

Week of January 13, 2008

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Monday

Mark 12:43 And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury."

God measures the heart, not the purse. Since God owns all the materials of the world, His concern has little to do with values, amounts, or dollar fluctuations. Our giving is not measured in heaven by dollar amounts but by our spirit, our obedience, and our faithfulness. The amount of our giving and its proportion to our income reflect all three: our spirit, our obedience, and our faith. That is why, by God's measure, this woman put in more than all the rest.

Tuesday

Mal. 3:10 "...test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."

It's still God's promise. Those who faithfully tithe of their income will find God faithful to His word. This promise is conditional. This test is two sided. The windows of heaven are not opened to all, not even to all believers. The overflowing blessings of God are not automatic; they come as a result of obedience. Are you looking for God's blessing without obeying God's direction? Is it true in this area of stewardship? Is it true in some other area of your life?

Wednesday

Mark 12:41 And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury.

Some say that God does not care about my cash, but this passage reveals the truth. God is watching our giving habits and watching them closely. He takes note of the proportion of our giving in relation to our wealth. He takes notice of the heart of the giver, not just the amount. Giving has always revealed the true nature of the giver's faith. Jesus watches each week, observing how and why and even how much we give. Does God see your faithfulness?

Thursday

Luke 11:42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done *without neglecting the others*."

Jesus does not restate the Ten Commandments, but they are still in place. He does not restate the promise and responsibility of the 'tithe', but neither does He cancel them. Old Testament principles that carry into the New Testament era are often simply taken for granted by the New Testament's pages. Such is the 'tithe'. Jesus does not speak of it often because it is taken for granted, here he emphasizes its place. What emphasis do you find here for you?

Friday

Mal. 3:11 "Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it may not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes," says the LORD of hosts.

In an agricultural world the threat of varmints and diseased crops was great. Even today the farmer fears the dual disasters of drought and blight. God promises to protect us from the uncontrollable financial disasters of life as we learn the lessons of the tithe. This is not a 'name it and claim it' theology, but a promise of divine protection and grace. This is the promise of God's supernatural power at work in your practical life. Why would anyone not desire the protective and gracious power of God?