

The Outcasts:

(*The Outcasts* is a series of Bible studies based on those people whom most levels of society would consider unimportant, insignificant or even repulsive. These people are often overlooked or cast aside, as if they have nothing to give the body of Christ.

Rebels...backsliders...children...senior citizens...the handicapped...uneducated...homeless.

Thankfully, God looks upon the heart and sees us for what we can become; beautiful witnesses for the Gospel of Christ. It is my prayer that through these Bibles studies you will be blessed and gain a clear vision for how the God of the Universe sees you; incredibly precious and valuable).

Giving Your All

By Mary Kane



The year 2010 will be remembered for several natural disasters; the terrible earthquake in Haiti, an equally dreadful earthquake in Chile and the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Two of these disasters occurred during the school year; my students and I prayed for the injured and suffering during our class Quiet Time. One morning, while we were praying for the victims in Haiti, one of my students had an idea. (I have learned over the years that the Holy Spirit moves powerfully through children and some of the best projects that I've had been blessed to be a part of were generated by children). Rachel suggested that we collect change from the students in our class and send it to the children in Haiti. As I already had a donation slip from GAIN¹, the biggest problem was solved; where to send the money. The other details quickly fell into place. My class organized a collection squad, picked a team to count the money and decorated a collection jar. The class decided to name the project *Change for Children*. We set a goal of twenty dollars and the children got to work!

Every morning we brought in our offerings, tallied up the money and posted the result on the board. As our total grew, so did the excitement of my students! Other classes caught on to what we were doing and joined in the effort. Through the course of this project my students learned valuable lessons concerning Christian service, compassion, problem solving, communication and conflict resolution. In the end we

¹ Global Aid Network

were able to send over one hundred-sixty dollars to the children in Haiti! Before we mailed our check, we prayed that God would take our little effort and multiply it with His mighty power to feed and help many of the suffering children. The amount may have been small, but the heart behind the effort was huge.

Please pray for God to fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit and to make ready your heart to receive from His Word.

Now please read Mark 12:41-44.

Where was Jesus sitting?

Did it seem to you as it did to me that Jesus did not just *happen* to be sitting opposite the treasury; that He was sitting there on purpose?

What was He doing?

The NKJV states "Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury." At first glance the word *saw* seems like a normal everyday word; Jesus was just casually passing time, watching people put money into the treasury. In this instance, the word *saw* means more than casual observation. *Saw* in the original language is *theoreo* which means to be a spectator, to view attentively, to view mentally, to perceive, to ascertain. We gather then from the meaning of this word that this type of *seeing* was not just passive looking. *Theoreo* is derived from another Greek word *theaomai* which means to view attentively, to learn by looking and to view in the sense of visiting or meeting with a person. From what we just learned about the word *saw* we could infer that Jesus was gathering personal information about those He observed putting money into the offering.

Put a check mark by the classes of people that are mentioned in verses 41 and 42:

- The working class
- Many who were rich
- One poor widow
- The Pharisees

The rich were walking along side the widow, all going to the same place. I wonder, did they even see this poor woman in her dirty faded clothes? Did it ever enter into the minds of the wealthy that the poor widow was one who needed a little help? I must ask myself the same questions. Do I ever see the poor and hungry walking the same streets as I do, or do I cross to the other side so I will not be inconvenienced by their need?

One poor widow. Think on each of these words for a moment.

One: only one. No one else of that description was at the treasury that day. Was she the only widow who showed up to *give*? Were all the other widows waiting to receive? Or was she the only widow who was able and willing to give?

Poor: a beggar, helpless, needy. She probably had to beg for the two coins she dropped into the treasury.

Widow: one of the lowest classes of the Jewish culture. The Hebrew word for *widow* is derived from the word *chasma* which means a gaping opening, a chasm, a gulf. The death of her husband left the widow with a hole in her heart and life. She was giving out of the pain of her own heart.

Verse 41 states that Jesus was watching *how* they put money in the offering. What might have Jesus observed about the manner in which different people deposited their money into the treasury?

Perhaps a few people just dropped their money in without a care, not even aware of how much they tossed in. Maybe some dropped their money in with a wrinkled brow, worried about how they would eat that week. Possibly many dropped their money in with great fanfare, hoping that others would notice their generous gifts. Surely some threw their money in with joyful hearts, happy to be able to give to the work of the kingdom.

Matthew Henry notes "...Our Lord Jesus takes notice of what we contribute to pious and charitable uses; whether we give liberally or sparingly; whether cheerfully or with reluctance and ill-will; nay, he looks at the heart; he observes what principles we act upon, and what our views are, in giving alms; and whether we do it as unto the Lord, or only to be seen of men."²

How about the widow? How do you think she put her money into the treasury?

I think the widow cast in her donation with great love, care and prayer, grateful that she had anything to give to her Lord and Savior. I wonder if she realized that her Lord was sitting a few feet away?

Please go back and read verses 41 and 42 again.

How much did the rich put in the treasury?

² Henry, Matthew. "Commentary on Mark 12." . Blue Letter Bible. 1 Mar 1996. 2010. 15 Jun 2010.
< [http:// www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?
AuthorID=4&contentID=1636&commInfo=5&topic=Mark&ar=Mar_12_41](http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=4&contentID=1636&commInfo=5&topic=Mark&ar=Mar_12_41) >

How much money did the widow put in that day?

Our verse says that she cast in *two mites* which by today's standard equals about two fifths of a penny (probably less considering the devaluation of the American dollar).

But what did Jesus say about her donation? How much did He say she put in the treasury (verse 43)? Please check the box that applies:

- 100 denari.**
- More than one of the rich.**
- More than all of the rich.**
- More than all who had given that day.**

The verse says that "the poor widow has put in more than *all* those who have given to the treasury" (emphasis mine). Let's ponder that information for a moment. What conclusion can we draw from this portion of scripture concerning how Jesus feels about giving?

What have you learned from these passages about giving?

It's not about the treasure, it's about the heart! Our heavenly Father really doesn't need our money—He can create anything He wants out of nothing. It's not our money He's after, it's our hearts. Our willingness to give not only proves how much we love and care about the poor, but it also proves how much we love and care about Jesus!

Let's consider one final point before we close our study for today. I pray you will be as blessed by this information as I was!

Where did she put her donation (verse 41)?

She put her money in the *treasury*; in Greek, the *gazophylakion*. "This word is used to describe the apartments constructed in the courts of the temple, in which not only the sacred offerings and things needful for the service were kept, but this was also where the priests (etc.) resided (cf. Neh 13:7). The sacred treasury, public records, and even the property of widows and orphans were deposited here."³ In the New Testament, the Treasury was thirteen chests or boxes which were used to gather money. Ironically, part of the money gathered in the treasury was distributed to the poor. The widow was giving out of her own poverty to help the poor! Perhaps she was so rich in her heart that it never crossed her mind that *she* was poor. The point is she gave deeply out of what she had.

Think of the contrasts that are contained within these few verses of scripture:

The Rich: The Widow

Much: mites

Abundance: Poverty

Many: One

What can we learn from one poor widow that we can apply to our own lives?

³ Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for *gazophylakion* (Strong's 1049)". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2010. 15 Jun 2010. <
[http:// www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?
Strong's=G1049&t=KJV](http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=G1049&t=KJV) >

- **The power of One:** God has called you to do things that you must do even if you are the only one. He has also called you to do some things that only *you* can do!
- **The Power of Pain:** Instead of dwelling on your own hurt and needs, be like the poor widow; chose to serve others who fall into the same circumstance.
- **The Power of Poverty:** Do not underestimate God's ability to use what you consider to be a *little* time, a *little* talent or a *little* money. Give your *little* gift to God with all your heart.

In closing, please record which of the concepts listed above speaks to you the most and what step you intend to take in response to what you have learned today.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:21

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