

## Unit 31, Session 4: The Widow's Gift

*Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4*

### **Christ Connection:**

**Preschool:** Jesus said that the widow had made a big sacrifice to help those in need. Jesus would soon make a big sacrifice Himself, but He was going to give something much more important than money. He was going to give His own life to help those in need—all of us who need a Savior.

**Kids:** Jesus gave up everything He had in heaven to come to earth and save us from our sins. Jesus even gave up His own life, dying on the cross in our place. When you know and love Jesus, you can serve Him as the Lord of your life and offer everything you have. God rewards those who seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

### **Adult Connection Point:**

*Read Mark 12:41-44 and Acts 4:32.*

If the gospel has transformed us, we will become more generous. The widow's giving sacrificially, even out of her poverty, is a beautiful example of the kind of generosity that the gospel motivates. The apostle Paul described the proper for our giving in his second letter to the Corinthians: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though He was rich, for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). As followers of Jesus, we do not give out of guilt or from coercion but because we have freely received. Christ gave Himself for us, so we give ourselves to others, personally or monetarily. The grace of God compels us to do as such for everyone but especially our fellow Christians (Gal. 6:10). We take special care of those joined to Christ's body.

The common heart and mind we read about in Acts 4:32 is not only birthed out of the body metaphor, however. Because of their future hope, the early Christians were less likely to hold tightly to their present possessions. Only the gospel can free men and women to be so generous because only the gospel calls such sacrifice a wise investment. This is what Jesus meant when He spoke about the necessity of present sacrifice for the sake of future glory. "Everyone who has left houses, brothers or sisters, father or mother, children, or fields because of My name will receive 100 times more and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first" (Matt. 19:29-30).

Imagine being offered 10 dollars today or 100 billion dollars tomorrow, but you can only have one or the other. Only a fool would reach for the 10 dollars today. God's promise of eternity gives us the perspective that frees us to love and serve others.

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we share in a future inheritance that will far outweigh every deposit we make now. Every temporary sacrifice will result in eternal treasure since Christ Himself is the heir of all things (Heb. 1:2). The question is the degree to which we believe this truth. Our greed and covetousness and selfishness are manifestations of unbelief and foolishness. We either do not really believe that God's reward will be greater or we don't care.

If we are united to Christ in faith and love, then we will share in a great and glorious inheritance. This inheritance will far surpass anything we could gain or earn

in the present. Therefore, all sacrifice and suffering is far outweighed by the glory to come (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17).