

The Heart of the Giver

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources)

Introduction:

A. Mark 10:18-22

1. This man wanted to go to heaven, he lived a moral life, he wanted to follow Christ, and he thought he was ready. Can you identify with this?
 - a. It never entered his mind that his attitude toward his material possessions would keep him from all of these things.
2. Jesus knew this man's heart; there was something he put before God.
 - a. The young man turned and walked away.
 - b. What cost him his eternal life? Adultery? Homosexuality? Murder? Theft? Abortion? Gambling? Drunkenness?
 - c. Because of his attitude toward stuff, his heart was not right; he loved his money more than he loved the Lord.
 - d. Penitent Christians confess sins of all sorts, but I have yet to hear one confess the sin of covetousness

B. This lesson is not about your contribution on the Lord's Day. It is to examine our attitudes toward giving - Prov. 4:23

1. Look into the hearts of these givers

I. WRONG HEARTS

A. Judas - John 12:3-6

1. "Temptation commonly comes through that for which we are naturally fitted." (Westcott Commentary)
2. Judas must have had talent for financial matters.
3. Familiarity with his stewardship led him to relax enough to let temptation in; after a while, temptation modified his heart to a lover of money instead of a lover of the poor
4. What about your talents? The minister who becomes too familiar with the sisters; the professional who becomes too familiar with clients; it is dangerous to become too comfortable with our gifts to the point where temptation catches us off guard - 1Cor. 10:12

B. Ananias and Sapphira - Acts 5:1-11

1. They lied about their giving proving their heart was on what they could keep and not who they could help
2. Deceit by a few hinders all of God's people - Joshua 7:1
3. If we try to leave the impression we are giving liberally, but secretly give reluctantly, we are just as guilty of deceit as Ananias and Sapphira.
4. Mal. 3:8, 10

II. SPIRITUAL HEARTS

A. Barnabas - Acts 4:36-37

1. He was a good man in stark contrast with the young ruler, Judas, and Ananias & Sapphira
2. Josés would have had rights as a Levite to land that would become his livelihood and retirement, and he gave it up.

B. The Poor Widow - Mark 12:41-44

1. Giving was done very visibly in the temple. Collection boxes for specific needs lined the court of women in the temple complex. The boxes had trumpet shaped metallic mouths to receive the offerings so that others would hear the loud rattle of coins dropping in. Rich men giving large sums would make a big noise. A widow dropping in two tiny brass coins wouldn't catch anyone's attention, except for Jesus. But then, she wasn't about the noise, was she? She gave all she had.
2. How would our giving change if it were done publicly with Jesus present to look on? Our collection trays have felt bottoms to muffle sound, and paper currency and checks make no sound.
3. Would we be ashamed or embarrassed? We believe we have a right to privacy when we give, but what we can't expect is privacy from what the Lord sees on Sunday. He not only knows how much we put in, He knows what we kept back

C. David - 2Sam. 24:18-25

1. "He who has a religion that costs him nothing, has a religion that is worth nothing" - Prov. 3:9
2. Mal. 1:6-8 - They were bringing animals that were of no value to them
 - a. Treating the Lord like Goodwill, dumping off things we don't need
3. 2Cor. 8:1-5 - They first gave themselves.