



## More Than Meets the Eye

### Key idea:

Jesus condemned the scribes who looked outwardly impressive but were inwardly far from God, but He praised a poor widow whose tiny offering flowed from a heart of true faith and love for God.

### Key text:

Mark 12:38-44

As he taught, Jesus said, “Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted 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. Such 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 fraction of a penny.<sup>43</sup> Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, 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.”

### Key points:

1. Jesus strongly critiqued and condemned the scribes for their concern with outward appearance and reputation and their inward bankruptcy before God through which they violated the two great commandments.
2. Jesus praised the poor widow for her small financial gift, for it evidenced a heart full of love for God and trust in Him. She is a model of true discipleship.

### Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. Why did the scribes want to wear distinctive clothing and get special seats at banquets and in the synagogue? Why is this such a temptation for humans?

3. Why was it forbidden for the scribes to be paid for their study? What was the benefit of this system? What was the danger?
4. Jesus critiqued the scribe's prayers. What exactly was wrong with their prayers? Is it the length? The content? Or the motive?
5. Do I think leaders in the church today face some of the same temptations that led the scribes astray? Can I give some examples? How can I tell if a leader is giving in to these temptations? What safeguards could a church implement to protect from these temptations?
6. In what ways is the poor widow the opposite of the scribes?
7. What is it about the widow that so impressed Jesus?
8. In what ways can the church be tempted to judge by external appearances rather than inward reality? How can a church protect itself from this danger?
9. How can I protect myself from the affixation of the culture on an outward facade? What practices can I implement to protect my heart and mind in this area?
10. Is there any area where the Spirit is convicting me of withholding my full love and commitment to Jesus? How can I give this over to Him?
11. Who can I reach out to this week to share the Good News of God's grace?