

View

Opportunities to Help

As we come to the end of the year, and enter the season of giving and thanksgiving, it would be good for us to run a few scenarios across our minds. The scene that challenges me most is found in Mark 12:41-44. Jesus observed people putting money in the treasury and many put in large sums of money. But there was a widow who came along and put in two small copper coins. Jesus made a remarkable statement: He said she put in more than all the others because she put in everything she had.

She gave, not out of her abundance, but *out of her poverty*. Similarly, the churches in Macedonia were "wealthy" in their generosity, as they gave to help the churches in Judea *out of extreme poverty* (II Cor. 8:1ff).

In my life, I have had some difficult times, financially, but I cannot say I have ever been in extreme poverty. I cannot relate to "extreme poverty" at any level. I would have to give a relatively huge sum of money to put in "everything I had." If, on one Sunday, everyone at Folsom gave "every thing they had," our coffers would inflate astronomically. But we could still never give out of our "extreme poverty" because none of us are living in poverty.

What is Jesus teaching us? He is teaching us perspective: how to look at money, wealth. People are panicking because their stocks have taken a hit or their 401k's have taken a dive. But they have not been plunged into poverty, or anywhere near it. Some are selling their boats and RVs, but they are not truly concerned about where their next meal is coming from. Nearly all of us could be thrust from our homes, yet still have the means to get a roof over heads.

Recession? Yes, but only because of the standard of living that we have enjoyed. R = reduction in luxuries, some "disposable" income, but not poverty. Jesus is telling us to put money into perspective and ask the right questions: how can I put this to use to help others?

We learn from those who gave out of their poverty to properly view our wealth. We learn that it's not what we give

The church of Christ

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Services

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM

Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.
Private classes arranged
at your convenience.

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that counts as much as what we have *left over*. Some of us may need to hear what the rich young ruler heard: "Go, sell ALL your possessions, give to the poor and come follow me." Some of us are so tied to money that we need to give it all away before we can be saved. That's a sobering thought. But even giving it away wouldn't help if we didn't follow Jesus in every other way.

That's what this is about. Giving comes naturally for a Christian because he follows Christ. Generosity is every Christian's middle name. Good works are best when we are giving — not only out of our wealth, but also when times are difficult.

This has an impact on our treasury — Christians are "cheerful givers" when the collection plate is passed. But it also has an impact in many other areas. We cannot and

should not satisfy all the giving though the weekly contribution. Nor should we limit our giving to money. We must also be generous with our time, our concern and our patience, which is more difficult than giving money.

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Jesus didn't say that receiving is a curse; he says giving is *more* blessed. It takes a mature Christian to fully understand that concept. Receiving is fun, giving can be life-altering; receiving brings pleasure; giving brings satisfaction; receiving is more important to children; giving is more important to the mature.

There are a lot of opportunities to give among our members here. There are some who simply need some encouragement. A card or a visit is all it takes. But there are some real financial giving

opportunities as well. Here are a few that are being led by individuals (not the church):

- **The Titus Fund.** This helps those in the Philippines who suffer from disease and natural disasters. See Ken Marrs.
- **Sacred Selections.** An organization designed to help fund adoptions and, indirectly, perhaps save a baby's life. See Dana or Dave Carrozza.
- **Zimbabwe relief.** An effort to relieve hunger of our brethren who are facing horrible conditions in Zimbabwe. You can make a financial contribution, donate food or help pack and send food. See Christie or David Posey.
- **Local needs.** Someone in our group probably has a physical need that you may be able to address. One value of being close to each other and getting to know each other better is to open up avenues of communication so we know when a need arises. The ladies workshop is a good place to discover these needs.

DP

Train up a child...

You can Lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him Drink...

You can hand a man the Word of God, but you cannot make him Think.

You can teach a child the words of love, and emulate its glow...

But the multitasking child today may never God's love know.

You can talk about what's good and right, and take your child to church...

But the child whose mind is in the world, is always in a lurch.

So must I give my child to him who will the worst sustain...

My choice begins before he's born, "will he be born again"?

PHIL REMBLESKI