

## Thought for the Day, 6 May

### *The Widow's Mite*



Lord, the bills, the bread. The baking!  
None could blame me if I kept  
Charity for home consumption  
While I wait for better days.

Lord, this tithe is not worth giving -  
Will you mock so small a sum?  
Here, I place it in your hands  
Trusting you through all my days.

We will not see collecting tins in our streets for many days, I fear. But the needs of the world increase around us; we are not let off the hook; now is not the time to hold back! This story of the widow's mite (found in Luke 21.1-4) is important to us today for many reasons.

Firstly, it reminds us of what God can do with very little. We warm to stories of children giving up treats to help a good cause, and are heartened by our community hub in the village, supported by so many volunteers with their time and their talents. And who has not been moved by the example of 99 year-old Captain Tom Moore, recovering from a hip operation but walking up and down his garden daily to raise funds for the NHS - now £28 million and counting! His story quickly went viral, a really appropriate word in this context!

His loving thought has unlocked the generosity in the hearts of so many people. He is an inspiration.

But there is more for us to learn in the story of that poor widow woman. We aren't told if Jesus even spoke to her. He is teaching his disciples the importance of not judging people by any standard but God's. He is telling us that it is the heart that matters. How easy it is to be quite disparaging of people we regard as insignificant. Maybe they are not!

I had a friend who used to get quite angry with a certain charity which had a roll of honour for those who gave large donations. I could see her point, but the fundraisers were only doing their job to the best of their ability. God knows, they needed those large donations. My small mite isn't going to save the world on its own.

But the givers, rich or poor, need the motivation of love. In the early days of the charity Send-a-Cow, Christian farmers were quite literally sending cows to Uganda to give to poor families after the civil war there. The cows were all in calf, and the deal was that when the calf was born the family would 'pass on the gift' to another family. This is all done 'in situ' now, with sufficient breeding stock to keep the work going. Love received should lead to love given.

Finally, if we are ever tempted to feel virtuous or complacent as we give, let us remember that those who are the recipients, perhaps living in the worst possible conditions, may themselves be counting out their mites. That is enough to humble us. For sure:

The mathematics of God's kingdom  
Have a different root than ours.  
However else can two small coppers  
Be reckoned wealth beyond pure gold?

Ruth Tiller

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