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## Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

October 25, 2015

Motivated By a Vision

*“One poor widow came forward and put in two small copper coins worth a penny.”*  
Mark 12:42 (Common English Bible)

Catherine was a woman whose faith moved mountains. A member of a small church I served many years ago, Catherine lived modestly on a meager social security check. The only other financial stream she had came from housesitting people's pets while they traveled. She had little, and nothing about how she dressed and lived suggested otherwise. Yet, to know Catherine was to experience a living parable of God's grace and generosity. Her life was motivated by a vision that neither poverty nor inadequacy could quench. It was a vision that she could be used to change lives.

Each year, that congregation collected food and prepared large gift baskets for under-resourced families in the community. Each basket would have a medium-sized turkey, fresh vegetables, assorted canned foods, and breads and a dessert. Each year, Catherine participated by baking a loaf of bread to be included in one of the baskets. It was all she could afford. It was enough. During my six years of ministry in that church, nearly 100 people told me that Catherine's witness of generosity resulted in their own. My best estimate is that the additional generosity approached \$5,000, making those six loaves of bread become nearly \$5,000 to feed empty stomachs. In my way of seeing the world that is a huge mountain Catherine moved.

Examine this faith. Can yours compare to Catherine's, a faith that drives you to be generous, particularly when you may have little to offer? What sort of faith is this that would make Catherine bake a loaf of bread to feed another family on Thanksgiving? I asked her and her answer was the best sermon I have ever heard on God's grace. She giggled and said that so many people have a fear of running out. But God's mercies are new every day and so is God's capacity to meet our daily needs. Catherine's loaf of bread was an expression of gratitude. More, she answered, she is part of God's work force helping God keep God's promise to provide for someone else.

This one sentence from Mark's Gospel could be about Catherine. This poor widow trusted in God. The result was a determination - in the face of all evidence to the contrary - to contribute something of significance to advance God's work. Despite the poverty of the offering, she was motivated by a vision. It was a vision that she could be used to make a difference in the life of another. And Jesus noticed.

Doug Hood