

To some who were confident of their own legalistic superiority and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable:

“Two people went up to the temple to give alms into the treasury, one a Pharisee and the other a poor widow. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—the lame, the poor, orphans—or even like this widow. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get according to the law.’ He said this last part with some regret, and even shed a tear or two as he considered how much he had been made to give.

“But the widow stood at a distance after putting her only two coins into the box¹. She would not even look up to heaven, but beat her breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner. But you have blessed me so much! And I am moved to tears of compassion when I see those who are truly in need. I give what I can² to help the helpless³.’

“I tell you that this widow, rather than the Pharisee, went home justified before God. For God loves a cheerful giver⁴.” He especially loves those who give until it hurts⁵.

God loves those who trust in His Grace, and search for Him with all of their hearts⁶.

1. Luke 21:2
2. 2 Corinthians 8:2-5
3. Psalm 82:3, “Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.” and Isaiah 1:17, “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.”
4. 2 Corinthians 9:7
5. 2 Corinthians 8:2-3a, “In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.”
6. Deuteronomy 4:29, “But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.”