

Out of Abundance

“And He said, 'Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.'” Luke 21:3-4.

When Jesus taught and answered questions in the temple, He looked up and saw the wealthy putting their gifts into the offering box. But then a poor widow put in two copper coins, each called a *lepton* and worth about 1/128th of a day's wage. He then commented that she gave out of her poverty whereas the rest gave out of their abundance.

This is what it means to have wealth: To have an abundance of something. Having more than is necessary. A person can be wealthy in many different ways. A person can be wealthy in monetary terms, having more money than they know how to handle. A wealthy farmer can have an abundance of food and livestock and survive just fine without any cash. Wealth comes in many different ways and forms for all kinds of people in all kinds of societies.

The great dangers of wealth has always been taking for granted whatever it is of which one has an abundance and to forget that all things come from God in the first place. An abundance of money, then, can lead to a hoarding of, and reliance on, wealth, rather than acknowledging that wealth comes from God, thus relying on God, and using the blessing of money in a way that pleases Him. The same can be said of nearly all kinds of wealth that one may receive during one's lifetime.

One of the problems facing the modern church is that Christians are tempted to give to God out of our abundance. Not out of our abundance of money, mind you (though this can be a problem, too), but specifically out of our abundance of time. Our society is a society that has a wealth of time. As a society that has a wealth of time, we tend to fill up our schedules with appointments and *have to dos* to the point that God is only granted the abundance of time, not the first fruits of it. We have a tendency to hoard it, store it up, and keep it for ourselves, not realizing that time comes from God in the first place and that we have a responsibility to steward it in a way that pleases Him.

Not all have this kind of wealth today. There are many who struggle to make ends meet during the limited hours of the day. But for those who are wealthy in this way, even in this wealth should not be given to God out of our abundance, but out of the first fruits of what He's given to us.

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