

Why Give?

Mark 12:41-44

1. *Stewardship* refers to more than money.

“Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes.”

Text: about \$, also woman’s heart. What might we say re: what was in her heart? Why did she give?

Two questions. For each, we’ll give 2 bad answers, then 2 good ones. And in every case, make a little test.

2. Whose? Bad answer: It’s mine. It belongs to me. We tend to think: everything I have belongs to me.

Leads to poor giving: whatever in pocket, but keep big bill for me! Not regular, proportionate, sacrificial.

Not even good to say, “I gave God 10%; rest is for me.” The woman did not think so. She did not give so.

3. God owns all. Every animal of forest, cattle on 1,000 hills. *“It is He who made us, and not we ourselves.”*

Handkerchief test: 2 coins were in handkerchief, then fell out. Would her gift have been the same to God?

Well, God would not have gotten those coins. Still, He owns everything. She trusted herself to this God.

4. Needs? Bad answer: God needs my money. A moment ago we saw how ridiculous that is.

“Cattle on 1,000 hills” helped Him say: *“I have no need of a bull from your stall or goats from your pens.”*

What she gave = not quite 1/30 of day’s wage. It wouldn’t meet much need. But then, God has none.

5. Problems arise when churches get into tight \$, say: We need certain monies to pay bills, make budget.

Problem: when the need passes, giving falls off. Another problem: God is not limited. Creator and Judge!

Handkerchief test: if God has needs, that’s no help to meet them. But He has none. *We need help with sin*

6. Whose? Good answer: I belong to God, not only by way of Creation but also by way of Redemption.

“It is He who made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people, the sheep of His pasture.”

And the Good Shepherd died for us sheep.

Christ *“appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”* (Heb 9:26).

“He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9).

7. While the widow gave her living, all she had to live on, the Lord gave His life. Then He took it up again.

Handkerchief test: her faith the same. Faith that receives Christ & faith that responds to Christ, trusts Him.

She did not think about what others gave, or what might be her “fair share.” She just responded to God.

8. Needs? Good answer: God in Himself has no needs, yet He makes needs of others His own. Mt 25:40.

Handkerchief test: Widow seems to fail this time. Yet God always accomplishes more than we imagine –

not only with what we *do* but also with what we *desire*.

And besides, we have a need: a need to respond to God. The woman’s giving does not at all fail that test.

9-10. Vetter story: My dad and me – we do this all the time.

11. Why give? Well, your money doesn’t belong to you. God does not need it, either.

You belong to the Lord, by Redemption as well as Creation. He makes the needs of others His own.

And as His redeemed child, you have a need to respond to Him.