

Mark 12:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them,
Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in,
than all they which have cast into the treasury:

Analysis

Jesus called His disciples and said: 'Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury' (Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἡ χήρα αὕτη ἡ πτωχὴ πλεῖον πάντων ἔβαλεν τῶν βαλλόντων εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον). The widow gave 'more' (pleion, πλεῖον) than all others—not absolutely but proportionately. Jesus measured giving not by amount but by sacrifice. The solemn 'Verily I say' (Amēn legō, Ἀμὴν λέγω) emphasizes this truth's importance. God's mathematics differ from human calculations—the smallest monetary gift given sacrificially surpasses large gifts from abundance. This principle transforms Christian stewardship: not 'how much can I afford to give?' but 'how much can I afford to keep?' Sacrificial giving demonstrates trust, worship, and kingdom priorities.

Historical Context

Jesus' counter-cultural valuation shocked disciples accustomed to honoring wealthy benefactors. Greco-Roman society operated on patron-client relationships—wealthy donors received public honor, inscriptions, prominent seats. Judaism similarly honored major contributors to temple and synagogues. Jesus inverted this value system, declaring the destitute widow's penny offering superior to rich men's gold. This became paradigmatic for Christian values: God doesn't evaluate by worldly standards (1 Corinthians 1:26-29). The early church practiced radical generosity—sharing possessions (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37), collecting for needy

churches (2 Corinthians 8-9), and teaching proportionate giving according to ability (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:12). The widow's example inspired countless Christians to sacrificial stewardship.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' evaluation of the widow's gift challenge worldly measures of significance based on amounts rather than sacrifice?
2. What does proportionate giving (measured by what remains, not what's given) reveal about our true treasure and trust?

Interlinear Text

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῖς λέγω
And **he called** ^{G3588} **disciples** **unto them** **I say**
G2532 G4341 G3101 G846 G3004

αὐτοῖς Ἀμὲν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἡ χήρα αὕτη ἡ
unto them **Verily** **I say** **unto you** **That** ^{G3588} **widow** **this** ^{G3588}
G846 G281 G3004 G5213 G3754 G5503 G3778

πτωχὴ πλεῖον πάντων βαλόντων τῶν βαλόντων εἰς τὸ
poor **more** **than all** **hath cast** ^{G3588} **hath cast** **into** ^{G3588}
G4434 G4119 G3956 G906 G906 G1519

γαζοφυλάκιον·
the treasury
G1049

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 8:2 (Parallel theme): How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

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