



7 - 13 November 2021 [Giving your all](#)

Related Bible reading(s): Mark 12.38-44

## Bible study on Mark 12.38-44

*This study can be used by a small family/household group, or by an online group, or – sometimes with a little adaptation – by an individual.*

See our [Guidelines for a weekly Bible study](#)

### **Begin with an opening prayer**

Generous God,  
we come, individually and together,  
as your people to be resourced, inspired and blessed.  
We come, thankful for the self-giving love of Jesus.  
Inspired by his example, may we be generous and giving,  
with no reward other than knowing we are doing your will.  
We ask this in his name.

**Amen.**

### **Read the passage**

*Consider different ways to read the text. For example, hearing it in more than one version of the Bible.*

*In an online group, you could share parts between those present, or use/adapt this week's Share the Word suggestion: Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to go to Share the Word and scroll down to find the Gospel reading.*

### **Explore and respond to the text**

*Start by reading the Bible notes below. You may want to read them more than once, or pause after each paragraph to reflect on what you have read.*

### **Bible notes**

This passage – beginning ‘Beware of the scribes’ (v.38) – follows directly after the scribe who is commended because he was ‘not far from the kingdom of God’ (v.34). The story is set in the Temple precincts. Here there are scribes and other important people, but there are also the destitute. Imagine the scene. Jesus takes his position and watches people as they make their donations to the Temple. These donations would have been over and above the tithe and the Temple tax. But not only does Jesus watch, he also comments, He compares the gift by a widow who gives pennies (v.42) and that of the rich who give ‘large sums’ (v.41). Prefacing his words with ‘Truly’ (v.43) tells us that this is important, and we must take note. In these few verses, Jesus inverts the criteria by which we assess importance. What God sees is not the total given, but that the personal cost of the gift to the individual is the real measure of generosity. It is the heart of the giver, rather than the gift, that is important. The widow gives her all, probably literally; whereas the rich give from what they have left over. It is generosity of a different order. As Jesus travels to Jerusalem and the Cross, he emphasises the total commitment that we owe to God – and how that contrasts with what appears to be costly discipleship, but which in reality has no real cost at all.

See also:



### **The way we live matters**

Tim Herbert introduces the readings in this issue, in conversation with Siggy Parratt-Halbert.

### **Reflection**

*Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading. This idea may help.*

When does giving stop? The saying ‘charity begins at home’ is often used to limit what we give or do, and to whom. But, as the 17th-century clergyman Thomas Fuller said (and others since): ‘Charity begins at home but should not end there.’ Charles Dickens amended it another way: ‘Charity begins at home, but justice begins next door.’ How do these sayings help us to understand the story of Jesus and the widow at the Temple? Can you think of practical ways to respond to God’s generosity to us?

### **Questions for reflection**

*You may wish to use these questions and the picture to help you think about or discuss issues of sharing.*



Click on the image to view a larger version or use the *Jump menu* to go to *This week's images*. For artist's details, see [this issue's illustrators](#).

## Questions

- This image is called 'giving hands' how would you portray that idea?
- What does living generously mean to you?
- What would it mean for you to 'give your all'?

## A simple activity

### Thinking about a generous church.

- Draw or stick a picture of your church in the middle of a large sheet of paper. Give out sticky notes and pens.
- Invite people to write or draw ways in which your church might be (more) generous. What can you offer to your local community or to the wider world? Encourage everyone to contribute ideas. Ask people to stick their notes to the image of the church.
- Look at the results together. What do you learn? Are there common responses or patterns? How can you respond? How might these influence future plans? Be honest too about things that are impracticable or impossible!

*Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to go to more activities in Explore and respond.*

## Prayer

### A prayer for generosity

Generous God, make us generous.  
Make us generous in joy, and generous in love.  
Help us to remember what we have done today.  
Remind us, every day, that we need to share our love for you with others,  
that we need to give and live generously –  
for you are generous God, our God.  
Be with each one of us and all whom we love,  
this week and always.

**Amen.**

*Adapt to your local context.*

*Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to find more prayers,*

*including up-to-date intercessions.*

## A prayer to end the Bible study

Gracious God, for all you have poured out upon us:

**we give you thanks.**

For your Word that has inspired and fed your people; for those who had vision to record it, skill to translate it and presence to share it:

**we give you thanks.**

For your love that has surrounded and enfolded us, that has given us joy, confirmed our faith, nurtured our love and given us enduring hope in the gift of the promise of eternal life:

**we give you thanks.**

To you be all praise and glory,

**for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

### **Go with God 24/7**

*Encourage everyone to put their faith into action.*

Think of a way in which you could give something this week that will be costly for you – probably not money but, for example, an hour of your time to help someone else.

*Encourage everyone to explore their faith this week with the **ROOTS at home** resource.*

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