

Bible Stories for Adults

The Widow's Offering

Mark 12:41-44

Opening

- Gathering: Why do so many people have trouble giving back to God?
- Today's Focus: A poor widow gave little, but gave all, in a lesson to teach us how God wants us to give.
- Key Verses: *"This poor widow has put more ... 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 on."* Mark 12:43-44
- Everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from Your hand.*
1 Chronicles 29:14

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Setting the Tone for the Week (*Mark 11:1-26*)

- How did Jesus begin the last week of His ministry?
John 12:1, 12-15
- What strange object lesson on faith did Jesus teach over the next two days?
Matthew 21:18-22
- What did Jesus do on Monday that strengthened the resolve of the Jewish leaders to kill Him?
Luke 19:45-48
- Bazaars of Annas - Sold certified sacrificial animals and changed Roman money into temple money
Made great profit for the effective High Priest Annas

A Challenging Tuesday (*Mark 11:27-40*)

- How did the Jewish leaders deal with Jesus on Tuesday?
Mark 11:27-28
- Why didn't Jesus claim authorization from God?
Mark 11:29-30, 33
- How did Jesus then point out that the leaders habitually rejected God's authority?
Mark 12:1a, 12
- What did the Jewish leaders do since they were afraid to stop Him in public?
Luke 20:20
- How well did this plan work?
Matthew 22:22, 33, 46

A Typical Day (*Luke 21:37*)

- What was Jesus' normal pattern for a day during His last week?
Luke 21:37
- Where did Jesus spend His nights on the Mount of Olives?
Mark 11:11
- Did Jesus make any rest stops on His way to Bethany?
John 18:1-2 (Luke 22:39-41)
- How early would Jesus head to the temple?
John 8:1-2

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Teaching in the Temple (Mark 12:41)

Why did the Jewish leaders permit Jesus to teach openly in the temple each day?

Matthew 26:3-5

Did Jesus understand why He was permitted to teach openly in the temple?

Mark 14:49

Was Jesus teaching in Solomon's Porch when He taught today's lesson?

Mark 12:41

Thirteen "trumpets" (narrow top, wide bottom) were along the walls of the *Court of the Women*

Each collected offerings for special temple purposes - wood, oil, incense, etc.

Offerings were voluntary and showed devotion to God's Temple

Mighty Mite (Mark 12:42)

Did only the rich give these voluntary offerings since God had blessed them with extra?

Mark 12:42

Lepton ("the thin one") - Smallest, lightest and lowest value Jewish coin of the time

Two were worth less than a *kodrantes* - lowest value Roman coin of the time

KJV: *two mites, which make up a farthing* - mite & farthing are old English coins

Value of two lepta was worth less than one of today's pennies

The Widow's Offering (Mark 12:43-44)

How did Jesus comment on the worthlessness of the gift of two lepta?

Mark 12:43

The others had obviously donated more money. How could Jesus say she gave more?

Mark 12:44

Paul's Example (2 Corinthians 8)

What example did Paul give to the Christians in Corinth to make this same point?

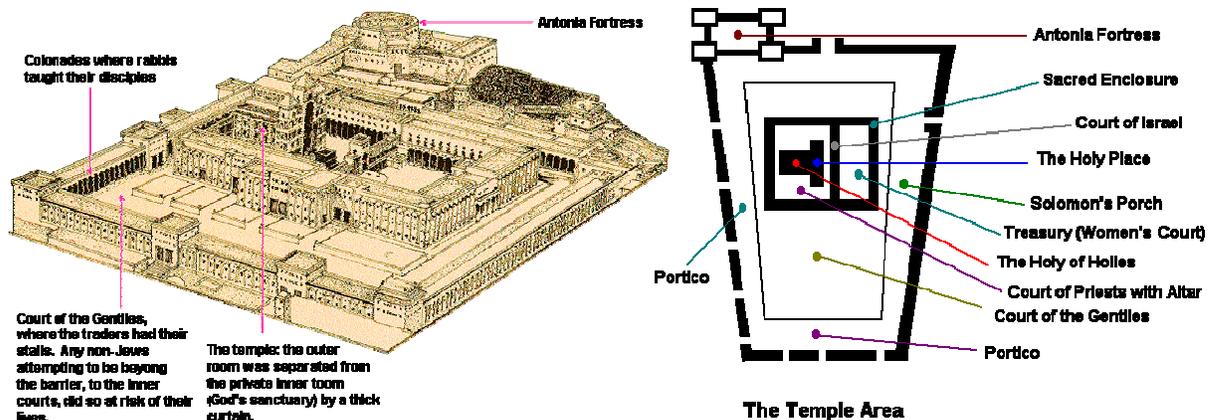
2 Corinthians 8:1-5

Did Paul give this example to help the Corinthians consider making a gift to help other churches?

2 Corinthians 8:8, 10-11

What if their situations had changed and they couldn't meet their pledges?

2 Corinthians 8:12



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How Much? (*2 Corinthians 9:7*)

How do we know how much God wants us to give? A tithe? More?

2 Corinthians 9:7

But God really wants us to give a tithe or more, right?

1 Samuel 16:7

To help us determine how much to give, should we figure our budget to see what is available?

Exodus 23:19a

You Reap What You Sow (*2 Corinthians 9:6-15*)

Isn't it irresponsible to give before taking care of our own personal obligations?

Proverbs 3:9-10

How does Paul put this?

2 Corinthians 9:6

Are these just nice sayings, or do we have such a promise directly from God?

Luke 6:38

How does God respond to us returning the first-fruits of what He has given us?

Matthew 25:21

Why would God give us many blessings when we give as faithful servants?

2 Corinthians 9:11

How do our gifts go beyond our gifts and the blessings we receive?

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

A Greater Example (*2 Corinthians 8:9*)

What greater example do we have of a life of giving than the widow and Macedonians?

2 Corinthians 8:9

Why does Paul say Jesus was rich?

Haggai 2:8

Sure, God the Father owns everything in the universe. Why does this mean Jesus was rich?

John 16:15a

Examples from the Example (*Hebrews 2:17*)

What are some ways that Jesus, though He was rich, became poor?

Luke 2:7

Luke 2:22, 24

Mark 6:3

Luke 9:58

John 12:14

Matthew 27:59-60

Why did Jesus have to give away His rightful riches and become poor for our sake?

Hebrews 2:17

What should we learn from Jesus becoming poor for our sake?

Philippians 2:5-8

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Examples of Giving (*Acts 3:6*)

Without material wealth, how could Jesus serve as an example to us of how to give?

Acts 3:6a

What are some examples of ways Jesus gave without having riches?

Mark 6:41-44

Matthew 8:25-26

Mark 6:56

Luke 5:20

Matthew 11:28-30

John 15:9, 11

Jude 21

Greater Gifts

What are some things Jesus gave that are especially important to us?

Acts 1:8

Matthew 26:26-28

John 16:7, 13

Luke 11:2-4

John 10:28

The Proper Attitude (*John 13:1-17*)

When in His ministry did Jesus give the strongest object lesson of giving to His disciples?

John 13:1-2

What unheard of thing did Jesus do to teach His lesson?

John 13:3-5

What happened when a disciple tried to stop Him from this improper act?

John 13:6-11

Did He make sure they understood the object lesson?

John 13:12-17

How should we determine when, what and how much to give?

Ephesians 5:1-2

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. Do I give to God out of thankfulness and praise to Him or to receive praise or something in return?
(*Mark 12:38-41; Psalm 68:18; Amos 4:5; Matthew 6:1-4; 23:5-7, 28; Acts 4:32-5:11; Romans 11:35*)
2. When have I been stingy in returning to God what He has first given me?
(*Luke 21:1; Deut 16:17; Proverbs 11:24; Isaiah 43:22-24; Malachi 3:8-9; Mark 12:17; Luke 12:48b*)
3. When and how have I given sacrificially?
(*Mark 12:41-44; 1 Chronicles 29:14-16; Psalm 116:12; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15*)
4. When have I experienced God's blessings in response to my stewardship of what He first gave me?
(*2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Malachi 3:10-12; Matthew 13:12; 25:21, 29; Luke 6:38; James 1:17*)
5. Do I give to God from my first-fruits or from my left-overs?
(*Proverbs 3:9-10; Exodus 22:29-30; 23:19; Deuteronomy 26:1-15; Nehemiah 10:35; Hebrews 11:4*)