



## Grain

“A budget is a moral document.” A quote attributed to more than one person

## Field

38 As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, 39 and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! 40 They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." 41 He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. 42 A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. 43 Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. 44 For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on." Mark 12:38-44

## Thoughts

The story from Mark strikes close to home but we have to hear it. We can render certain individuals and groups invisible to the point that how we treat them doesn't seem to matter, but it does. It's the but-it-does-matter that agitates our conscience, relieves us when we are the ones being disenfranchised, and makes us resisters.

In the case of the scribes Jesus pointed to, they not only ignored widows, but devoured their homes. Whether the scribes used their mastery of the law to actually nab the estates of widows or cheated them by not distributing funds intended for them and other vulnerable populations, is unclear. At any rate, Jesus challenged the scribes' economic policies. To reveal their out-of-whack priorities, Jesus didn't simply expose the scribes' dubious behavior but took time to focus on how much the widow was of value to God. Why was the latter necessary? Had messages about widows not mattering become so systemic that Jesus had to tell the disciples to resist the lies?

Today, beware of letting those in power tempt you to exchange our support for healthy immigration reform with contempt for immigrants and refugees. Beware of diminishing people who are challenged by illnesses and disabilities, or demonizing those who need a safety net to get back on their feet.

As we approach elections, we consider our values in the very significant act of voting. However, remember that our work continues after the elections. The 2018/19 Wisconsin state budget is being drafted. In response to God's love for us, what do we say matters? Happy Monday!

## Prayer

Highly recommended.

## Share

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy