

One of the nice things about Jesus was that he used a lot of parables when he was trying to teach his disciples - and everyone through the ages - about how God works.

Jesus was sent to this little ball floating around the Sun with a message. That message had nothing to do with world events and lifestyles. He came to teach us about the spirit world where God dwells which is quite different from this world, yet connected. It wasn't an easy sell. A lot of people didn't buy into his message back then, and many today still don't.

Jesus gave us many examples of this connection between the world we live in and the spirit world and what makes them different. These parables gives us a basic situation we all can understand and then shows us how the world and how God would look at the same situation from a different perspective.

Today I wanted to talk about one of these parables found in Marks gospel.

Jesus tells us the story of the scribes and wealthy who gave a portion of their wealth to the treasury and the poor woman who gave all the money she had, yet a very small amount.

Then Jesus asks his disciples who contributed more?

When you focus on the world we live in, it's an easy answer that the wealthy gave more. Certainly, their contributions enables the religious leaders to provide more services for the community they serve, where the small amount the poor woman gave will have little impact within the life of the community.

But Jesus shows us that God uses a different calculator.

The poor woman gave more, not because she gave all she had but because she gave everything she had from a heart of love. The numbers on Gods calculator are derived from the heart, not the wallet.

In the world we live in there are people at many different levels of finances. Some are born into wealthy families and will never know financial struggles. Others are born into absolute poverty and will experience few days without hunger. And most of us live somewhere in-between.

There is no way God can judge any of us by our finances as it is in the world. The only

way to be fair is to judge us all by our hearts.

That's the calculator in the spirit world.

In our world, the wealthy get a lot of recognition and are treated with respect for their bank accounts. At the Zoo, there are plaques that reflect names of people at nearly every exhibit that have donated generously to make that exhibit possible for all of us to enjoy. That recognition is deserved, certainly, and makes it possible for a young, growing Zoo to keep moving forward in expanding its product.

But in the spirit world, God brings in the heart of each person to calculate the value of their giving. Be it the poor woman or the wealthy scribe the value of giving will always focus on the WHY.

There are many wealthy people who give generously to causes they truly care about and want to support. Their 'spiritual' plaque of recognition is just as deserved as it is in our world.

I often hear people make comments that suggests that Jesus was always making a case against people of wealth. It's true that Jesus uses the wealthy a lot in his parables, but he never says being wealthy is a bad thing. He uses wealthy people as a clear example of separation between the world we live in and the spirit world.

Jesus never got into worldly issues, and finances is certainly a worldly issue. Money plays a big role in our life here, but plays no role in the spirit world. When a person passes over to the spirit world, their worldly possessions are divided up between those left behind. In the spirit world, your wealth is measured by the love in your heart.

We will all face our own 'judgement day' when we cross over to the spirit world. Through the many parables used by Jesus, we can be certain that in Gods world the judgement will always be the 'why'.

I have often said, "The one who said 'give 'til it hurts was a genius because when you give from the heart, it never hurts."