



*“Give generously to God...  
and he will bless you”*

*~ Deuteronomy 15:10*

## **How Financial Generosity Leads to Happiness**

**Read:** Mark 12:38-44

In the gospel we hear the story of people dropping money into the temple collection basket. The widow, who contributes a few meagre coins, is the one praised by Jesus for her generosity. She gives out of her scarcity rather than her abundance.

I recently had a discussion with a woman who was visiting our parish. She was telling me that her and her husband were struggling to handle their debt. They both made six figures but somehow couldn't make ends meet. With a steep mortgage on a house that was “bigger than necessary”, multiple vehicles, fine dining, vacations, a cottage at the lake and so forth, it was no wonder they had issues. Then she said, “The irony is, the more I have the less happy I become.” It was a rather profound insight.

So how does financial generosity lead to happiness? First, although scripture doesn't say so, I bet the woman in the gospel was quite happy, despite her poverty. The Bible tells us that “whoever is generous will be blessed” Proverbs 22:9. That is exactly what Jesus does; he blesses the woman for her financial generosity.

Second, the Bible teaches us not to set our “hopes on money, which is untrustworthy, but on God who, out of his riches, gives us all that we need for our happiness” 1 Timothy 6:17. The woman in the gospel was poor but she gave anyways. She knew that true riches did not come from the number in her bank account, a fancy house or a vacation home, but rather from a heart filled with generosity.

Third, generosity frees our hearts. The Bible teaches us to keep our “lives free from the love of money and be content with what [we] have” Hebrews 13:5. In other words, if we are not always trying to keep up with the Joneses, we will be much happier. A heart that is not always seeking material gain is a heart at peace. Money is a good thing, but it can cause stress and anxiety if not handled properly. Someone who knows that money is a gift, is not ruled by it and manages it wisely, is someone much closer to being happy.

Through the example of a generous widow, Jesus teaches us that true blessing comes not from the size of the gift but the spirit in which it is given. Our financial generosity can make a world of difference when it comes to finding happiness.