oh, I have to?

For God loves a cheerful giver. He's the most cheerful giver in the universe and he loves cheerful giving. If that's the kind of giving that the Lord loves, we know that this woman's gift was cheerful because the Lord took great pleasure in it.

There was no reluctance in it, but rather the joy of having something to give. Does your giving have this pleasing element of cheerful joy?

[37 : 07] Do you know anything of the reality of Jesus' words? It is better. It is more blessed, more happy to receive than it is, or to give than it is to receive.

It was her sacrificial, trusting, cheerful giving that gave the Lord such pleasure as she gave her two thin copper coins, which in the valuation of heaven was more than all the others.

Now, before we leave this account, let me ask you, isn't there something attractive about this woman's giving? something beautiful, something endearing?

Do you know what it is? It's God-like. It's God-like. For God so loved the world that He gave. He gave. And what He gave was not something without cost.

No, He gave the most precious, the most delightful thing that He had, His own Son. His well-beloved Son. His one and only Son from all eternity.

[38 : 15] He gave Him that sacrificial giving, you see. That's where this woman gets it. It's God-like. His giving.

He did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up. Gave Him up, delivered Him up to what? To the hellish cross to be the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Oh, there's the attractiveness of this woman's gift. It's God-like.

It was sacrificial giving. And it pleased the Lord to crush Him and to make His soul an offering for sin. But there's something else attractive about her giving. It was Christ-like.

This widow gave everything. All she had. Galatians 1.4 The Lord Jesus Christ who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age.

[39 : 19] He loved me and He gave Himself for me. Galatians 2.20 That's sacrificial giving. He held nothing back. He gave all that.

There was no more to give. He gave Himself. Wealth. Galatians 3.13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. How? By becoming a curse for us.

Cursed is everyone who's hanged on a tree. He was forsaken by God that we might never be. What a love. What a cost. What a sacrifice. It was sacrificial giving.

His life for ours. And He was a cheerful giver. There was no reluctance. Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. No one took it from Him.

He voluntarily, willingly gave it. Cheerfully gave it. Indeed, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross and scorned the shame.

[40 : 20] What joy. The joy that by His sacrifice and giving of Himself He would bring many sinners to glory. Do you know that, sons and daughters of God, that you were an ingredient in the Savior's joy as He hung on the cross?

As He said, Lord, I know that my death here is not the end. And there was faith, you see, in Jesus' giving because He believed that the Father would vindicate Him by raising Him from the dead, keeping His promise in that eternal covenant.

You go and die for our people and I will raise you from the dead. And Jesus, in His giving of Himself, is trusting the Father to keep His part of the bargain.

And it's a future hope and so there's this joy of bringing many sons to glory. Jesus' giving was sacrificial. It was joyful and it was believing faith.

And these are the marks that we see in this lady's giving. When writing to the church in Corinth to excel in the grace of giving, Paul holds up two examples.

[41 : 34] The first is the Macedonian churches who out of their most severe trial and overflowing joy and extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. I don't know how they did it, but they were poor as poor could be and it welled up in rich generosity.

But the other example that he gives is the example of the Lord of glory. And it's the word to us this morning.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor that you through His poverty might be made rich.

He was rich and He impoverished Himself. He did that in the incarnation, the eternal God took on a human nature. What a stoop!

And then He did it at Calvary where He again took upon Himself the debts of His people. The Lord, the Father laid on Him the iniquities of all His people.

[42 : 38] Folks, there was enough iniquity in me that would have had me in hell forever and it was laid on the Lord Jesus Christ. when He became poor.

You talk about poor. He took my sin debt. He took all the sin debt of all His people, piled on Him, enough to keep us bankrupt forever in hell, never able to pay the last farthing.

And He had it all on Him. What a mountain of sin. My mountain, your mountain. And He took our sin debts. Boy, you talk about being bankrupt. That sunk Him.

Now He's in great debt to the Father and the only thing that can pay it is the wrath of God to fall as the punishment that brought us peace. For by His wounds we are healed.

So He became poor when He took our sin debt and He paid the last payment on it that we might be forgiven. All who have taken refuge in Jesus Christ.

[43 : 36] What a gift. What an impoverishment. Well, may the example of our Lord Jesus move us to give like He gave, becoming poor to enrich others.

So may the Lord Himself by His example shadowed in this widow sacrificially, trustingly, cheerfully, enable us to excel more and more in the grace of giving.

Let's pray. Thank you, Father, for the gift of Your precious Son. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the gift of Your very life's blood laid down so willingly for us.

Thank you for the example of this woman. We're shamed that she lived on the other side of Calvary and gave so willingly, so sacrificially, so joyfully, so trustingly.

We live on the other side of this glorious sacrifice. Forgive us of our stinginess. Enlarge our hearts. Enlarge our gifts. And may You be pleased.

[44 : 50] And may more and more of Christ be seen in our giving. We ask for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.