

DEFICIT GIVING Luke 20:45-21:4

What kind of givers are we?

Some don't give to God at all.

They don't recognize God's existence
or His authority over their lives.

They owe Him nothing. So they don't give Him anything!

Jesus addresses those who DO give.

He compares **TWO KINDS OF GIVERS**.

(1) Those who **give Pharisaically**.

(2) Those who **give "poorly."**

Sincere worship of a poor widow, evidenced by her poor gift, is greater than the hypocritical show of rich religious leaders who give much more.

2nd class citizens respond appropriately to Jesus:

poor, outcasts, pagans, common people.

Leaders aren't interested in following Jesus.

They have their own agenda.

The conflict climaxes at the cross.

In 20-21, Jesus is on His way to the cross.

He presents Himself to the nation and is officially rejected.

He's in His final week.

The last challenge has just taken place.

He takes a moment to speak to His disciples,
while the people listen.

Jesus introduces two incidents that point to the contrast between "2nd class citizens" and wealthy religious leaders.

WARNING CONCERNING THE "LAWYERS"

THE MOTIVE TEST 20:45-47 *While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, 46 "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. 47 They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely."*

Their desire: NOT to know God better or thirst for Him

Jesus exposes their real desires.

FOUR DESIRES OF THEIR HEARTS:

1. DISPLAY/SHOW 46a

Parading about in long flowing robes (=> fancy suits)

Fancy garments reflect distinguished position; they strut around like kings, or priests performing official functions

2. ATTENTION 46b

They live for formal greetings in the market places

They love to be called "Rabbi" by which common people indicate respect for their unusual wisdom.

3. PROMINENCE 46c

They love to take chief seats in the synagogue

Seats right in front of platform, facing the audience

Able to watch everybody – "To see and be seen"

They love to be assigned places of honor at banquets (at head table)

4. MONEY 47

Taking away from poor to consume more themselves.

Various attempts to identify exact offense.

What's clear: they provide their own desires
at expense of the poor and needy.

One way to do it: loan money to poor at exorbitant interest rates; foreclose when
they can't repay.

Then they praise God in lengthy thanksgiving prayer
because of their prosperity.

IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS:

Experts in Bible, but don't apply truth to their own lives—living a lie, putting
on a show, while exploiting the poor.

Only interested in privileges and power, NOT serving God.

They're religious for profit.

They look pious; but devour people they "serve."

They don't thirst for God;
they thrive on public attention.

They don't long to be godly; they long to be noticed.

They live for the perks of their position

While praying long, loud, religious-sounding prayers,
they use God-given resources to deprive the poor and needy, then put on a show as
a pretense:

False "worship" fools people; lets them exploit the poor.

People see the outside and praise them.

God sees the heart;

knows cause for condemnation rather than praise.

God is not impressed!

They come under just punishment of a righteous God.

[2nd implication relates to] **The peril of leadership:**

You can get hung up on perks of leadership – privileges of being "up front."

Danger of enjoying the response of the crowd,
the compliments, the deference.

It's easy to begin believing your own press releases.

**Hendricks: "Compliments, like perfume,
are meant to be smelled, NOT swallowed!"**

EXAMPLE OF THE POOR WIDOW

THE SACRIFICE TEST 21:1-4 *As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. 2 He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. 3 "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. 4 All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."*

If you want an example of sincere religion to imitate,

look at poor widow; she gives all she has to live on to God.

The sincere worship of the poor widow, shown by her gift,
is greater than hypocritical show of rich religious leaders.

"Trumpets" in "Court of the Women"—13 boxes designed to call attention to how much
people deposit.

Each is assigned a different purpose, so the wealthy can show off their generous gifts
—a lot of noise!

While rich are getting attention for generosity to God's house,
No one pays attention to her sacrificial gift.

System's built to **magnify sound of offerings** of the rich.

Jesus is moved by her sacrifice for God.

She gives out of poverty

By our minimum wage standards, she gave about \$13.

Day's work = 1 denarius = 8 lepta = $\$6.55 \times 8 = \52.40

2 lepta = 2 hours work

In country paying \$1/hr = \$2; \$1 per day = \$.25 (if 8 hr)

**** \$1 per week = about \$.05 ****

"I just give my 'mite' to the Lord"

like saying someone "eats like a bird."

Actual amount small; proportional quantity is huge!

Are we really willing to give Him all we have?

Jesus says she put in all she has to live on.

She has two coins.

If she only gives one, she's giving 50% of resources, that's a lot more than a tithe.

Certainly she could justify keeping *half* for herself!

She makes a **statement of gratitude** to God

Statement of faith: trusts GOD to provide for tomorrow

She's willing to give Him all she has!

"FAITH PROMISE GIVING" vs. "DEFICIT GIVING"

She practices "Deficit Giving"

–NOT taking out a loan to give to God.

But **giving sacrificially, when you can't see where the next meal's coming from—that's faith giving!**

"Faith promise" giving often misses the mark.

What is often *called* "faith promise" is to promise God that if He provides a certain amount, we'll give it to Him.

We promise to give as He provides.

That's **not giving by faith!** That's **giving by sight!**

Her faith is different.

She gives when she doesn't know about tomorrow.

She loves God so much that she gives Him all she has.

She trusts Him for tomorrow.

He won't let her or her family starve.

THE LEADERS' SHOW vs. THE WIDOW'S SACRIFICE

Wealthy Religious

1. **Give great sums**
2. **Give out of great wealth**
"From overflow" –what's left over
3. **Never puts dent in resources**
4. **Everyone notices and praises**
5. **Jesus isn't impressed**

Poor Widow

1. **Gives small amount**
2. **Gives from empty pockets**
3. **Took all she has**
4. **No one notices**
5. **Jesus is moved**

IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS:

We see **the wealthy** as big givers.

God sees **the poor widow** as the big giver.

She gives *all she has*!

Edersheim: "She held in her hands the smallest amount.... But it was "all her living" (Mk.) ... perhaps all she's able to save out of her scanty housekeeping; more probably, all she has to live on for that day."

Pentecost: "The wealthy have their wealth to provide for them in days ahead. The widow has only faith to sustain her. Her trust must be in God."

We can't afford to do that, can we?

Do we really love Him?

Do we just give God a bit of overflow,
from excess, from leftovers?

"Let's see how much we have left this month.

Maybe we can give some to God....

if there's nothing more important to do with it!"

Or do we give abundantly because we love Him so much?

It's the widow that catches God's attention!

She doesn't have much to give, but she gives it all!

8-year-old girl: "Mama, I thought **a mite's a little thing**. What does Jesus mean when He says the widow's mite is more than all the money the rich men gave?"

Her mother thought a moment: "There was once a **little girl, who had lots of dolls**, almost more than she could count. Some made of china, others of wax, with hair and eyes that would open and shut. She was tired of them all, except a new one her aunt gave her for Christmas.

One day a poor girl came to the door begging; her mother told her to get one of her dolls to give to the little girl. She gladly did so; she had plenty. The **poor beggar girl** was delighted. She had only had one doll in her life, and that was a rag doll. This was the nicest doll she'd ever seen!

She hurried home to hide it among her few toys. As she was going up to their room, she saw through the crack of the basement door, her friend Sally, who'd been sick in bed all summer and was alone all day while her mother was working to keep them from starving.

She rushed into the room and on to the bed, "Oh, Sally, see my new doll!" Sally tried to reach out her arms to take it but she was too weak. So she held up the doll and as she did so, she thought, "Sally looks so sick today. She doesn't have a doll." Suddenly she said, "Here, Sally, you keep her!"

Now do you see? The little girl's doll is like the widows mite
– she gave her everything she had.

Are WE motivated to give Him all we are and have?

The widow understood the message of **Isaac Watts** great hymn:

Were the whole realm of nature mine,

That were a present far too small.

Love so amazing, so divine,

Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Is it really *practical* to imitate the poor widow anymore?

Is anyone willing to give all we have to God any more?

Or do we have to hang onto some for ourselves?

How much do WE love Him?

TAKE MY LIFE

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee;

Take my moments and my days -

Let them flow in ceaseless praise,

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love;

Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee,

Take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King;

Take my lips and let them be filled with messages from Thee, Take my silver and my gold -

Not a mite would I withhold;

Take my intellect and use every power as Thou shalt choose, Take my will and make it Thine

- It shall be no longer mine;

Take my heart - It is thine own - It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store;

Take myself - and I will be ever, only, all for Thee,

Ever, only, all for Thee.

Take my silver and my gold, *not a mite would I withhold*

Is that our prayer? I hold nothing back—it's all yours?!!