

**Frisco First Baptist Church**

ALL IN • THE WIDOW’S MITE • MARK 12:41-44 • 11/12/2023

# MAIN POINT

As many of you know, we do our best to sync the sermon to the lesson. In a topical sermon series, the week-to-week sermon can take on a diﬀerent direction than the LIFEGroup lesson, which has been curated weeks if not months before. Today is the perfect example. The sermon will be over Luke 7:36-50, where Jesus is anointed by Mary. The lesson, will be over Mark 12:41-44, the widow's oﬀering. The way these two lessons sync is through the theme of generosity, even though the passages do not align.

Hopefully, even when the lesson and sermon do not align, you can still have a fruitful conversation over both. These next four weeks, we will have a topical sermon series called ALL IN: Moving from Intention to Follow Through. The big idea is to not just say we are all in, but prove it.

This week's LIFEGroup lesson is on: God calls us to give not out of abundance, but out of gratitude.

# INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**Which of the following best describes your parent’s perspective on money? 1) Money is the root of all evil; 2) A successful person makes six ﬁgures; 3) Money gives you a sense of security; 4) People make money so they can help the poor and tithe regularly.**

**How do you think your parents’ perspective on money has aﬀected yours?**

# UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

## HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:19-24.

**What emotions do you experience when you read this verse? Explain. What is the diﬀerence between having nice things and having treasure?**

**How can you tell if money and possessions are becoming your primary treasure?**

Jesus pointed out the foolishness of making earthly treasures the goal of life, instructing His followers to focus their attention on heaven. Unlike earthly treasures, spiritual treasures aren’t material possessions that bring us temporary satisfaction. Rather, they’re the beneﬁts we’ll get for our faithful service to God while on earth—such as eternity in His presence, an inherited place in the kingdom of God (1 Peter 1:3-5), and our perfect, gloriﬁed bodies (1 Corinthians 15). We don’t remain faithful to God in order to accumulate spiritual treasures for ourselves, but so that we can oﬀer them back to God.

**What do you have to believe to be true about God in order for you to spend your money like Jesus says in this passage?**

**Why are materialistic and godly values at odds? Is there a way to reconcile those values? Why or why not?**

## HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MARK 12:41-44.

**Why did Jesus commend the widow? How much did she give?**

**What excuses could the widow have made for not giving anything?**

Jesus saw diﬀerent people giving at the temple. First, He noticed the rich who put their money in the oﬀering box. He then noticed a widow who gave two coins worth a typical day’s wage. Jesus commended the widow for her generosity but not the wealthy, even though they gave more monetarily. The value of the widow’s gift was based on its sacriﬁcial merit. The widow gave everything, even though it was little. Her faith in God gave her the conﬁdence to give everything, as she trusted that God would care for her needs.

**Does Jesus’ commendation of the widow imply anything about His view of the gifts by the rich? If so, what?**

**When you give, do you ask, “How much should I give?” Or, “How much should I keep for myself and those dependent on me?” How might these**

**changes impact your giving?**

**If you had to summarize Jesus’ teaching regarding giving in one statement, what would it be?**

Jesus’ point regarding giving is simply this: believers are to give in a generous and sacriﬁcial way that does not call attention to themselves.

# APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**Share an experience in which following Jesus cost you something.**

**What are you sacriﬁcing when you give to the church or other charitable organizations?**

**How does the story of the widow point you to Jesus?**

**The sacriﬁcial gift of the widow points to the sacriﬁcial gift of Jesus. She gave her entire livelihood; He gave His very life. How will you respond based on your gratitude?**

# PRAYER

Close in prayer, thanking God that we have a model for sacriﬁce and generosity in Christ. Thank Him for sending Christ, who was rich, to become poor for us. Pray that your group would give of themselves in light of what God did for them. Pray that God would show all of your group new ways to be generous with everything they have been given.

# COMMENTARY

## MARK 12:41-44

12:41 The “treasury” appears to have been located in the court of women and appears to have consisted of thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles for both the temple tax and money given voluntarily for various purposes.

12:42 The “two very small copper coins” were two lepta (so the Greek text). The lepton was the smallest coin in circulation in Palestine and was worth 1/64 of a denarius, a day’s wages for a common laborer. It was not in circulation in the western part of the Roman

Empire, where Mark apparently wrote. Therefore he explained their value for his audience.

12:43–44 Jesus indicated that the thing of most importance is not how much is given but the extent to which the gift is a sacriﬁcial one. Or to put it another way, the most signiﬁcant thing is not how much is given but how much is left for one’s personal use after the gift. A major element of Jesus’ teaching is that attitude is more important than action. The widow’s total giving demonstrates an attitude of absolute trust in God.

Quite diﬀerent is the interpretation that claims the widow was guilty of imprudence and that Jesus could not have commended her. Rather he condemned a system that permitted widows to be destitute and perhaps even made them destitute by pressuring them to give all they had. The same kind of extravagance, however, is commended in 14:6. There was so much poverty in ancient Palestine that the authorities could do little about it. The commendation of the widow does not imply that every disciple should give away everything.

Jesus’ teaching was intended for His disciples and for all subsequent disciples. They too were to be generous in the extreme but without any ostentatiousness. In various ways they were to give their all as the widow did. But there is an additional lesson in the account. The sacriﬁcial gift of the widow points to the sacriﬁcial gift of Jesus. She gave her entire livelihood; he gave his very life. As Paul put it, “You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9). Therefore the account functions as a transition to the passion narrative in chaps. 14–15. With this beautiful story Mark ended his account of Jesus’ public ministry.