

Sacrifice

BIBLE STUDY STEWARDSHIP 2023

She put in... everything

Mark 12:41-44 NIV

⁴¹Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴²But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins*, worth only a few pence.

⁴³Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on.'

*For those into coinage, these were two lepta, which make a kodrantes. A kodrantes was a Roman copper coin worth about 1/64 of a denarius. A denarius was a day's wage for a labourer, so in today's money, she would have put in about £1.50



Setting the scene

Jesus' presence in the temple began with his condemnation of the buyers and sellers for the animal sacrifices (Mark 11:15-19) and ends with his commendation of a widow who sacrifices her all for God. Jesus situates himself opposite the treasury – probably a reference to one of the thirteen shofar-chests (boxes shaped like trumpet). Jesus disregards the wealthy donors who throw in large sums that are probably announced by a loud clang they make in the trumpet bell (see Matt 6:2). Jesus singles out a woman whose offering makes only a tiny clink.

David Garland

Read and Discuss

- 1) In verses 41 and 42, we see Jesus observing what was going on in the temple. Contrast the "rich people" with the "poor widow", thinking particularly about who they were, what they had and how others viewed them. Who do we see as "rich" and "poor" today?
- 2) Read verses 43 and 44. Jesus uses this incident as an opportunity to teach his disciples (and us) about what God really sees as important. How did Jesus value the widow's offering? Why did he say that she "put more into the treasury than all the others"? What does this say about sacrificial giving?
- 3) In what ways did the widow's offering foreshadow Jesus' giving of himself on the cross?
- 4) 1 Chronicles 29:11 says, "Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours." How does this help us when it comes to giving 'our' money?

Reflect and pray

Use the lines from the hymns below to help pray for each other to give our all to God.

King of Kings, Majesty

Jarrod Cooper

*"Your Majesty, I can but bow;
I lay my all before you now"*

Take my life and let it be

Frances Ridley Havergal

*"Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold."*