

A Poor Widow's Example

n/a

Ready:

“As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ‘I tell you the truth,’ he said, ‘this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.’”

-Luke 21:1-4 (NIV)

Set

C.S. Lewis, one of last century's most influential and prolific Christian authors, in writing about tithing said that if it doesn't impinge upon one's lifestyle, then he isn't giving enough. The giving of money to the work of the Lord, he said, should involve some sacrifice.

One has to look no further than Jesus' commentary on the giving habits at the temple in Jerusalem to understand the truth in Lewis' words. The amount of the gift is really superfluous; it is the amount of sacrifice that matters to the Lord. Giving out of your wealth is easy. Someone like Bill Gates can easily donate a billion dollars to charity and it will not impact his lifestyle in any way; yet, a college athlete struggling to pay the bills could give \$25 to his church and it be a tremendous sacrifice. The widow gave almost nothing, but Jesus credited her with giving the most of anyone because her sacrifice was the greatest.

Too often we Christians use the excuse of having little money as a reason not to tithe. College students say they will give after they graduate. College graduates say they will tithe after they pay off their school loans. Parents say they will begin giving when the kids are older and done playing soccer. And so it goes.

The reality is that for the vast majority of us, there will never come a time when we feel we have enough money. But we are not called to give when it is comfortable or convenient. We are called to give because God has asked us to give back a portion of what we have. It doesn't matter how much we have; only, like the widow, that we are willing to give out of what we do have. And to give in this way will impact our lifestyles. So it should! The sacrifice of God for us was no small thing.

Today, consider your giving habits to the work of the Lord. Are you in the habit of using the excuse that you have no money to give? Then take another look at the widow who gave out of her poverty. It was her willingness to sacrifice that drew praise from the Lord.

Go

1. Do you struggle with tithing? What are some of your common excuses?
2. Does tithing make a difference in the lifestyle you lead?
3. Describe the sacrifice that God made for you.
4. In light of all He's done for us, do you need to make changes in your giving habits?

Workout

Malachi 3:6-10

Matthew 6:19-24

Bible Reference:

Luke 21



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