

This week we remember the last few days of Jesus' life. On Thursday we will look back at the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples. On Friday we will remember the day of Jesus' crucifixion. The season of Lent and Holy Week ends on Sunday with the celebration of the essential truth of our faith; death did not get the last word. Jesus was raised from the dead.

This parable is one of the most direct words of condemnation for the religious leaders who handed Jesus over to be crucified. It is a reminder to us that in the last days of Jesus' life we see a picture of God at God's best and humanity at our very worst.

Have you ever rejected what God was trying to offer you? What does it say about God that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"?

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This scene takes place near the end of a long day of teaching for Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem. Part of that teaching included Jesus' response to the question, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Jesus replied, "The most important one is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

What did Jesus find significant about the offering of this "poor widow"? In what way might her actions be seen as a demonstration of her love for God and love for neighbor?

During Holy Week we focus on the actions of Jesus because they reveal the character and heart of God. What does the offering of the poor widow teach us about God?

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These two short verses wrap up the last day that Jesus spent teaching in the Temple, which has been our focus since our reading on Monday. The Temple structure was one of the most incredible architectural works in the ancient world. It is not surprising that Jesus' disciples, many of whom came from very simple backgrounds, would have been overwhelmed by the sight of one of King Herod's major building projects. Jesus' response to their amazement invites the disciples to see something even more extraordinary happening right before their very eyes.

Perspective changes everything. The way we see God, ourselves and our relationship with God shapes our entire lives. The disciples saw "magnificent buildings." Jesus understood that God was doing something much more amazing in their midst. How would you describe what God is doing in your life right now?

What might God be challenging you to see and appreciate more fully this day?

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Today we remember the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples and the holy meal that we continue to share as followers of Christ "in remembrance of his mighty acts." As hard as this night must have been for Jesus to endure, this was a moment that Jesus said he "eagerly desired." For thousands of years Christians have gathered on this day and throughout the year to receive Holy Communion in fulfillment of Jesus' command to "do this in remembrance of me."

You are invited to receive communion today from 6:00 to 8:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in our Chapel or tonight during our Holy Thursday service which starts at 6:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Prepare to receive communion today by offering God your own prayer of confession, remembering always that "where sin abounds, God's grace abounds more."

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