

# Reflection



- Showing love
- Giving hope
- Bringing peace

The Church of St John & St Leonard

**Mark 12:41-44**

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020**

## **The widow's offering**

*<sup>41</sup> Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. <sup>42</sup> But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few pence.*

*<sup>43</sup> Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. <sup>44</sup> They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on.'*

*New International Version*

This event comes as the crowds have gathered in Jerusalem for Passover. We have already had Jesus' entrance into the city with the crowds getting caught up in the praises of "Hosanna". Within days Jesus will be arrested, crucified and then gloriously risen!

Mark writes as if directing a play. Here he has stilled the pace focusing on an individual. Why is this here? Why has Mark chosen this widow's offering?

The place of this scene is the temple. A place where people come to pray and give offerings to God. A place to be forgiven and restored. In the Passover celebrations a place to remember the rescue from slavery from Egypt and the call to live lives as God intended.

The wealthy throw their money into the treasury. Throwing – making noise, using extravagant gestures, expecting people to see and acknowledge their loud acts of giving. I wonder, is throwing a lack of care of what they have? Are they forgetting that all they have is a gift from God?

The widow puts her coins in the treasury. She is giving all she has. The contrast is a quiet and gentle act. It is an act that most do not see...but Jesus does, and he knows her heart.

I wonder about her faith. God cares for the widows; we see this in the story of the widow and Elijah where the oil and flour she gives to feed him never runs out (1 King 17:7-16). How much does the widow in Mark's passage trust that her God will care and provide for her? I wonder if this is the first time she has given her all, or has she constantly given to the God she loves and seen him continually provide.

As we live through this time of lock-down we see incredible funds given by governments, we see NHS workers and volunteers working tirelessly to care for the sick and vulnerable. School staff, grocery shop and delivery people are working to help all to get what they need. But for many of us we are living quietly and simply. Each day trying to follow the government guidelines, to remain at home.

Jesus watched the people as they gave their offering. Some gave much of their time, some gave financial support. A widow came and put her time to pray for the lost, to

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cry out to God for his mercy and grace. She gave up her daily walks to the shop, gave up seeing her family her time to be loved and touched. She gave up her freedom and trusted in her God to provide and comfort as he had done so many times before.

I wonder what you have given up. What you have gently put in the treasury?

I wonder what act you could do to share the love of God with another this week. Many of us are calling each other on the phone. I wonder if we could share a testimony of his love, a passage of scripture or pray together.

Debbie Nicholls

**Rector: The Revd Vicki Bryson**



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