

Chapter 8 – Out of Their Abundance

George Walker and Tom Bridges picked up the collection plates left in the foyer by the other ushers at Saint Andrew’s Church. Carrying the plates, the senior ushers went to the church office. As they had to do each Sunday morning, they asked the group of older men gathered around a large table to move back so they could count the morning’s offering. Their conversations interrupted, the old men grudgingly moved away. These men were carried on the roll as the Men’s Bible Class, but they liked to refer to themselves as the Sunday Morning Quarterback Club. Instead of attending Sunday School or Church Services they met in the church office where they discussed the football games that had been or would be played that week end.

Assisted by long experience, George and Tom separated out the checks and paper money and efficiently added up that part of the morning’s gifts. Then Tom reached into the plate to gather the coins. Pausing, he picked up what looked like two small pieces of dirt. He held them out toward George. “What are these?”

George took the small bits of trash. “I don’t know,” he said. “They look like dirt but they feel like metal.”

Their confused discussion attracted the attention of the Sunday Morning Quarterbacks. One of the

quarterbacks, Sam Turner, ask the ushers to let him see what they had. George handed Sam the objects. Sam rubbed on the pieces then blew on them and laughed. “Someone in the congregation has a sense of humor.”

Tom stepped closer and looked at Sam. “What do you mean, Sam? What’s so funny about trash?”

Sam laughed again. “These bits aren’t trash. They’re copper coins. You’ve been given a couple of the Widow’s Mites like Jesus talked about.”

“Really? Do you think these coins are old? Could they be from back in Jesus’ time?”

Frank Burleson, another quarterback, stood up. “Let me see those coins. I know a little about coin collecting.”

He studied the coins carefully then faced the ushers. “They’re genuine. They are two-thousand years old.”

George took back the coins and stared at them. “Two-thousand years old. Wow these things could be worth a lot.”

“Not necessarily,” Burleson said. “I’ve seen them for sale on the inter net.”

“Really?” Tom Bridges said. “How much are they worth?”

Burleson returned to the desk and picked up a small

computer. “I have my laptop here. Let’s ask Google what they’re worth. When the file showing the coins in question came up, the price was thirteen dollars. George Walker shook his head. “Someone has had their fun teasing us. I say let’s leave them on the preacher’s desk. I want to get back in time for the closing ceremonies.’

Ralph Carpenter, another quarterback said, “If they’re worth thirteen dollars each, I think we ought to get up twenty-six dollars and give it to the church.

Glenn Evans picked up a Bible from the table and lifted his hand for attention. “It’s been a long time since I heard the story. I’d like to hear what Jesus had to say.”

Surprising his audience, Glenn opened the Bible and rose to read: “Mark 12: Verses 41 through 44. -- And Jesus sat down near the treasury and watched the multitude putting money in the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow put in two copper coins which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all of those who are contributing to the treasury. For they are contributing out of their abundance, but she, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, her whole living.”

Glenn looked around the room and said, “Gentlemen. I see these Widow’s Mites as a challenge to each of us. I suggest we collect a hundred dollars and give it to our church benevolence fund.”

The room was quiet for a moment, then Tom Bridges spoke up, “That’s a good thought Glenn, but you realize that one hundred dollars will feed the poor people who come to us for food for only one week.”

Glenn turned to Bridges and smiled. “I’d thought of that, Tom. I’d like to make a motion that we pay for these Widow’s Mites with one hundred dollars every week.”

Tom looked into the men’s faces. “All in favor raise your right hand.”

Every right hand in the room went up. Thus, the Sunday Morning Quarterback Club met a challenge more valuable than week end football.