

Mark 12:41-44

Mark's recording of Jesus' observation of the widow is surprisingly understated. What seems like an anticlimactic end to his public ministry is actually a startling contrast. The widow's meekness falls against the background of a magnificent and lavish temple. The widow's two coins stand in contrast to the rich contributors to the treasury. And the widow's trust in God exposes those that seek the praise of men.

- 1) Read verses 38-40. Below is a list of descriptions of the teachers of the law:
- walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces
 - most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.
 - They devour widows' houses and
 - for a show make lengthy prayers.

Next to each phrase, write one word that describes them.

2) Now, read verses 41-44 and compare it with the passage before, verses 38-40. What are the contrasts you see?

3) Jesus commends the widow for "giving more" than the others. What does Jesus mean by this? Is this passage about money? Sacrifice? Something else?

4) By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Mark put this passage as the last of Jesus public ministry. What is the significance of that? How is the widow similar to Jesus and what He is to experience in just a few days?

5) What are some areas or things in your life that you have difficulty letting go (money, security, kids, job, hobbies, toys)?

6) Jesus points out the example of a widow. Why is she an example to us? What is it about her that we should emulate?