

The Gospel of Mark: Money - Part 3

The Widow's Offering

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Part of The Gospel of MarkMoney

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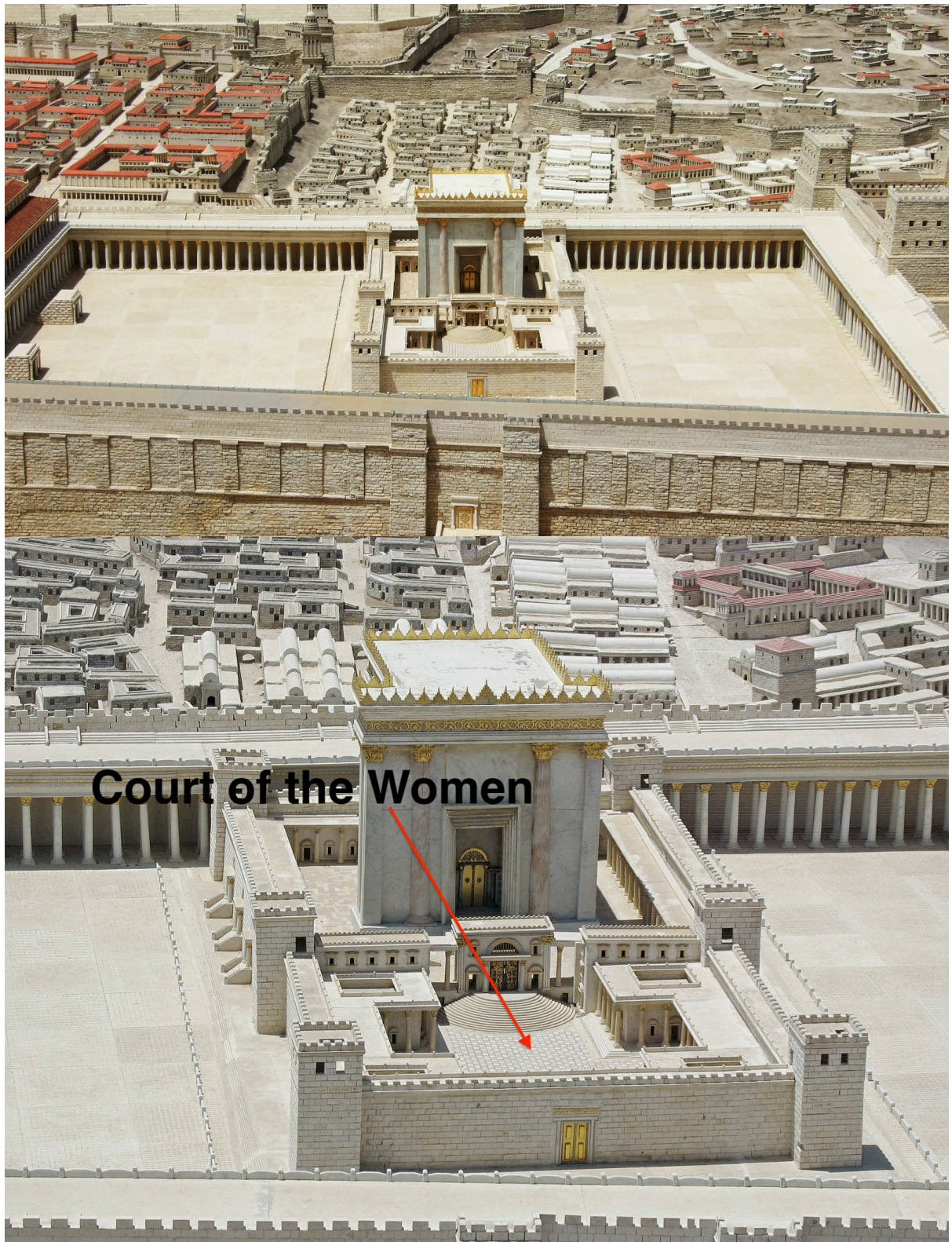


Underlying Principle #1 - Mark 12:1-12: God created it all, and it's all His!

Underlying Principle #2 - Mark 12:13-17: God has a plan for how each of us is to steward or manage the resources entrusted to us.

Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts.

—Mark 12:41 (NLT)



Court of the Women



The Court of the Women would have been the primary place women could make their offerings.

Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.

—Mark 12:42 (NLT)

coin = *lepton* (Greek) = a tiny thing = mite (KJV English)



***lepton* = smallest of coins = worth about one hundredth of a denarius**

denarius = one day's wages

Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions."

—Mark 12:43 (NLT)

On the surface, that seems like a pretty crazy statement by Jesus - there's *no way* a poor widow gave more than all the wealthy folks.

'For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on.'

—Mark 12:44 (NLT)

Jesus is praising the "poor widow," who gave sacrificially of *all* she had, while for many others, the amount they gave was an afterthought or an attempt to look important in the eyes of those standing nearby.

Jesus' divine perception led him to discern that for this woman, her gift said everything about her soul, and Jesus wanted his disciples - then and now - to see this.

Jesus: ... "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The LORD our God is the one and only LORD. And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these."

—Mark 12:29-31 (NLT)

Underlying Principle #3 - Mark 12:41-44: How each one of us gives matters more to God than what each one of us gives.

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

—1 Samuel 16:7 (NLT)

HOW GOD TELLS US TO GIVE:

1. Give **happily**, because you **want** to give.

You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

—2 Corinthians 9:7 (NLT)

In this Scripture and elsewhere, God is making it clear that He's looking at the heart behind our giving long before the amount given enters in.

2. Give **anonymously**, or at least in ways that don't draw attention to yourself.

Jesus: *"Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you."*

—Matthew 6:1-4 (NLT)

3. Give **sacrificially**.

God doesn't need our money, but He does want our heart, and if we're not willing to sacrifice for God, He doesn't have our heart.

"Why have you come, my lord the king?" Araunah asked. David replied, "I have come to buy your threshing floor and to build an altar to the LORD there, so that he will stop the plague." "Take it, my lord the king, and use it as you wish," Araunah said to David. "Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and you can use the threshing boards and ox yokes

for wood to build a fire on the altar. I will give it all to you, Your Majesty, and may the LORD your God accept your sacrifice.” But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on buying it, for I will not present burnt offerings to the LORD my God that have cost me nothing.” So David paid him fifty pieces of silver for the threshing floor and the oxen.
—2 Samuel 24:21-24 (NLT)

King David refused to give a gift that didn't cost him something, because it was how he demonstrated for himself that God came first.

4. Give as an expression of love.

The greatest reason we give is because it's an expression of the love of God at work in us.

*“For God so loved the world, that he **gave** his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*
—John 3:16 (ESV) (emphasis added)

God is a Giver, and we were created in His image, to be like Him.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
—Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)

If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.
—1 Corinthians 13:3 (NLT)

How do we know we are becoming more like Jesus? We become more loving, where love is accepting someone for who they are and working for their good.

How each one of us gives – with love, for the sake of others, etc. – matters more to God than what each one of us gives.

As we seek to become more loving and more like Jesus, we'll discover not only that generosity comes easier for us, but it demonstrates God's love in us as a way to point others to God and His Kingdom.

For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

—2 Corinthians 9:10-15 (NLT)

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