

Luke 20:41-21:4

How You Treat Widows Tells Much About Your Relationship With God

Introduction: This takes place on Tuesday, March 31, 33 AD. Here we see Jesus changing from being on the defensive to a deliberate attack.

- 1) Jesus appeals to His authority over King David from the OT—20:41-44
 - a) Jesus states a rhetorical question about the Messiah—20:41 ⁴¹ *Then He said to them, “How can they say that the Messiah is David’s Son?”*
 - b) Jesus quotes a familiar Psalm (110:1)—20:42-43 ⁴² *And David **himself** (emphatic) said in the book of Psalms, ‘The Lord (Yahweh) said to my Lord (Adonai), “Sit at my right hand, ⁴³ until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’*
 - c) Jesus restates His rhetorical question—20:44 ⁴⁴ *Therefore, if David calls Him ‘Lord,’ then how is He his son (descendant)?”*
 - i) i.e. How can David’s Son be his Master (Adonai, Sovereign)?
 - d) There is no answer from His audience to His questions. But the following things are clear.
 - i) Jesus recognized David as the author of Ps. 110, who wrote in the sphere of the Spirit (cf. Mt. 22:43; Mk. 12:36).
 - ii) Jesus believed that David acknowledged the authority of his Lord (Adonai).
 - iii) Jesus teaches that He is both God and man.
 - iv) Jesus recognized the Father’s authority over Him to command Him to sit at His right hand.
 - v) Jesus recognized His enemies were a part of the Father’s plan.
 - vi) Jesus recognized His Father would ultimately defeat His enemies.
- 2) Jesus warns His disciples by condemning the temple’s scholars—20:45-47
 - a) He did so publicly—20:45 ⁴⁵ *Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples,*
 - b) He issues an ongoing warning—20:46a ⁴⁶ *“Beware [pres. act. imp.] of the scholars,*
 - c) He describes the spiritual danger—20:46b-47a
 - The self-focus of these leaders is matched by their ill-treatment of the most vulnerable. (Thompson, EGGNT)
 - i) Their sinful desire for distinctive appearance—*who desire* [pres. act. ptc. θέλω] *to walk around in long robes,*
 - ii) Their sinful pleasure in prominence—*and who love* [pres. act. ptc. φιλέω]...
 - (1) Commercially—*greetings in the marketplaces,*
 - (2) Religiously—*and the best seats* [πρωτοκαθεδρία] *in the synagogues,*
 - (3) Socially—*and the best places* [πρωτοκλισία] *at the banquets,*
 - iii) Their sinful callousness toward the vulnerable—⁴⁷ *who are devouring* [pres. act. ind. κατασθίω] *widows’ houses,*

- iv) Their sinful hypocritical religious activity—*and for appearances' sake make long prayers* (for/to themselves) [pres. mid. ind. προσεύχομαι].
 - (1) It is not the length of the prayer but the motive of the prayer
- d) He guarantees a severe judgment—20:47b *These will receive a greater condemnation.*
 - i) Matthew records a series of 8 woes that Jesus pronounces on these men (23:13-39). Jesus had pronounced woes on them earlier in Lk. 11:42-52 the previous autumn.
 - ii) There are degrees of punishment and misery in hell.
- 3) Jesus honors a destitute widow who stands in stark contrast to the temple's scholars—21:1-4
 - a) His accurate observation—21:1-2
 - i) Observing the many wealthy—¹ *Now, having looked up, He saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury,*
 - (1) Gifts were given directly to the priests, while the giver explained the amount and purpose of the gift. (Rogers)
 - ii) Observing the solitary destitute—² *and He also saw a certain poverty-stricken widow putting in there two small copper (the smallest) coins.*
 - b) His accurate judgment—21:3-4
 - i) His accurate statement—³ *And He said, "Truly I say to you^{pl}, that this destitute widow has put in more than all of them,*
 - ii) His accurate knowledge of people's motives—⁴ *because ...*
 - (1) The giving of the self-oriented wealthy cost them little—*these all out of their surplus have put in gifts for God,*
 - (2) Contrasted with the giving of the God-oriented destitute widow that cost her much—*but [δέ] she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.*
 - (a) Jesus highlights her generosity that springs from her trust in a faithful and merciful God. (cf. Ps. 68:5; 146:9)
 - (b) She could have kept one of her coins "just in case."
 - (3) The size of the gift is not always indicative of its genuine value. Don't say, "I have too little to give."
- 4) Things for us to remember
 - a) We must beware of the dangers of religious hypocrisy. God sees our hearts.
 - b) This (giving by the widow) is not seen as a requirement to get right with God. One does not earn right standing with God by giving—sacrificially or otherwise. But these are the actions of one who is right with God. They prove one's standing with God. (MBC)
 - c) God wants our whole heart, not just a partial heart.