

Giving Our Last Mite

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Sunday night I attended a hymn sing. The collection plate was passed, and as I scurried through the contents of my purse, I came across a few forgotten coins. When I hurriedly dumped these coins into the plate, they clinked against the other small coins nested in the plate. After singing a few more numbers, the director for the evening announced that the collection amounted to \$28.01. We resumed singing. The hymn sing being over, I went home, but all the way home, something bothered me. Twenty eight dollars and one cent kept ricocheting through my head, and I didn't know why. I've heard collection results announced before, so why did this particular amount perturb me? And then, I knew why - it was the odd collection amount which haunted me. Where did that one cent come from? How strange to have a collection for Beacon Lights result in pennies! Upon reflection, I couldn't help but recall that most of the young people at the hymn sing were fashionable dressed and had well kept cars. Many even had full time jobs; and yet, the collection amounted to twenty eight dollars and one cent.

Really, fellow young people, it's a bit hard to understand. We plan and save our money for weeks in order to make payments on skirts or fender skirts; we diligently budget our money for a new paint job on our cars, or a new dress with shoes dyed to match; we willingly allot money for flashy new class rings. But, has any of us ever planned and saved our money for even one week for a hymn sing, or for a school drive, or for society dues? Why, that's unheard of; Ridiculous! Foolishness! But is it?

Oh, we like the widow Christ commended for giving her last two mites, give our last mite, alright, but is it because that's all we could have given? Remember, that is the point of the whole text. Two mites were all the widow could have given. Can any of us say the same?

As early as the fourth grade, we've heard such phrases as: "to give is better than to receive", the Lord loveth a cheerful giver", lay up for yourselves treasures I heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt." Have these much repeated phrases failed to impress us? If not, how can we account for our negative attitude and inarticulate utterances when society dues are raised one measly dollar? How can we soothe our consciences when we toss pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters into collection plates, and spend five dollars, ten dollars, twenty dollars for new clothes, new cars, trips, entertainment, food, cosmetics and you add the rest?

Look at the title of this article once again. Yes, young people, for the most part, isn't this exactly what we do? We give our last mite, our last bit of money – the money we were shocked to know we even had, the money we were unknowingly carrying around, the mite which fortunately stuck in a corner of our purse or pocket, thus saving us the social embarrassment of having nothing to put in. There is no planning involved, no allotting of our weekly paychecks, no apportioning of our money for the "lasting" things; but, on the contrary, we go right on giving our last mites, the mites which fortunately happen to be within grasping distance. And mites such as this are supposed to put out this magazine, pay the conventions, support the poor, build high schools, publish pamphlets send our missionaries, pay teachers and support a host of other missionaries, pay teachers and support a host of other worthwhile causes...., but can they?

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