

Seeing with the Eyes of Jesus

The Widow's Offering

⁴¹ He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. ⁴³ Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴ For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

A woman, a mother, a widow.

We don't know who she was. She has no name.

I wish I knew her name and would not remember her as the "widow who had 2 mites"... It's sad because a few important Bible women, who are teaching very important lessons, are without a name. And here in this story, it is kind of sad, that we talk more about the two mites than about the widow.

If you google 2 mites, the first thing that appears is "the widows 2 mites, widow with two mites."

If I tell you, that 2 mites in today's currency are only 0.25 US cents – how does that sound to you. Imagine putting 0.25 cents in the offering box? We wouldn't even think about doing it.

But back to the woman:

As I often do – I want to give her a name – I will call her Liara - "Light", "inner peace".

In Mark 12 41/42 we read...

And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow called Liara came and threw in two mites.

She put in 2 mites...

For most of us, the small money she gave would be nothing - it wouldn't mean anything to us. But it was all, it was everything she could give. She gave her all to God, for the love of God, with all her heart. Maybe also with pain in her chest...

After her husband's death, where would she get an income from?

Her Husband earned most of the money, I'll stick to "most" because we don't know if she tried her best by selling things on the market or not.

From the story I learn: During Jesus' times, it was better to have much than less. People with good reputation would ignore you because you were poor. The priests in the temple did. The rich visitors to the temple did.

Everyone with money would not even try to talk to you or be around you when you were poor.

So, this woman who had nothing, was not even important at all. People wouldn't see her effort of trying to give. In their eyes what she did, didn't count.

She was a person to look down on.

But Jesus saw her with different eyes, he saw her action and what she gave. And it touched his heart.

Rich people would never understand the difference between what she did and what they were doing. It was easy for them to drop money in the basket.

Whether Liara gave something or didn't give anything, didn't matter to the rich and powerful.

Liara was poor.

She had nothing.

She was a nobody.

But Jesus saw her.

He saw far more than a poor widow. Or the little money she gave. He saw into her heart, was touched by the way she 'd moved through the temple yard, and he knew her story.

Because Jesus was so moved by Liara – he loved her and wanted to make the others see her with loving eyes, too.

He didn't want to keep his love and affection for the young woman to himself. He called his disciples and shared her story with them. He wanted them to see who he sees...

Did the disciples understand what Jesus tried to tell them?

She was a poor widow, why would Jesus' friends be interested in her story or pay attention to her? Weren't there much more important and powerful people in the temple that day?

The disciples were just like everybody else, I guess. But Jesus made them change their focus.

Jesus wanted to change their way of thinking.

He changed mine too.

Just because Liara didn't give as much as the others gave, it wasn't worthless. It meant everything to her. And that is what counts.

To Jesus it was immediately clear that she had given all she has. ...no "let me put in half of the money, so I still have some left to buy food". No.

Her love for God was bigger than her hunger. She knew, that she could trust in God. God would provide for her. She could tell he did, since her husband had died.

I think, it's important to understand that you can have "nothing" but most of the time its more than others have.

You can have nothing, but there still is your pride, your hunger for life, your desire to love, your willingness to care, your longing for a better future, your dreams which have not died.

What matters is the way we see the things. What matters is to learn seeing with Jesus' eyes.

Maybe the poor widow was in her understanding rich, confident and happy, not because she had much money but much love. I imagine Liara not alone on her journey through life. There was always God, I guess, and God's people. All those who had their eyes opened through Jesus.

It is important to understand, that through Jesus, we can change the way we see things. We get a second chance to overthink things and stories. We do not have to judge at first sight. We can even change our minds, let God and his love transform us – over and over again.

What Liara's story teaches me, is: Money can buy you safety and fun. Yes. But it will never make you as happy as love can do.

It's not the money that counts, but our actions. Sharing hugs, listening to your friend's problem, inviting God into your life, or pray, is more than the rich can give with their money.

Just ask yourself... what can I give that is worth more than money?

If you know the answer, just remember it every day. On days on which you feel you haven't got much to give, remember it.

If you don't know the answer yet, then do know: the answer will come - unexpected and at the right time.

Liara, who in the eyes of the rich and powerful had nothing – but in the eyes of Jesus had all she needed to live as a beloved woman of God can transform us today and every day.

Remember her little story.

See her with the eyes of Jesus.

Love her and others like Jesus did. Amen