

## Radical Encounters – The Widow’s Offering

Jonathan Cleveland

Mark 12:41-44

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### **Reflection & Discussion Questions**

#### **Jesus has a radical encounter at the temple in Mark**

Read and discuss Mark 12:41-44 (NIV)

*41 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. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.*

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

\*What is surprising or interesting about this encounter?

\*When looking at this snippet from Mark, what is the lesson we take away about giving?

#### **We learn more about this encounter when we read more of the story**

Read and discuss Mark 12:38-40 (NIV) and Mark 13:1-2

*38 As he taught, Jesus said, “Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, 39 and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. 40 They devour widows’ houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely.”*

*13 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”*

*2 “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”*

\*What more do we see about this encounter when we put it in context?

\*Does Jesus honor the widow’s faithfulness? Does Jesus seem to believe giving money to the temple was worthwhile?

\*How do we embrace both messages sown into this radical encounter?

#### **We should give faithfully and sacrificially – AND THOUGHTFULLY**

We have been set free from religion by Jesus, but also our finances are part of our spirituality.

\*How does what we do with our money affect our hearts?

\*How does our giving get entangled with human systems of getting to God?

- **You are freed from obligatory giving -AND- you should have a God inspired giving strategy**
- **You shouldn’t be guilted into giving -AND- it is sometimes good to give when you don’t want to**
- **You should evaluate where you give -AND- the point of giving is love not efficiency**

\*Has God led you to a strategy for giving?

\*How has a giving experience stretched you outside of your comfort zone?

\*What questions should we ask as we evaluate where we give?

\*Are there ways you’ve learned to give from the heart?

\*What is the next step you are being called to in the conversation about giving?