



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

A Story of Devotion!

Luke 21:1-4

Message #62 of 70 – S852

Sermon given on July 14, 2019



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Story of Devotion!

Luke 21:1-4

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 21**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- One of the words we use in the church is devotion, or devotions, or devotionals
- It is often referring to our quiet time with God
- For example; I wrote a book of devotions – meant to help you as you spend time with the Lord
- Devotion is not a Christian word
- Parents can be devoted to their children
- Husbands and wives can be devoted to their marriage
- Athletes can be devoted to their sport
- Artists to their craft – businesspeople to their companies
- As Christians, we should be devoted to God, right?
- Can you measure devotion? And if you can, how do you measure devotion?
- And is there a benefit to devoting some or all your life to God?
- This morning we are going to look at the brief story of a woman and her devotion to God
- The story God is trying to write in your life is a story of devotion
- Let's pray and then see how we might devote more of our story to God
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Story of Devotion!**
- In chapter 20, Jesus had to deal with a bunch of religious guys and the leaders of Israel
- When He wasn't interacting with them, He was teaching and preaching to the people who gathered in the temple area
- People from all over Israel have come to Jerusalem for the Passover

- One of the things people would do while they were there is give an offering of money
- Arranged around the temple area were thirteen brass treasuries
- People would come up and pour their money – coins of gold, silver, copper and other metals
- It would make quite a racket as they poured their offering into the treasury
- Jesus takes a break from teaching to watch people as they are giving

- **Luke 21:1-2**

- One of things that this reminds us about is that God is always watching us **Psalm 139:1-4**

O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.

- For me that is both comforting and convicting
- I love the fact that God's eyes are never off me – He is watching over me
- It is also convicting because sometimes He is watching me do something I shouldn't be doing or not doing something I should be doing – we might feel like Paul **Romans 7:15; 24-25**

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do... O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

- As Jesus watches this scene, the rich are coming and pouring lots of money into the treasury – probably making quite a racket
- And then comes along a 'certain poor widow' – just some random woman
- Everything we know about this woman is found here and in the parallel passage in Mark
- Widows wore certain kind of clothing that marked them as widows
- If she was poor, they might have been a little ragged
- She walks up to the treasury where the rich are pouring in big bags of money and she drops in two mites
- The mite was the smallest coin in circulation – worth less than a penny
- When the rich dropped in their money everyone noticed

- When she dropped in her two mites – might not have made a sound – no one would have noticed – no one except Jesus
- In Mark's gospel it says Jesus called His disciples over
- **Luke 21:3-4**
- Jesus expresses a spiritual principle here that is alien to most people, including to most Christians
- Too often people are focused on how much they have to give – what is the right amount or percentage
- Listen – money matters – it matters to us and it matters to God **R.**

Kent Hughes

God does not want our money. He wants us. And yet we cannot give ourselves to God apart from our money.

- What Jesus saw in the poor widow's two mites was her devotion to God
- No one in her culture would have rebuked her if had given nothing
- She had two mites – she could have kept one and still would have given more than everyone else there
- One aspect that is implicit in the idea of devotion is sacrifice
- You cannot be devoted to something and not sacrifice something else
- If you are devoted to your children, you will sacrifice a career or friendships
- Before I was saved, I was devoted to my career – to do that I sacrificed time with my family
- It is only by God's grace that I didn't lose my family
- True devotion is sacrificial – it will cost something
- If it isn't costing something, you probably aren't really devoted to it
- Can devotion to God be measured? Yes!
- Jesus uses a very tangible way to measure devotion, but giving is not the only way to measure devotion
- I would like to draw your attention to three things in verse four that we can use to measure our devotion
- First, her devotion was **Elevated**
- 'she out of her poverty put in all...'
- The Passover was an opportunity for her to express her devotion to God and she didn't let her circumstances deter her

- She would not use her poverty as an excuse not to express her love for God
- Poverty is not just a money thing
- I have had people tell me they can't serve at church because Sunday is the only day they have off
- Or a man will tell me he can't pray with his wife because he is tired when he comes home
- This poor widow rose above her circumstances to express her love for God and her devotion to Him
- The second thing – she was **Abandoned** in her devotion
- 'she...put in **all** the livelihood she had.'
- The rich were putting in offerings out of their abundance
- After their offerings they still had an abundance – more than they needed
- She didn't hold anything back from God
- And notice she was unashamed of her devotion to God
- While the rich are dropping in large amounts, she gets right in line with them and drops in her two mites
- It didn't matter what anyone else thought about her giving
- Third – she was **Trusting** in her devotion
- 'all the livelihood that she had' = everything that she had to live on
- She walked away from that act of devotion with nothing for tomorrow
- This was a radical expression of her trust that God would provide for her what she needed
- She was a living example of **Matthew 6:31-34**
Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.
- Her two mites proved that she trusted God
- Does your devotion to God prove that you trust God?
- We are going to partake of Communion in a little bit
- I would like you to take a little time and think about your own devotion to God

- Is it elevated above your circumstances?
- Is it abandoned – are you giving all of yourself to God?
- Is it trusting God for what you are sacrificing?
- Someone might be thinking – I don't have anything to give that will make a difference
- What difference did two mites make – a fraction of a penny – it wouldn't even buy a little oil for the lamps in the temple
- Jesus took her two mites and multiplied them hundreds of millions of times over in the hearts of men and women to devote themselves more to God
- Jesus can take your two mites and do infinitely more than you can imagine
- You were created by God to be devoted to God
- We live a devoted life by giving Him all our lives and letting Him decide how our lives are lived
- We live with our hearts wide open to God
- We choose to sacrifice anything we must to express our devotion to God
- Once we do that, everything we do in life becomes an expression of our devotion to God
- The way we live out our marriage and raise our family
- The way we work and develop our careers
- Everything becomes an opportunity to express our devotion to God
- And yes, it will affect how we relate to money
- We will examine our spending and giving – looking for opportunities to express our devotion to God – whether it is two mites or great gifts
- The story of your life is the story of Jesus living out of you
- It is a story of elevated, abandoned, and trusting devotion to God
- Reflect on that for a moment as we prepare to commune with the Lord
- **Pray!**