

32nd Sun OT
Mark 12:38-43

The Widow in The Temple

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury...***A poor widow*** also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents...‘Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury...She, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her while livelihood’.”

The word widow serves as a catchword to introduce the only direct teaching of Jesus addressed to his disciples so far in Jerusalem. Commentators are divided on whether Jesus is lamenting or praising her action. By giving it all up, was she not tempting God?

But others would follow the more traditional interpretation in praising the widow because, ***anticipating Jesus in his coming Passion***, she offered all that she possessed to God. Her commitment to God and trust in him, was total. Unlike James and John asking for seats with Jesus in his glory, or the Scribes looking for places of honor at banquets, she wanted nothing for herself. She joins the ranks of Bartimaeus and the good Scribe in putting before the reader attitudes well worth imitation by those longing for the realization of God’s Kingdom.

The widow’s attitude compares starkly with the brothers of Zebedee in how we interpret God’s will *for us*. Do we request from Jesus to sit at this left and right to help serve him in carrying out God’s will, maybe even in interpreting God’s will like Peter in his rebuke of Jesus’ Passion and Death predictions?

Do we simply do our small and what seems insignificant part in doing God’s will, even if it means giving from our meager and insignificant means, like two copper coins...especially when compared to the rich’s large amounts?

The women who followed Jesus would never have thought of sitting at his left or right to rule, but they did quietly serve him and his disciples by providing for their meals and other means. Did they make a difference?

We might also ask ourselves; do we really make a difference in God's plans for his Kingdom if we are not in important positions whether socially, religiously, or financially?

It seems the bottom line for the widow and for us, is that our reason for giving all we have, whether it makes a difference or not, is that ***it makes a difference to God!*** And hopefully our reason will affect our attitude. People may not know or understand our reason, but they will notice our attitude whether they understand it or not.

If we are already members in the Kingdom of God, it really doesn't make a difference whether we are first or last since everyone counts and everyone is important, and we are all headed in the same direction. Whether the priest or the person in the pew, we are all gathered in Jesus' name. Where two or three are gathered, Christ is in our midst. The priest may represent Christ, but he is NOT Christ. Ex opera operandi, Christ is present in the Sacrament no matter what the state of the priest's soul; the Sacrament is still effective. But notice how much more effective the priest will be the more he becomes like Christ, especially in his attitude.

I like to think of the Church as a boat, which is Mark's favorite symbol. The Church is still safe, even if Jesus is asleep and a storm comes upon us. It does seem at times that he is sleeping, especially when our boat goes in circles. As long as we reach the shore, that is what is important. Even though the Lord has been known to walk across the water and seems ready to pass by, he does at time calls to us to join him, on the water. Now that takes faith, not attitude. Peter had attitude and he sank.

It is the attitude of the widow that would keep us afloat and able to walk out to him. Whereas those with the money might pretty well sink to the bottom with all their treasure in times of great storms.