



From the Desk of Father Peter

What does the Bible Say About Giving?



The Widow's Offering There are at least three important things about giving in this story of the widow's offering: **God values our offerings differently than man does.**

In God's eyes, the value of the offering is not determined by the amount of the offering. The text says that the wealthy gave large amounts, but the widow's offering was of much higher value because she gave all that she had. It was a costly sacrifice. Note that Jesus did not say she put in more than any of the others; he said she put in more than all the others.

*Our attitude in giving is important to God. The text says Jesus "watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury." Jesus observed the people as they gave their offerings, and he watches today as we give. If we give to be seen by men or with a stingy heart toward God, our offering loses its value. Jesus is more interested and impressed by **how** we give than **what** we give. We see this same principle in the story of Cain and Abel. God evaluated Cain and Abel's offerings. Abel's offering was pleasing in God's eyes, but he rejected Cain's. Rather than giving to God out of thankfulness and worship, Cain may have presented his offering with evil or selfish intent. Maybe he had hoped to receive special recognition. Regardless, Cain knew the right thing to do, but he didn't do it. God even gave Cain an opportunity to make things*

right, but he chose not to. This illustrates again that God watches what and how we give.

God not only cares about the quality of our gifts to him, but also the attitude in our hearts as we offer them.

God doesn't want us to be overly concerned with how our offering is spent. At the time Jesus observed this widow's offering, the temple treasury was managed by the corrupt religious leaders of that day. But Jesus did not mention anywhere in this story that the widow should not have given to the temple. Although we should do what we can to ensure that the ministries we give to are good stewards of God's money, we can't always know for certain that the money we give will be spent correctly. We should not be overly burdened with this concern, nor should we use this as an excuse not to give. It's important for us to find a good church that is wisely managing its financial resources for God's glory and for the growth of God's kingdom. But once we give to God, we don't need to worry about what happens to the money. This is God's problem to resolve. If a church leader or a ministry misuses its funds, God knows how to deal with them.

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*Peace and blessings to all,
Fr. Peter Enyan-Boadu*