

PEARCE CHURCH

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Stewardship of Treasure

Dear Pearce Family,

Before injuring my foot, I used to run a bit. I did not love running, but I found it helpful for clearing my brain, exercising my dog, and getting into better shape. When running through the streets of Warsaw where I lived, inevitably, someone would drive by and recognize me, beeping and waving. In those instances, something changed in me. I'd pick up the pace. I imagined they thought well of me or were impressed by my exercise regimen. Although I did not run for attention, getting noticed was a side benefit. Proudful thoughts began to go through my head: "They noticed me. They realize I'm being disciplined about my health. They approve of how I take care of my dog. They think I'm an expert at fitness. They wish they could be a little more like me." In that moment, someone would drive by and splash me with mud, or I would trip and fall into a puddle. Pride does come before the fall.

Jesus warns us about being more concerned about appearances on the surface than we are about the substance of our inner lives. There's a temptation to impress, to look important, to seem to "have it together" on the outside. The problem is that we remain shallow on the inside. In Mark 12:38, the religious leaders craved attention. *They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces.* They wanted to be looked upon with reverence and respect, to be held in awe as spiritual celebrities. They want their star on Hollywood's walk of fame. A few verses later, they made a show of their offerings: *Many rich threw in large amounts (v41).*

But Jesus notices a widow who gave very little because she had very little to give. He says this about her: *Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others (v43).* On the surface, the gifts of the wealthy seemed to be significant while this woman's did not appear to amount to much. But this simple and humble offering conveyed the widow's interior life of complete devotion to and dependence on God. *She, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on (v44).* As we consider our Stewardship of Treasure, may we ask ourselves, *Are we using material things to prop up our own egos and impress others? Or do we realize that all we have comes from God, and are we willing to go "all in," just like she did, in giving and trusting God?*

With Faith,

Pastor Todd