

Many of us are at least a bit familiar with economics

**It is defined as the science that deals with the production
Distribution and consumption of goods and services;
Or the material welfare of humankind.**

But there is another kind of economics

**One that deals not with the material welfare of mankind
But rather the spiritual welfare of mankind**

This economic system takes a different view of investment

And return on investment

It is a system anyone can invest in

You do not need a large portfolio to invest

You need a generous spirit

And the return will not necessarily grow your 401-K

It goes beyond that

For the return is eternal

**The economic principals of this system are opposed to those of the
world**

They are based upon the law of the gift

The more we desire something

Give it away

Abundance comes from the willing gift

When we are intricately linked to God

---Who is nothing but Gift

We will never run out

We see this heavenly economic system at play in our readings today

In our first reading we find Elijah

The nation of Israel is suffering from a drought and famine

He is sent to a foreign land

Not to an Israelite widow

But to a gentile widow

A pagan widow

This is a sign of how low the Israelite nation has sunk

Their faith has rotted away

They forgot about God

They were relying totally on their own resources

And once famine struck the land

They have nothing to sustain themselves with

When the prophet Elijah encounters this widow

She is in bitter straits

Elijah asks for a drink of water

As she goes to get this

He asks for a small cake as well

Nothing much

Unless that is all you have

She tells him she was going in to make one last meal for herself
and her son

And then they will die

And Elijah makes her a promise

Do not be afraid

Go and do as you propose

But first, make me a cake

Remember, this is a pagan woman

She does not know the God of Israel

But she has tremendous faith

She gives what she has

Despite giving everything away

Perhaps because she gave everything away

She is rewarded

For a whole year the three of them received a return on her
investment

For the jar of flour shall not go empty

Nor the jug of oil run dry

We see a similar situation in the Gospel

Again a widow is involved

Here we find Jesus in the Temple

He is sitting opposite the treasury

He is also sitting opposed to the Pharisees

They are there hoarding all they can

Not just money

But honor, privilege, titles

Everything being done for the show

You can be sure that if they put anything into the treasury

Everyone will know how much they contributed

The widow enters the scene

Probably not even noticed by the Pharisees

What could she offer them?

They would see not only was she poor

There would be nothing to gain by associating with her

So they ignore her

But Jesus takes notice

And points her out to his disciples

Look at this poor widow

She has put more into the treasury than all the others

She has contributed all she had

Her whole livelihood

The stories diverge a bit here

Because we know how the widow of Zerephath was rewarded

We know nothing more of what happens to this widow

Other than the certainty that her investment was rewarded by God

Perhaps in this life

Certainly in His Kingdom

Abundance comes from the willing gift

The economy of heaven has similarities to the economy of the world

Both require risks to be taken

Both require investments

Both offer a return on investment

But what is invested

And the return are opposed to each other

When we invest in the world

We seek material rewards

It is so easy to fall into the trap of hoarding

Hoarding not only money

But power, sex, pleasure, reputation as well

Any of these and more

When we make them our god

We hoard

But when we do this, we find there is never enough

We are always looking for the next rush

But when we invest in the economy of heaven

When we listen to the invitation Jesus made to his disciples

His invitation to us

To invest everything we have and are

All our time, treasure and talents

When we do this

We find the more we give

The more we have

If you desire a stronger, more vibrant faith life

Become a witness

Tell your story, share it with others

If you desire more joy in your life

Become a bearer of joy to others

Become a gift to others

If we take our gifts, our talents and treasure

And we offer it to God

No matter how little the world might consider our offering

We place these into the heavenly treasury

Into a treasury that is filled with the grace and merits of Christ

**This is how the widow's mite becomes more than all the other
deposits**

She unites her limited offering to the infinite offering of Christ

Where he who offered everything

Invites us to do the same

Not offering only what we can afford

But offering what we hold most dearly

Taking the risk to invest your very heart