

## *Not forgetting the offering*

*“A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins. ... He said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.’” Mark 12:42–44 (NASB)*

As my truck pulled up to the tiny church in a remote village, women began to gather. We soon filled the mud structure where it was dark inside. Logs lay in rows to provide seating on the dirt floor. Most all the women had babies tied to their backs and had already hauled water and wood, cooked a meal and walked several kilometers to the church. I stood by the one window cut into the mud wall to be able to read the Scriptures.

Three different languages were spoken, so I waited for my two interpreters as I thought through what to say next. As I gazed out the window, I could see ladies preparing our noon meal in a big black cooking pot. I finished my teaching and had just asked someone to ask God’s blessing on the meal when a voice piped up: “We haven’t given our offering!”

I stood there in tumult, trying to explain to God just how little these women had, as if He wasn’t already aware. As each woman danced up to give her money, my heart broke. Then a woman poured coins, amounting to 20 cents, into my hand and asked me to make sure this money got to the right place.

God began to work in my heart, saying, *I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I don’t need their money. Their willingness to obey My commandments and joyfully share what little they have is the gift I seek. Do not rob them or me of this joy.*

—GAYE, WEST AFRICA

*Lord,* MAY I JOYFULLY GIVE WHAT I HAVE TO YOU. BLESS THESE WOMEN IN WEST AFRICA WHO GIVE SACRIFICIALLY. STRENGTHEN THE MISSIONARIES WHO SERVE THERE SO THAT THEY CAN GIVE THEMSELVES TO OTHERS WHO NEED YOU. *Amen.*