



# Small Group Study Guide



October 4, 2020  
"All In"

## OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, give us courage to live your way. In these challenging days, we ask that you would give us a vision to see beyond the brokenness of our world so we can stay focused on your heavenly kingdom. We are bombarded by a 24/7 news cycle describing one tragedy after another. We pray for a Spirit of discernment, and we pray that your Holy Spirit would shape and mold us with courage to value the work of your kingdom most of all. Help us to see in the "small things," you are doing something mighty. And as you call on us to give of our time, talents and treasures, may our generosity be evident because of our deep trust in You. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

### Mark 12:38-44 (NIV)

<sup>38</sup> As he taught, Jesus said, "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, <sup>39</sup> and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. <sup>40</sup> They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."

<sup>41</sup> Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. <sup>42</sup> But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

<sup>43</sup> Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. <sup>44</sup> They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

### Luke 21:1-6 (NIV) [parallel passage to Mark 12:38-44]

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. <sup>2</sup> He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. <sup>3</sup> "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. <sup>4</sup> All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

<sup>5</sup> Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, <sup>6</sup> "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

## INTRODUCTION

Generosity is freely sharing what you have with others. It is being willing to offer money, help or time when it is needed. To be generous means giving something valuable to you without expectation of reward or return. Sometimes generosity requires pushing past a feeling of reluctance because we all instinctively want to keep good things for ourselves. If we are able to intentionally live “below our means,” we can cultivate a sense of surplus that makes us want to share with others and partner in the work of God.

## QUESTIONS

- 1) As you read the two parallel accounts, there are several things that the story of the widow’s mite teaches us. First, God sees what man overlooks. The big gifts in the temple were surely noticed by people; that’s probably what the disciples were watching. But Jesus saw what no one else did: He saw the humble gift of a poor widow. This was the gift that Jesus thought worthy of comment; this was the gift that the disciples needed to be aware of. Have there been times when you sensed God was calling you to stop and notice something God finds precious, that you initially overlooked?
- 2) The widow’s two small coins may have added up to less than a penny, but Jesus said that she had given *more* than anyone else that day. How could this be, when “many rich people threw in large amounts”? The difference is one of proportion. The rich were giving large sums, but they still retained their fortunes; the widow “put in everything—all she had to live on.” If you were one of the disciples on the scene, how might you have responded to Jesus’s observation?
- 3) Here was a woman in need of *receiving* charity, yet she had a heart to give. Read about another widow in 1 Kings 17:8-16, who gave her last meal to the prophet Elijah. What do we learn about God’s care and provision for this widow?
- 4) It is interesting that just before he commented on the widow’s mite, Jesus commented on the scribes “who devour widows’ houses” The religious officials of the day, instead of helping the widows in need, were perfectly content to rob them of their livelihood and inheritance. The system was corrupt, and the darkness of the scribes’ greed is starkly contrasted by the widow’s sacrifice. How would you describe God’s care for the most vulnerable?
- 5) What excites you most about giving money to help others? Was there a time when you were able to meet someone else’s need? How did it make you feel? Are you aware, right now, of a need that is breaking your heart?