

WHEN LESS IS MORE
Mark 12:38-44

I. A THREATENING PRESENCE

- A. *“And he sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came, and put in two copper coins, which make a penny” (Mark 12:41-42).*
- B. “Oh, no! Here she is again.”
1. She keeps showing up at stewardship time.
 2. We don’t know her name or how old she is or where she lives, but we certainly know how much she gave!
 3. I like Bob better!
- C. She is a threat to us.
1. For eleven months we can ignore her, pretend that she doesn’t exist, and just when we are feeling pretty good about our giving, there she is.
 2. “I’ve never seen a church that likes to talk about money ... They know that such talk hits them in the most unfaithful area of their lives.” (William Easum)

II. THE MIGHT OF THE MITE

- A. *“Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living” (Mark 12:43-44).*
- B. The most impressive thing Jesus saw.
1. The disciples were impressed with the great temple.
 2. Inside the impressive temple were many impressive people giving impressive amounts of money.
 3. Jesus was impressed with one we might have missed.
- C. God evaluates a gift, not by what is given but by what is kept.
1. “If you give what you don’t need, it isn’t giving.” (Mother Teresa)
 2. Ask, “What part of my income do I keep to make ends meet?”
- D. God evaluates a gift, not by size but by spirit.
1. Myths about giving:
 - We give in order to get.
 - We give to support a budget.
 2. *“Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).*

Prayer Concerns: Members – Burney Biesel, Eddie Burks, Alton Creasy, J.W. Davis, Marie Davis, Leona Evans, Dorothy Miles, Jim Mohead, Carolyn Perkins, Jim Prince, Carol Webb ... **Friends** – Melinda Banks, Henrietta Beckmann, Meryl Broussard, Pat Bryan, Alma Jo Churchill, Doyle Davis, **Pat Dean**, John Fumbanks, Brandon Funderburk, **Earl Gatlin**, Margaret Hayes, Ed Henson, Gary Hinson, **Matt Jennings**, **Kim Evans Lee**, Judy Malaquias, Connie Overton, Violet Stout, Durward Webb ...

Christian Sympathy is extended to **Rob and Stuart Watson and family** in the death of their grandmother, **Peggy Shipman**, on Saturday, October 20 and to **Jeff Burns and family** in the death of his cousin, **Felicia Reaves**, who died Sunday, October 21.

PASTORAL PRAYER

(adapted from a prayer by Frederick Buechner)

Almighty God, be present with us at the times of choosing when time stands still and all that lies behind and all that lies ahead are caught up in the mystery of a moment. Be present especially with the young who must choose between many voices. Help them to know how much an old world needs their youth and gladness. Help them to know that there are words of truth and healing that will never be spoken unless they speak them, and deeds of compassion and courage that will never be done unless they do them. Help them never to mistake success for victory or failure for defeat. Grant that they may never be entirely content with whatever bounty the world may bestow upon them, but that they may know at last that they were created not for happiness but for joy, and that joy is to them alone who, sometimes with tears in their eyes, commit themselves in love to you and to others. Lead them and all the world ever deeper into the knowledge that finally all people are one and that there can never really be joy for any until there is joy for all. In Christ's name we ask it and for his sake. Hear us now as we pray the prayer he taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

MARK 12:38-44

And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to go about in long robes, and to have salutations in the market places and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

And he sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came, and put in two copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him, and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living."

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

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| November 4 | <i>Giving the Best</i> | Luke 15:1-10 |
| | All Saints' Sunday | |
| November 11 | <i>It's Not About the Money</i> | Luke 16:1-13 |
| | Veterans' Day | |
| November 18 | <i>Fatal Mistakes</i> | Luke 16:19-31 |
| | Commitment Sunday | |
| November 25 | <i>Unbelievable</i> | Luke 18:9-14 |
| | Congregational Meeting | |

On the Radio (1450 AM):

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| November 4 | <i>Understanding Stewardship</i> | Matthew 6:19-24 |
| November 11 | <i>It's Never Enough</i> | Ecclesiastes 5:10-20 |
| November 18 | <i>"Give" Is a Four-Letter Word</i> | Mark 10:17-27 |
| November 25 | <i>Are You Prepared?</i> | Matthew 25:1-13 |