



“E-Team E-Zine”

*Encouragement and Equipping for
Evangelism That Extends the Kingdom*

“A Christmas Widow’s Mite”

*Here’s a “Heart Piece” for Christmas Time...
and An Example of A New Way to Tell an Old Story*

December 19, 2002

Reflected neon lights glared off shiny steel and glass on the shopping mall entrance. Softly falling snow blanketed gray sidewalk slush. Christmas music wafted through the air, ebbing and flowing with the opening of the mall doors. Through those doors hundreds of holiday pilgrims, pausing briefly to wolf down a burger and fries between stops, rushed in a harried herd to make their sacrifices to the gods of consumerism. Every year the demands of the gods expanded. Exchanging plastic and paper for presents meant more profits to satisfy the cravings of the merchants...and *perhaps* the purchases would bring a measure of happiness to the hearts of the pilgrims.

At the moment, however, the faces of the pilgrims mirrored more stress than satisfaction.

Just outside the huge temple of materialism, a lonely sentinel stood, ringing a bell next to a red kettle. The sign next to the ringer said, "Sharing is Caring."

Few paused to even consider the message.

Coming out the doors, trying to balance armloads of packages, a shopper here and there stopped in front of the solitary bell ringer. Oft times at the urging of a child tugging at their coat sleeve, a pilgrim dug in their pocket for the leftovers of their change (leaving enough for the parking meter at the next store, of course) and dropped a few coins into the metal container.

While trying to ward off winter chill, the sentinel noticed the approach of an old woman from down the block. Her steps were slow and steady, her coat old and worn--the frayed and weary veteran of many winter seasons. Age lines etch her face, but her eyes sparkle with the quiet joy of one decades younger.

Focusing her gaze on the watchful ringer at the red kettle, ignoring the pleading of the lights and signs and stores, the elderly lady walked right up to the red receptacle. Taking a frazzled coin purse from her pocket, she took two dollars and fifty three cents in change (all it contained) and dropped it all into the kettle. Then, with a cheery "Merry Christmas...God bless you, stay warm" she turned and walked back to her small apartment, surrounded by the softly falling snow. She is penniless until her next social security check...but rich, oh, so rich in her heart...

...and if you'd have listened closely enough, you'd have heard the applause of angels accompanying her walk home.

Next edition: "News on an Upcoming Coaching Clinic in January"



As always, please feel free to pass along editions of these "E-Team E-zines" to others. If you'd like to have people added to this mailing list, contact me. If you have insights, feedback or questions, I'm glad to hear them. God's best to you!