

Faith Of A Certain Poor Widow

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*As I look back over those years, no matter what the reason was for my giving,
I thank God with all of my heart that I gave!*

As you and I face this year together, let me help you by sharing one of the greatest revelations that God has ever given me on the kind of faith it takes to prosper in troubled times.

Mark 12:41 through 44 says: (41) *And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. (42) And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. (43) And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow bath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: (44) For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.*

Have you ever wondered who this widow woman was who loved God so much that, even though she had lost her husband, she was not bitter at God.

Even though she was poor and the Temple where she had cast in all of her living cost a fortune to build, she was not full of resentment at God because religion seemed to have so much while she had so little.

One thing I know for sure, the faith of this woman touched the heart of God and you can rest assured that He took care of her, for this woman's faith has become a permanent part of the Word of God and shall stand as a testimony FOREVER!

Remember this, it is not the lawful act of giving out of duty or fear or because you feel obligated from being pressured and condemned that causes God's greatest blessings.

In the case of the widow woman, it was not the amount that she gave, the amount was almost nothing. It was the tremendous faith that she had in God that caused her to look past the wealth of the Temple, past the hurt of losing her husband and being left destitute...

The kind of faith that says, "Father God, I trust you with all my heart and I will serve you when times are good ... and I will serve you when times are bad, either way, Father God ... I will serve you."

All of my born-again life I have been giving to God and, for the first eight years, my tithes and offerings were acts of obedience. I obeyed because I was afraid of what might happen if I did not. There was no faith in my giving.

The image that I had of God was not that of "Father God" but more on the order of the kind of God that a person would make sacrifices to. And, even though I feared Him, there was something on the inside of me that loved Him (which I have come to know as the love nature of my born-again spirit).

I SO WANTED TO PLEASE HIM that I began to pay double tithes thinking the whole time that it was my personal sacrifices that pleased God ... a kind of prideful humility from suffering and going without for the Kingdom of God's sake.

As I look back over those years, no matter what the reason was for my giving, I thank God with all of my heart that I gave!

Now that God has taught me how to prosper, it is easy to look back, not only upon my own life but on the lives of many, many believers throughout the years, and pinpoint a certain pattern that emerged.

Everyone who was tithing and giving out of duty or fear or because they were being pressured and condemned never seemed to really prosper.

It is not as though God did not take care of them, HE DID! But they never seemed to prosper beyond their everyday struggle with the affairs of life. You know, always caught up in their own needs!

The reason for this is, when giving becomes a duty or an obligation, a person will not do any more for God than their basic commitment or just what is necessary!

The problem with this is, IT IS NOT THE DOLLAR AMOUNT THAT YOU ARE GIVING THAT GOD IS LOOKING AT ... IT IS THE FAITH THAT IT TAKES FOR YOU TO GIVE IT!

In Luke 6:38, Jesus said that the measure that you mete ... or the measure that you give, shall be measured unto you again.

How could the widow woman have given more than all the rich men who cast their money into the treasury that day if the measure that she gave was not based on the measure of faith that it took her to give it?

Jesus was not against those rich men who gave out of their abundance any more than He is against systematic tithing or giving a set amount each month.

But, as far as heaven is concerned, the rewards and blessings are 'not based on the amount that you give as much as it is on the faith that it took for you to give it.

One man could give \$50,000.00 and it would mean nothing to him. Another person could give \$5.00 and it would mean the whole world.

A man's life does not consist of the abundance of the things that he has! There are a lot of wealthy Christians who are just as smart as the world when it comes to making money . They capitalize on a free enterprise system and can match the sinner dollar for dollar.

But let the system collapse and the same faith that they displayed when they gave the \$50,000.00 would not be enough faith to believe in a loaf of bread! Whereas, on the other hand, the person who had the faith to give the \$5.00 would be sustained under the same circumstances.

IT IS NOT THE AMOUNT, IT IS THE FAITH THAT IT TAKES YOU TO GIVE IT!

As faith people, we have a tendency to categorize believers into groups. We will look at one group of believers and say, "Boy, they sure have a lot of faith for finances!"

Then we will look at another group and say, "They sure have a lot of faith when it comes to believing God for the healing of the body."

And, we cannot help but wonder ... how is it that some believers seem to have so much faith in one particular area and almost none in another.

The truth of it all is, when it comes to making money, what some of us mistake for faith is ability. And, because we mistake ability for faith, then we get confused as to why the person can believe in so much money yet when it comes to the healing of their body, they seem to have no faith at all.

So we sum it all up by saying, "Well, this person has developed their faith in the area of finances but not in the area of healing!"

The truth of the matter is, if faith will work in one area, it will work in another! Hebrews 11;1 says:

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

What faith really is, is the ability to believe and, even though you cannot see what you are believing for, something on the inside does not care, it has the ability to believe it anyway.

The issue surrounding faith is not "WHAT" you are believing for, whether it be finances or healing, but rather the issue is whether or not you can believe that something exists that you cannot see!

Believe me, if you can believe that something exists in one area that you cannot see such as finances, then you can believe something exists in other areas that you cannot see such as healing and lost loved ones, etc.!

The same kind of faith that would cause you to prosper in the Kingdom of God or sustain you in troubled times is the same kind of faith that would sustain you when your money is not worth the paper it is printed on.

It is the same kind of faith that the widow woman had when she reached into the heart of God and touched Him with two mites and a million dollars worth of FAITH!

'This is why you cannot measure a man's faith by how much wealth he 'has but you CAN measure his faith by how much of that wealth he is willing to part with for the Gospel's sake!

When I first began to see these principles, it caused me to understand why God had dealt with me the way that He had in certain areas concerning giving and prosperity.

Just like you, I wanted to know how to believe God for His genuine prosperity. Not the kind that crashes with the economy or does not work any more upon suddenly finding yourself in India with no one to turn to.

Like most Christians, I had settled into a set pattern of tithing and giving a certain amount monthly as well as an occasional pledge of some kind.

What I did not understand at the time was that it was not the set amount of money that I was giving each month that released God to move. It was the faith that it took for me to give it! For the thing God uses to bless us with is the VERY SAME FAITH it takes for us to give!

SO, IN MY SET PATTERN OF GIVING, WHAT I HAD DONE WAS PUT A CEILING ON MY FAITH! No matter how much I wanted to prosper above that ceiling I could not! Because the one thing that God needed from me in order to remove the ceiling off of my faith was the kind of giving and obedience that would cause my faith to grow – to reach across those set barriers of duty and obligation to give God something to work with!

Like most faith people who know that they have been redeemed from poverty, I began to claim things! You know ... like a higher income, a new car, more finances for the ministry, etc..

The problem was, most of these things were above the ceiling of my faith.

So, do you know what God did? He did not do what I thought He would. I thought that He would send someone around with the keys to a new car, big fat checks of prosperity, etc..

In my carnality I kept thinking as do most people, that after praying and confessing the Word all I would have to do was wait and watch for the things that I was believing for to begin to show up.

Because I was looking for signs in the natural, I kept missing what God was doing in supernatural.

You see, in order for God to bless me above the realm I was operating in, He had to bring my faith level up! And the way He did that was by sending people and situations to me with needs.

And, like the widow woman who gave all of her living, those needs always required more faith than the set pattern I had locked myself into at the time! So, in order for God to meet my needs, He sent me people who had needs.

THE NEXT STEP WAS UP TO ME!

Through all of this, I noticed there were three definite steps that take place between God and any person who wants to experience the true prosperity of God.

1. The first step is to realize the perfect will of God for your life and to actively pursue the same for the good of others as III John 2 says: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest PROSPER and be in health, even as thy soul PROSPERETH."

2. The second step is to understand it is the supernatural hand of god moving on your behalf when He sends people with needs and special opportunities your way to afford you the opportunity to support the Gospel towards the lost.

3. The third step is to understand it is the same faith that you use in those special opportunities to meet people's needs that God uses to bless you above what you are already operating in.

.And, remember ... the same God that can send someone by with a need ... can send someone by with your blessing!

For Jesus said, "I will cause men to give unto your bosom."

I encourage and challenge you to look for a way to raise the ceiling on your faith! God will use this to continue your maturity as His children!