

Entrusted: The Source of Generosity

Luke 21:1-4

MPS Generosity flows from a heart that weighs its giving by the promise of God's all-sufficient grace above one's personal need.

OBJ Every person can understand weighing the heart by God's promise of grace to determine our giving by Four Lessons.

INTRO How would you answer if I asked you, "what makes a person generous?" The truth is there are many ways that we measure generosity. Most often we think of generosity as we measure the amount given. But what would you think if I told you that God doesn't measure generosity as much as He weighs it. What I mean is that we typically think of generosity in terms of measuring how much is given. But today's passage presents a completely different perspective. Today we learn that God weighs generosity not by the size of the gift but the gift's impact upon the giver.

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What is God's Promise of all-sufficient Grace?

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. **2 Corinthians 9:8-9**

READ Luke 21:1-4

Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, ²and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. ³And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." **Luke 21:1-4**

Luke recounts a story of Jesus observing people giving in the Synagogue. There are a number of reasons Luke included this story at this point in his gospel, none the least of which is to condemn the religious leaders who "devour widow's houses".(21:47) But in contrasting the poor widow with the evil religious leaders, He highlights the true source of generosity.

Jesus was seated with his disciples across from where people brought their offering. Among the line of people giving their offering stood a poor widow who caught his attention. With all the people putting their gifts into the offering box, this lady put in two coins. The amount of her offering, *two lepta*, equaled 1/64th of a day's wage. While we don't know the amount of all the other people's offerings, we are given the amount of her offering, which was literally next to nothing.

Upon seeing this, Jesus turned to his disciples and told them that she put in more. And not more than just any of the other people, but more than all the other people combined. And the reason why her inconsiderably small offering was more than all the others combined is this, "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." Jesus looked at the source of each gift to determine its true value.

Consider Jesus' lesson by two small words, "out of". All the others gave "out of" their abundance. They took a portion of all they had and gave that. And there is no doubt that many, if not most, gave that first portion in faithful tithe. But when they gave their gift there was plenty left over to supply for their daily needs. Now recognize that Jesus does not make a value statement about their gift in any way, nor does He condemn them for their giving. Jesus' lesson is not about all the others but about the poor widow, who "out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Do you feel the weight of her gift? Everyone else's offering likely made quite the racket when it hit the offering box, due to the "weight" of the amount. But Jesus says that the poor widow's offering, which likely went almost undetectable in the Synagogue, made quite the noise in Heaven when it hit the offering box because when she walked away, God was all she had for her next day. Listen to how one commentator describes Jesus' lesson. "But God does not see things as we do. He does not count; he weighs. Jesus calls this widow's gift the greatest gift of those that his disciples have been observing. What others give comes out of their excess, and they will hardly miss what they toss in for the temple. But this woman is



giving out of her poverty. She gives what little she has, even though she needs it to live on. Jesus calls that real giving.”¹ Jesus did not measure the widow’s gift by its amount, but He weighed it by her faith that gave it. And while all the other offerings rattled in the room, the widow’s offering rattled Heaven.

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How should we respond to Jesus’ teaching?

OBJ Four Lessons that empower our generosity from the heart by God’s promise of grace.

Lesson 1: Faithfulness and generosity in giving is always a sanctifying process because it causes one to ask many questions of ourselves and of God.

When we pause to consider Jesus’ lesson, it causes one to think deeply about our own life and practices. Do “amounts” matter in giving to the Lord? Jesus’ answer tells us that amounts do matter, but in proportion to supply. All the other gifts were not meaningless to Jesus. He says nothing about their actual value or worth. But Jesus notices what all others would not recognize. A gift that was worth NOTHING to the world, which held no value of good, promise, protection, or provision in the world, this gift was worth everything to Jesus. When it comes to giving we often think, “well, now is when the rich have to step up for the church.” But nothing could be further from the truth. We never throw out the pennies when counting offerings at LifePoint, because the heart that gave it may be a heart of faith like the poor widow, who in Heaven would be considered the most generous person of all. And that’s the kind of heart we want to cultivate among us. Generosity in giving is not, first and foremost, about how much you have, but how much Jesus consumes your heart, your hope, and your whole being.

Generosity is always determined by that which consumes your heart most. If Jesus occupies only a small amount of who you are, then you’ll know you are supposed to give, but won’t want to give because everything else will persuade you that you shouldn’t, that you don’t have to, or that it won’t matter. But when Jesus is Lord, you ask Him first and make your decision as a faith response to His leading in your heart and life. Faith builds the heart of the person that is being made more like Jesus by growing generosity with every offering.

Lesson 2: Jesus calls some to give all their treasure, so He can supply their need by those who do not give all in learning even greater generosity.

Jesus doesn’t call nor command all His people to give all their money, treasure, or possessions. But He does for some. Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell all his possessions and give to the poor, then come follow him. Why did he do that? *When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”*²³ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” **Luke 18:22-25**

In the Scriptures, the only people who have to give it all are those who are completely all-consumed by it. Think about the rich ruler. It was the one thing that stood between him and believing in Jesus. He told the rich ruler this because his money was the one thing that consumed his heart, and blocked Jesus from being Lord. Anything that occupies the throne of one’s heart will have to be overthrown to become a real Christ-follower. In most cases what people give is not because of what Jesus demanded, but rather because what Jesus did in their heart. Zaccheus. As an act of repentance, he paid back four times what he had taken from people. No one told him he had to do that. Jesus didn’t tell him he needed to do that. But his heart was so stirred and changed that he did that.

And when someone gives their all, they entrust themselves to God for their every need. And God uses His people to provide for those needs. This is one of the main reason Luke records this story here, because if you read a few verses earlier (20:47) you will find that Jesus condemns the religious leaders because in their practices they stole from the people, and

¹ Darrell L. Bock, [Luke](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 526.



especially the most vulnerable among them, instead of helping them. LifePoint, in our brief history you have been a generous church. But if that is to continue, we must seek the Lord for every opportunity and testify to cultivate it among all our people. When needs arise, let us be a people who do not ask, “**What got them into this situation?**”, but rather, “God brought them to us. Let's see how He wants to meet their need through us.” because we believe His Word, “*Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.*”(Proverbs 19:17) **And may our resounding prayer always be, “Thank you, Jesus, for every opportunity to be generous, because we know and trust that you are working to make us more like you.”**

Lesson 3: We must never forget that the most important quality of our giving is the posture of our heart toward God, one of full surrender to and dependence upon Jesus.

Jesus does not celebrate her gift and the fact that she will have nothing when she goes away. How broken and dark our thinking to believe God relishes in our suffering. Rather Jesus, as God, felt the weight of her faith in giving her offering, that though she had nothing she gave it all, trusting God for her every provision. But as soon as she gave it the overwhelming love and joy of the Lord welled up to overflow in her soul, because God loves a cheerful giver.

ILLUS I have had people say, “If all Christians tithed the church would never have to worry about money again.” And this is likely true. But it would not solve the problem. Just because a person practices tithing does not mean they honor God in their giving. Even a tithe can be used for personal gain. Two weeks ago, I preached on nine qualities of giving by grace. And I shared with you the great benefit of tithing, that in the tithe you mark your giving by 7 of 9 qualities. However, the two qualities that tithe cannot satisfy are directly related to one's heart posture, cheerfulness and trust in God's promise. These are as important for us as we “weigh” our heart in giving the gift.

When we decide in our heart what we will give, that is where the Lord works in us according to our faith that produced the gift.(2 Corinthians 9:7) **Giving that is from the heart is what gets God's attention.**

Lesson 4: Let us always remember that how one determines their giving to honor God should be weighed against how it impacts your life for Him; whatever means little to us will always have little impact, and what means much to us will hold great impact.

The Scriptures instruct that when one considers giving to the Lord, we are to always first give ourselves to Him. Until you give yourself first, your offering will always mean little to you because it is given with little of you.

ILLUS A single lady once asked, “Pastor, I don't have much to give so I thought I would go to the casino and try to win more for the campaign. How much should I be willing to gamble for this campaign?” I told her, “Don't gamble with one red cent. Only give what you are able and what the Lord tells you, and trust Him to multiply your offering.”

Generosity seldom makes sense to the onlooker. But it always makes sense to God. It gets His attention because He sees the heart. It stirs him to action and even to blessing because He sees one who is completely surrendered to Him. And the person who places themselves in complete dependence of God, trusting in him for all things, will never be found wanting, unsatisfied, or disappointed. **The more our gift means to us, the more it will impact us in giving to the One who sees and rewards.**

Entrusted Commitment Card

Whether you have a lot that you plan to give or whether you only have very little out of which you have to give,

