
Giving from Poverty

**An article from the Cathedral Times
by Dean Sam Candler**

(From Dean Sam Candler's sermon on 11 November 2018. See the entire sermon [here](#).)

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."
Mark 12:41-44

Where is the church going to get the money it needs? ... Some of us depend upon the big donors. And, believe me, the church needs generous large donors. Many churches, and ours, too, appreciate those who give from their abundance. Jesus said elsewhere, "From those to whom much is given, much is required" (Luke 12:48). That is good. I enjoy people who give out of their abundance. The church needs people like that. We really do.

And so, when Jesus looked at the Temple treasury one day, he saw the marvelous new building projects, and the new classrooms, and he appreciated how they were named. There was Jeremiah Hall, given by the beautiful Jeremiah family. There was the exquisite Isaiah courtyard. And there was the lovely Leviticus Hall, given by the historic Levite family.

Those gifts are incredibly important! Thank you! But Jesus also noticed something else that day. He certainly did not condemn the large givers. But what he remarked upon was the person who was giving out of her poverty. ... What was it about her gift that Jesus applauded? What does it mean to give out of one's poverty? Well, if poverty means being poor in something, Jesus is saying "Blessed are the people who give out of the places where they are poor."

People who give out of their poverty give from the places where they are weakest. Maybe they don't have much money; but they give it, and they give a lot of it, often more generously than the people who do have lots of money. ... Poverty, like wealth, can be about things other than money. Many of us are poor in spirit, poor in relationships, poor in happiness, poor in courage, poor in wisdom; we even feel poor in love.

What does it mean to give out of our poverty when our poverty is about something other than money? Well, the principle is the same. I believe Jesus means to give from any place in our lives that feels weak, or thin, or poor. I believe Jesus means to give from the place we feel the weakest, from the place where we feel the poorest. That's what giving from our poverty means.

Are you poor in relationships? Then, give from there. Invite someone to sit with you at church, in the park, go for a walk with someone. Are you feeling poor in courage? Give even your most meager attempt at bravery! Many military veterans, here today on Veterans Day, know what that is like—to be brave when they were not feeling courageous at all. We salute them!

Are you feeling poor in love, as if no one loves you? Then, give from that place! Go give whatever small sliver of love you do have to someone else! It is amazing what happens when people who don't think they are loved go out and try loving someone.

Are you feeling unhappy about yourself? Are you poor in happiness? Well, giving from that place means going out and finding someone else for whom you can be happy. Yes, try being happy for someone else! The odds are you will feel happier about yourself as well.

Give from whatever place you feel the weakest. Sometimes that requires some self-examination. Where am I the weakest? Where am I the poorest? That is the place from which God invites me to give.

(See Dean Sam Candler's entire sermon [here](#).)

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