

The Day of Small Things

By J.P. Timmons

April 18, 2009

© 2009 CCI Publishing

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

“For who hath despised the day of small things?”

■ Zechariah 4:10

Other Scripture References: Matt. 16:5-12; John 6:1-14; Mark 12:41-44

Zechariah is a book from which we rarely hear a message preached, although we hear Zech. 4:6 quoted a lot; we have it as our personalized license plate on Evie’s car. Zechariah is one of the apocryphal books of the Old Testament that we should study and meditate in.

Every month when I read this passage about despising “the day of small things” I’m struck with how, unless we can see with the Eye of the Eagle, we often do this. We limit God just like Israel did not only with our words but also our thoughts and actions. Today the Spirit of the Lord came upon me when I was reading this and began to speak about the importance of this spiritual principle – never to “despise small things” if they’re dedicated to Him.

In 1996 the Lord sent me to the Philippines at my own expense to minister to one 22 year old girl. This experience taught me much about the absolute importance of one single person to the Lord. But what if I’d had a big head and said, “Why should I go? This is too small a thing for me.” After all, I’d ministered in Africa in crusades before hundreds of thousands of people at a time; why should I go half way around the world just to minister to one girl?

But of course I never thought of it that way at all. We *are* a ministry of truth and we do practice what we preach and, dear friends, the first question you must answer is always, “What is the will of the Lord?”

One of the problems we have in teaching and training missionaries, especially in other countries, is the mindset that they often have because of their upbringing in absolute poverty (because our ministry is mostly to and for the poor). It’s difficult to have a vision for the world when you’re wondering how you’re going to feed your wife and children who haven’t eaten in 3 days.

I always tell them – and it’s the truth so perhaps I should preface it with Jesus’ words, “I tell you the truth” – “Don’t ever allow any thoughts a place in your mind until you’ve first answered that question – ‘What is the will of the Lord?’” If you do, the enemy will use this against you all the days of your life and you will never accomplish much for the Kingdom. For example, because finances are always under attack by the enemy, you might say to yourself when you felt impressed to do something for the Lord, “I’d like to go on that mission trip or give some money to that pastor in Africa but I don’t have any.” No, first answer, “What is the will of the Lord?” You simply cannot allow the enemy to use *physical things* like money to stop the *spiritual* God wants to accomplish.

The right methodology is always to “soak it in prayer” until you absolutely know the will of the Lord and then you are able to enter into spiritual warfare to accomplish that which He’s called you to do.

Now, the Lord is really dealing with me this month as I read this passage of the Scriptures from Zechariah about the Day of Small Things. We should not “despise” it but rather begin to look at such opportunities through the Eye of the Eagle and the Will of the Lord.

Let’s look at some examples from Scripture that the Lord impressed me with this morning as I read this passage. First, we find an incredible miracle testimony from John 6 which is a marvelous chapter for learning something about Jesus – not only that He could and still can perform miracles but also that He “tests” us (v.6) – He wants to know if you’re still *looking* with the natural eyes or if you’ve developed *The Eye of the Eagle*.

The Apostle Philip asked Jesus a simple question: “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” Now I want you to get this and apply it to your own life so that you “do not despise the day of small things.” Jesus could have easily turned to Philip and rebuked him by saying, “Philip, don’t you remember

that I AM the Bread of Life and that I make this stuff no matter how many people there are who need to be fed I can feed them.”

We find out later in this chapter that there were “about 5,000 men” which probably means with women and children there were probably more than 10,000 people there who needed to be fed. But it doesn’t matter how many there are Jesus always has more than enough to feed them yet, as we learn from this Scripture testimony He also doesn’t want it wasted.

Jesus often spoke to His apostles and disciples about their “hardness of heart”; a deadly spiritual disease that the Lord began speaking to me about in 1999 when we were in Canada. Hardening of the heart is actually a digression from spiritual things – the more “hardened” your heart becomes the less apt you are to see spiritual things and recognize spiritual truth.

Now here in John 6 if you can picture yourself back then with Philip you realize that because there were so many people he was focused on the physical. He not only asked Jesus, “*Where* (italics added for emphasis) shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” but then he focused on the fact that they didn’t even have enough money in the ministry account to pay for this much bread! Notice verse 7, “Eight months wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!” (NIV)

Then as if to emphatically agree with what Philip was saying, the apostle Andrew, Peter’s brother, speaks up and makes an announcement: “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” In other words, it’s a small thing “among so many.”

Now you might be like Andrew, you might say, “I know the Lord wants me to go to Mombasa, Kenya, and start a church but how can I go with only \$50 in the bank?” In other words, it’s too small; it’s not enough to do anything with for the Kingdom!

If you think that way you will limit God and show that you have “despised the day of small things.” Learn this important spiritual fact that the Lord wants you to see today to increase your faith – “In His Hands nothing is small!”

What if Jesus had sided in with Philip and Andrew? What if He’d said, “Yep, you’re right, there’s gotta be over 10,000 people here and we only have 2 small fish and 5 barley loaves to work with. It’d be stupid to even try to feed this many people because only a few would be able to enjoy the meal and the others might stone us for not feeding them too.”

Don't forget what we're talking about – The Day of Small Things. Are you limiting God and what the Spirit of the Lord is trying to do with your life by despising the “day of small things?”

Now, let's look at the other example the Lord gave me this morning from Mark 12 – a story we've all heard in Sunday school since we were toddlers – the story of the widow's mite found in Mark 12:41-44.

It's interesting to note that Jesus, because He was perfectly able to follow the Holy Spirit and not make any mistakes and He only did what He “saw the Father do,” was not here by accident. He was often in the Temple and the Synagogues because these were the places of worship but this is the only account given where He purposely “sat down opposite the place where the offerings were placed and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury.”

No doubt Jesus used this as a teaching example to His disciples because He was not only the Son of God but also The Truth; He wanted to teach them to see with *The Eye of the Eagle* – to show them how God looks at things.

Obviously from the text there were a great many people who were putting money – tithes and offerings – into the box. I think this also means that Jesus and His disciples sat there a long time – they weren't there just a couple of minutes. Jesus made some observations about both the people and the money they were giving. The Word says, “Many rich people threw in large amounts.” So we see that there were many rich people giving to the Lord and of course there were many of what we might term “middle class” giving as well.

But Jesus focused His attention and the teaching lesson – the same one He wants us to understand today – on the one widow who came and “put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.” (v.42)

Jesus makes a powerful statement, one that He didn't make too often, He said, “I tell you the truth ...” Now, we know and they knew back then as well that this was a figure of speech. Hey, He was and is Truth so He never has spoken a lie. The figure of speech deals with a strong statement. He was saying, “I want you to get this and understand it – “this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on.”(NIV)

Why was she putting these two small copper coins – only a fraction of a penny – into the offering box? After all, it wouldn't amount to much, would it? You

can't pay the light bill with a penny; you can't buy a plane ticket to Nigeria for a penny, can you? What if she'd said, "I'm just a poor widow with nothing to give to the Lord; there's no reason to give this small amount because it won't amount to anything and, after all, if I do I won't have any money left to live on. But she did not "despise the day of small things." She gave to the Lord "everything – all she had to live on" the Bible tells us.

In 1998 the Lord showed me that this was the attitude Paul spoke about in 2 Cor. regarding the "poor saints in Macedonia"; they "first gave themselves to the Lord" and then they wanted to give like this poor widow to advance the Kingdom and so they helped Paul's ministry financially. Ministers and people are always quoting Phil. 4:19 "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" but they're taking that verse out of context. Paul was giving this promise to these poor saints in Macedonia *because* they had the same attitude that this poor widow did.

Many of you reading this are our spiritual sons and daughters. I want to express how passionately I feel about your never "despising the day of small things" in your own life and not putting off what you can do for the Lord today even though you may not feel that what you have is adequate. We want you to have as Paul said, "A full reward" from the Lord for your efforts while here on earth.

Whatever you have to offer to the Lord is – like the 2 small fish – always "more than enough" in the Hands of Jesus. Trust Him today and do not "despise the day of small things."