

## **Soul Business - Generosity**

### **Introduction:**

Many people collect rare coins, but clever people collect pennies. Why? It's common cents!

The widow in Luke 21 had no rare coins. All she had were two pennies, yet they were "all she had to live on." Her hands covered the holes in her clothes as she walked past the fabric stores. Her stomach growled as she walked past the food market. She had other plans for her pennies. She ascended the stone stairs of the temple and entered the court of women—an outer courtyard where women and men would gather together and give donations to the temple. There, she dropped her entire net worth into one of thirteen large stone receptacles.

Jesus saw her and declared, "This poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." The poor widow followed Jesus' advice earlier in Luke 12:33-34: "Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Jesus saw her, and Jesus sees you. He sees your generosity, and His reward is greater than anything money can buy.

### **Read Your Bible**

- Luke 21:1-4
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

### **Apply God's Word to Your Life:**

1. If you saw a penny on a sidewalk, would you pick it up? Why or why not?
2. In Jesus' day, the temple was well-funded. Do you think the widow was wise or foolish to give all she had to the temple? Why?
3. The rich donated more than two pennies. Why do you think Jesus says "this poor widow has put in more than all the others" (Luke 21:3)?
4. How does the widow's story make you feel?
5. In 2 Corinthians 9:7, the apostle Paul invites us to give only what we have decided in our heart to give, "not reluctantly or under compulsion." What is the difference between giving willingly and giving reluctantly?
6. What rewards does Paul mention for giving generously?
7. How is God calling you to *grow* in your generosity?

### **Reflecting on the text:**

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

### **Pray**

Gracious God, you have always been generous toward us. Everything we have come from You. Help us to be generous stewards of the time, talent, and treasures you have given to us. Help us to hold loosely to these gifts and tightly to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.