

Mt Carmel UMC

November 10, 2024

“The Widow’s Might” - Mark 12:38-44 - Rev. Jeffrey B. Childs

Jesus Is Watching. There are a lot of stories in the Gospels of people wanting to come and see Jesus, but there are also stories to let us know that Jesus is watching us. If you believe and remember the first line of the 23rd Psalm – “The Lord is my Shepherd...” What do shepherds do? They watch the sheep. The word shepherd comes from the same root word for chaperone – the one who watches the children or youth. Sometimes we might think that we can get away with something because no one is watching...but Jesus is watching. In this text he was watching the legal experts and noticed how they were not really helping the people but actually were hurting the people. How did Jesus put it, they show off and they cheat widows out of their homes?! Is it any wonder that a poor widow becomes the prime example of faithful giving in this story?

Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus (Luke 19:1-10). But he was short, and so he had to climb a tree to see Jesus. He thought he was an innocent by-stander. But Jesus saw him and stopped and invited himself and his disciples to dinner at Zac’s house. And Jesus kept an eye on him to the point where Zacchaeus was convicted to come clean and confess, that if he had cheated anyone even though no one saw, he would repay four times as much, and then he offered to give away half of all he had. He was transformed from a by-stander to a “stand-byer.” He would now “stand by” Jesus and be as honest and open and faithful as he could be. Jesus is not looking for by-standers or casual observers. Jesus is looking for disciples. Jesus is watching to see who is rolling up their sleeves and getting involved; making a positive difference and changing the world. In the temple near the treasury, he saw a woman.

The Widow’s Mite is the heading given to this story in King James Version of the Bible. Mite is a something small, and here it is the small coins. The focus here is given to the two small copper coins that were only really seen by two people. Remember Jesus is watching! Jesus saw the woman and he saw the coins. I wonder if their eyes met as they shared this holy moment?! Everyone else seems to dismiss her and her miniscule donation. They are focusing instead on the ones who bring in the biggest sacks of gold and silver. But if you think about it, do you know who else saw the two copper coins? The woman saw the coins! She saw them for what they represented to her - all she had. This was food for her to live on. This was clothing; this was shelter. This was everything. She gave her all. I wonder what it might take for us to have faith, like that woman with just the two small coins, and give our all?

Today I want to focus on *The Widow’s Might*. This may be a little play on words, but it is huge, for this is not really a story about the two small copper coins called a mite, but about the might of this poor widow who could give her all. I once heard a story from a colleague of mine, the Rev. Meri Whitaker, who was a missionary in Oklahoma. The church she served needed a special offering just to pay the heat bill. Sitting next to a poor widow Meri noticed that she put \$35 in the plate and afterwards asked her about it. This was the money the woman had saved for a winter coat, but when the church needed the money, she couldn’t refuse to give. She surrendered all. She had the might to give

and to trust that it would be alright. This kind of might makes right! Do you have the faith and the might to give your all?

Do all you might, with all your might. Think about this woman whom Jesus saw who gave not her 2 cents worth - but gave her all. I invite you to be like the widow and give your all. Live your life, live your faith to the fullest. What might Jesus see today? His church being the church! His church giving it their all! Today I invite you to make a difference in this world. I hear about things like that, don't you? Maybe not so much during their lifetimes, but as last Sunday we gathered to remember the saints or at the funerals and visitations when stories are told. We hear about how someone, somehow made a difference – made an impact on someone else's life. When a situation arises and you think, "Somebody ought to do something about that!" Be a somebody! Do something. Give it your all. Alleluia and Amen.

Jesus Noticed the Widow's Mite

Jeffrey B. Childs 11/4/2024

Jesus noticed the widow's mite,
As she gave God all that she might.
Others gave bags with huge amounts,
She gave her all by all accounts.

This woman gave God everything.
Of her great faith we come to sing.
Jesus taught his followers to,
Keep off themselves in all they do.

In Jesus' name give it your all,
Size doesn't matter, large or small.
What matters is your attitude,
Humbly give with your gratitude.