

Uncommon: Different on Purpose

Uncommon Generosity

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus talks about money more than nearly any other topic, why? Because he is trying to guilt you into giving him more of your money? No! Because money is maybe the most powerful reality of our lives

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Matthew 6:21,24

Main Idea: Uncommon Generosity both Displays and Deepens our Trust in God

“And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small 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 offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.’” **Mark 12:41-44**

I. Uncommon Generosity is Irrespective of Financial Status

In ancient times widows were the poorest of poor. There was no support or space for them to get money, jobs were not easily available. Even physically prohibited in many cases. Women relied on financial support through the men in their family, husbands and sons primarily. Even with all these challenges she was compared and contrasted with those who had much more financially.

“Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny.” **Mark 12:41b-42**

You don’t have to be rich to be generous, you have to be generous to be generous.

The two copper coins were much more than a financial stretch for the widow; they were an act of faith.

“One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.” **Proverbs 11:24-25**

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II. Uncommon Generosity is Instantly Recognized by Jesus

“And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box...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 offering box.” **Mark 12:41, 43**

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” **Matthew 6:1-4**

Culture tells us if we don’t have proof by its standards, social media posts for example then it didn’t happen. Uncommon Generosity defies that thinking it doesn’t look for the applause of people, it looks for the recognition of Our Lord.

“Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.”

Proverbs 3:9-10

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III. Uncommon Generosity is Identified by What’s Left

Jesus recognized this woman’s sacrificial offering and commended her. She gave all she had despite her lack of resources.

“For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.” **Mark 12:44**

“The amount was not large, but the sacrifice was great!” **Daniel Akin**

“God measures our giving and our faith not by how much we put in, but by what kind of sacrifice it represents for us. So, the question isn’t, ‘How much do I need to give?’ It becomes, ‘How much do I want God to bless?’” **JD Greear**

Uncommon Generosity is all over scripture and it does not always include money.

Biblical Examples of Total Surrender Giving

- **Widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:7-16)** Last meal, but God provided.
- **Ananias & Saphira (Acts 5:1-10)** Killed for withholding & lying about it.
- **Rich Young Ruler (Mark 10:17-31)** Denied the Kingdom for giving all.

“Children, how difficult is it to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God...with man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.” **Mark 10:24b-25, 27b**

The Widow's Offering doesn't mean everyone must leave church with no money and go hungry. It's not the normal pattern of giving in the Bible. Stories like this, the widow of Zarephath, Ananias and Sapphira, and the Rich Young Ruler are special situations. Most giving is generous, but not always this extreme. Still, if God calls someone to give that sacrificially, we must obey.

Biblical Model of Generous Giving:

- **Systematic (tithe)** – FIRST, percentage, thru local church, & undesignated
- **Excess (offering)** - From our excess, designated, and planned
- **Impulse (alms)** - From our excess, directly to a need, and usually impulsive

Practical Guidance for a Christian Budget:

<u>Typical Budget</u>	<u>Generous Budget</u>
Monthly/Weekly Income	Monthly/Weekly Income
<i>minus</i>	<i>minus</i>
Expenses & Savings.	Tithe (first), Expenses, & Savings
<i>and then</i>	<i>and then</i>
Occasional Generosity, but only after Excesses & Perks	Offerings, Alms, and Excesses/Perks for me

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Main Idea: Uncommon Generosity both Displays and Deepens our Trust in God

As always, Jesus is the hero of Uncommon Generosity. Not only because he properly defines it while recognizing the Widow's offering in Mark 12. But, because:

“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:6-8

Uncommon Generosity always starts with Jesus

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- **CSB Study Bible** – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Exalting Jesus in Mark** – Daniel Akin (2014)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible** – Tony Evans (2019)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible** – Charles Haddon Spurgeon (2017)
- **Bible Exposition Commentary** – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- **New American Commentary: Mark** – James A. Brooks (1991)