

Do You Trust The Lord
Luke 21:1-4

A question as we begin our study for today . . . Do you trust the Lord? Do you truly trust the Lord?

Several months ago in our weekly study, we dedicated some time to the consideration of what it might mean for each of us as we embark on the journey of "Trusting in the Lord", truly "Trusting" in Him.

And in that study, I suggested that within my feeble understanding of that journey, the first step of "Trusting in the Lord" will begin with "belief" in the Lord Jesus. "Belief".

And yes, people can "believe" in the Lord Jesus, but still not experience salvation. As we said at that time, in the Book of James, we are told that even the demons believe in Jesus. The demons know exactly who Jesus is and all that He has done, but yet they are not saved.

Then, we said that the next step in our journey towards "Trusting in the Lord" seems to be that of our growth towards a "deeper" level of "belief", a level of "belief" that these scriptures describe by using the word "faith", "faith".

"Faith" being the belief that Jesus really and truly is who He is said to be within these scriptures, that He is "God", the Third Person of the Trinity of God. And in His human condition, Jesus came to earth to give His life as a sacrifice for the sins of our souls, that He was crucified, dead and buried, and on the third day, God resurrected Him from the dead. And that now, He, the Lord Jesus is the Way, the only Way, the Truth and the Life, and that no one can come to God the Father except through Him.

And then we said, that though we might know all of this to be true, that we must "believe" in the Lord Jesus, and that we must have "Faith". Before the full and complete transformation of our soul can truly take place, there really must be one further essential step in our journey of salvation, the step of "Trust", of "Trusting in the Lord Jesus", the "Trust" that is spoken about in the book of Proverbs chapter 3, where we are told that we must "Trust in the Lord with all of our heart, and lean not on our own understanding, but in all our ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct our paths".

It is then and only then dear friends that real fullness of salvation can take place within our souls and that God's Holy Spirit can do His transforming work within our heart, our soul and our mind.

And now, here in today's passage, within a very simple, but profound demonstration of "Trust" by a poor widow-woman, we have a perfect example of what Jesus wants us to understand about how our relationship of "Trusting Him" is supposed to work its way out in some of the ordinary matters and conditions of our daily lives."

Let's pause for a moment and read these few words given to us here in Luke chapter 21 beginning in verse 1.

¹ Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, ² and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. ³ And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." (Luke 21:1-4)

Our Lord can see into the heart and mind of every person on this earth, clearly knowing the motives taking place within each of their thoughts. And He is also ever and always the masterful teacher, seizing every opportunity to instruct His beloved disciples, and us, in ways of righteousness.

And so it was here, as He observed the people placing their money into the offering plate in the temple. His Almighty Spirit was able to peer deeply into their souls, and to discern the most intimate of their thoughts and intents.

First with the wealthier ones with their gold and silver, and then the poor widow with her two small copper coins, Jesus knew well the deepest, most intimate desires that dwelt within each of them.

And He voiced this simple observation . . .

³ . . . he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." (Luke 21:3-4)

May I say to each of us, that while yes, as ordinary men and women, we also are very intuitive and are able, to some measure, perceive the desires and

motives of another person's heart, we can't truly know them! And probably, most often that is a good thing, because such judgments about other people are best left to God and to His merciful handling of them.

But that is not so as it regards our own heart and soul! We are reminded over and over again in these scriptures that we are to invite God's Spirit to come in and to examine our hearts and to reveal to us the real truth about the thoughts and motives and intents that take place within us.

For those of us who have trusted in Christ as our Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit is generous regarding such things. Through His abiding presence, we can have the deepest of insights into the nature of our own soul, His word piercing deeply between bone and marrow, soul and spirit, discerning the thoughts and the intents of our hearts. And for that reason, as we are told in another place in these scriptures, "we are without excuse".

May I emphasize what I am saying for a moment, because the same is not true for those dear ones who do not have Christ as their Savior?

While yes, each human soul does have an inborn measure of conscience and moral goodness. But those natural abilities are not sufficient for the discerning of spiritual matters.

Why would that be so? It is because also inborn within each of us is a depraved sinful nature. And unless the Spirit of Christ resides within a person, they are helpless to overcome that sinful nature's power and control.

We find that being said in the Book of Ephesians. There, addressing a group of believers about their former condition before they were saved, the Apostle Paul said to them,

¹ And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

And then also in Jeremiah chapter 17, the very clear words of our Lord,

⁹"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

Realizing such truths as these, we should not wonder why an unsaved person might behave in the most corrupt of ways, unable to grasp the simplest of truths about good and evil, right and wrong, and would have no real understanding of who God is and the desires and plans He has for them.

Simply put, corrupt behaviors and inclinations being inborn and natural to a person's soul, left unchanged by God's grace, can often continue unnoticed by them throughout their lifetime, and often only get worse over time.

I personally know that to be true as it regards my own soul. Before coming to know Christ as my Savior, my life was a constant struggle. And yes, sometimes me trying to "fix" myself, but never knowing how, and only becoming more and more corrupt.

But thankfully, God was merciful and He drew me to Himself. And though I am still continually tempted to go back into some of my old ways, being now saved by God's grace, I do now have answers that well up within my mind, good and helpful answers, for the temptations that come my way.

And may I remind us that such answers are guaranteed to us in the words of 1 Corinthians 10:13, that,

¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

And folks, I know that most all that I have said about myself, is also true for each of you, because these words I just read are true for each of us. Such temptations and desires truly are common to all of us.

But how do these considerations relate to the words of our text? It is this!

Here, as Jesus observed the behavior of all these people, the wealthy ones and then also the poor widow, He had full access into the deepest recesses of each person's soul. He knew the motives and the intents of each of their hearts. And

He knew where each of them placed their “trust” for the provisions of their daily lives.

Here, Jesus chose to use money as a revealing example. Why did He do that? It is because a person’s thoughts, desires and intents regarding money often serve as a portal into their souls, showing the true nature that lives within them about all things.

And that is especially so as it regards tithes and offerings in the church, and towards all such giving towards Christian based efforts.

And may I say again that the focus here is to be upon the underlying “motives” for our giving. Because, too often, even when people are willing to give all that they are supposed to give, they are apt to do it for wrong reasons. Perhaps they give out of a sense of “duty” or, perhaps just because God has commanded it, or as with some of the rich people, for the praise they receive for their large gifts.

While some of those motives are good and right, such motives as those do not fully yield to all the plans and purposes that God desires for a person. If our giving is done solely for those reasons, I fear that we will miss out on many of the blessings that God has in store for the “generous” giver.

So then, may I ask each of us to consider the motives that might flow through our own hearts as we write our checks and place our money into the offering plate? And beyond our church giving, what are our thoughts as we give to support missionaries and to feed the hungry.

In our giving to the church, one of our motives might be that we know that our tithes and our offerings go towards paying the expenses of the church, the upkeep and maintenance of the property, the monthly utilities, the Pastor’s salary.

And we know that many churches also give a portion towards the support of other ministries, such as takes place at French Camp Academy, Palmer Home for Children, Reformed Theological Seminary and Samaritan’s Purse.

And we know that missionaries throughout the world have all the same expenses and healthcare needs as do each of us.

And there are also many, many children throughout the world who are hungry and do not have the food and water and shelter that they need.

And all of these reasons and purposes are all very good. But may I say that God has an even deeper, far more important purpose in mind for us than all of these motives.

Our response to all these demands and circumstances of giving serves to provoke the real question that God intends, and that is, "How much are we, you and I, willing to place our trust in Him for all the many intimate needs and provisions of our own personal daily lives?"

Folks, that is a very deep and difficult question for most of us to resolve within our souls. Because to be willing to fully trust God for all the needs of our daily life takes all the surrender and all the commitment that our hearts can muster.

And yes, I know that such things are only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit within us. But I must say to us that there is also a lot of our own "will" that is also involved in our decision making.

And that is the real issue that Jesus is bringing forward in His words here in this passage . . . the question of, "How much will you and I "willfully" put our trust in God for our needs?"

And yes, that question can be applied to so many other of the serious matters that take place within our lives each day, our health, the health of our loved ones, our family relationships. But here Jesus elected to use money as the defining issue.

It's been said that over half of the parables and illustrations that Jesus gave to His disciples had some reference to money.

And why would that be so? It is because our dependence upon our money, and our desire for all the things that money can buy are closely linked to all the other lusts that strive to control us, lust of the eye, lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

Here, in only a few words, Jesus is able to delve into some of the deepest, most intimate thoughts and intents of these people's hearts, first the wealthier ones

with their gold and silver, and then the poor widow with her two small copper coins. Listen again!

¹ Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, ² and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. ³ And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." (Luke 21:1-4)

How do these words answer the question, "How much are we willing to trust God for the needs of this life?"

First with the wealthier ones, as they gave their silver and gold, perhaps even very large sums, note that they gave out of their excess, their abundance.

These words imply that these men might have first determined exactly how much they needed to meet their own family needs and then gave out of what was left over.

Where does the shortcoming lie in such rationale and logic? The shortcoming lies in trusting in the money rather than in trusting in God who provided that money.

But may I quickly add here that that is exactly what most all of us also do? We calculate the amount of money it will take to pay the rent or mortgage, the utilities, the car payment, the insurance payment, the groceries, and all our other perceived needs. And then, if we have any money left over, we give a portion of that to the church and to the missionaries.

Sometimes, we may even venture on out and make a commitment to write out our tithe check first. And that is a right thing to do. But sooner or later, as we go down our list of expenses owed, we start to cut our losses. And that is when we fail to go ahead and support that missionary that we wanted to support. Our rationale tells us that there is just not enough money to go around. And folks, such logic seems so right to us! But is it?

Observe the widow! She had only two mites, two copper coins, very small ones, worth less than a penny. And it was all that she had! Not extra! Not the excess after she had paid her bills and bought her food! It was all that she had!

What would she now do when the bill collectors came around? What would she now do when she became hungry? How would she buy clothes to keep her warm on those cold days?

Applying such words to ourselves and our own daily needs were we to do such a foolish thing as to put all of the money that we have into the offering plate, what would we do at rent time, or when we got hungry?

What would we do when our car runs low on gas? How would we get to work? The question again! "How much are we willing to trust God for all the needs of this life?"

R.G. LeTourneau, the owner and founder of the company that first patented and then produced the largest and best of the great earth-moving equipment in use today, made a commitment that his company would give 90% of its income back to the Lord. Not 10%, but 90%. And He wrote that wording into the legal documents that governed the operation of his company business.

He said that he did that so that in difficult times, he would not be tempted to hold back his giving. So he bound his sacrifice to the altar in such a way that he could not take it back.

He trusted God for the future needs of his business and for the future needs of his family. And God rewarded him greatly for his trust!

The widow here in our bible text, and R.G. LeTourneau, and many others just like them have been able to cross over that threshold and through the doorway of human rationale and logic, on out into a full faith and trust in God for all their present needs and for their future needs.

And no, such faith and trust does not look at all like it can work! It actually looks very foolhardy.

And I have to admit to you that I am miles away from having such faith and trust. But let me say to you that I really, really do want to have that kind of faith and trust, the kind of faith and trust that ignores common rationale and human logic, and instead, fully trusts that God can pour all that I need and all that my family needs right out into my lap every moment of every day, a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.

That was the difference between what was taking place in the minds of those wealthy men with their money, and what was taking place in the heart and mind of that poor widow. They trusted in their money. She trusted in God.

And folks, I want to be like her! Do you want to be like her? Listen as I close with these words from Luke 6:38.

³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Luke 6:38)

Pray with me.