**“She, poor as she is, put in all she had”** (Mark 12.44)

Before leaving College and going to first appointment in 1982 some of my stuff in storage was stolen, including a music cassette which I still miss. Grief is something we associate with death. But we can grieve over retirement, lost friendships, lost opportunities, even a lost tape…

Passage is in 2 halves, connected by widows. In the 1st widows were exploited by scribes; this might have been abuse of hospitality. It still goes on today. Widows were among the most deprived, along with those with evil spirits, or some health disability (In Mark, Jesus has 11 encounters with such - eg lepers, blind men – inc Bartimaeus, the man with a legion of evil spirits)

In 2nd half a widow puts money in offering basket, like we do. TEXT. (she gave 2 lepta = 1/64th labourer’s day pay). Jesus was not condemning those who gave large amounts, but praising the widow who gave all.

Treasurers love this passage – “give more!” This might be an appropriate response to TEXT, but it is not the best juice to be extracted! While the widow gave her all, this does not necessarily mean we have to do the same, any more than the man we met (on Oct 10) in Mark 10.17ff meant this for us.

Our widow was bereaved, but it is possible to be a ‘widow’ through poor health (physical or mental). Many in rest-homes feel they have nothing left to give – money is limited, energy is poor, abilities are all-but non-existent. They are widows in almost every possible sense.

Many sense they are on the ‘scrap-heap’, but does God see them like this? Even if God did, does this mean they cannot give their all, like our widow - TEXT?

It is not how much money (or time, energy, opportunities, or abilities) you have that matters, it is how much you are willing to allow God to use for the sake of the Kingdom.

Not saying ‘spend all time in church praying’, or ‘be feverishly active in our outreach programmes’, or ‘use every ability only for the church’. It is about our attitude towards all these things.

If time spent for church is ‘leisure’ time, if outreach involvement is perceived as nothing to do with our faith, if we donate our abilities like ‘Lady Bounty’ and *therefore* keep the rest to ourselves, are we being any better than the ‘**others** [who] **put in what they had to spare of their riches**’ (v44)?

This is not to say that all *that* giving is wrong, but that separating (this for God, this for me) is not what living the Kingdom in daily life is all about. If the praise of Jesus means anything to us TEXT.

How much of our all are we truly offering to God?