

Don't Discount the Value of Your Giving

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"- John 6:8-9

Andrew felt that the five small loaves and the two small fishes were too little to feed the great multitude of people. He calculated: 5 loaves and two fishes divided by five thousand equals zero. Mathematically, he deduced that it was an impossible task and he may have felt that the gift was of no use in the given situation.

The little boy was ready to give up his dinner for the cause. But doubt crept in and Andrew discounted the value of his gift when he said, "But how far will this go among so many?" Andrew's statement may have also caused discouragement to step into the little boy's heart, and thereby creating a barrier to his willingness to give. How hopeless the situation appeared at that point.

This is very common in life. On the one hand, we may feel that our money, time and other resources are already stretched, and the little that remains may be of no use to give to others. On the other hand, like the little boy, you may offer your gift to be used but someone may discount its value by comments such as "You are too young (or old)" or "We can't afford to do this now with our limited budget or small membership."

'Doubt' and 'Despair' and 'Discouragement' are three dreadful 'Ds' that are 'enemies' to our giving. Once present we no longer have a mind to give because we doubt the usefulness of our 'small' giving and, like Andrew, surmise that it is a hopeless situation. Once 'doubt' and 'despair' have set in, discouragement is close around the corner of our minds.

Here are some scriptures to silence the voice of doubt, despair and discouragement.

Proverbs 3:5-8- "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding."

James 1:6-7 - "But when you ask you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord."

2 Corinthians 4:18 - "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Hebrews 10:35- "So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you!"

Psalms 42:5 - "Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence."

2 Corinthians 5:7- "for we walk by faith, not by sight."

Romans 14:23- "But he who doubts is condemned ... for whatever is not from faith is sin."

It does not matter how insignificant your giving may appear to you or others, still give unto God. The story of the poor widow and her two mites should have already convinced you that Jesus sees the 'little' that we desire to give as 'a lot,' especially when it is given unto Him. Like the boy and the widow, never discount the value of the little that you have to give, once you are willing to give it all to God.

Don't specialize, like Andrew, in the subtraction and the division of what you have to give. Leave it up to Jesus to do the addition and multiplication of your blessings that will flow from your giving.

Never say that you don't have anything to give. I believe that this little boy was used to demonstrate that we must be like little children and step out in faith without too much care and mathematical analysis (like Andrew) about our circumstances. The Bible provides an example of the need to operate in child-like faith in Matthew 18:2-4:

'Jesus called a little child to stand among them. "Truly I tell you, He said, "unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven...."'

Always remember, it is in through the act of giving with child-like faith that we can unlock the promises of divine increase in our lives. Beware of the three dreadful Ds: Doubt, despair and discouragement. These 'spirits', as triggered by Andrew's statement, always conspire to abort our giving, and to shut up the windows to our heavenly blessings.

Heavenly Father,

"Teach me to take my eyes off of my circumstances, and to step out in faith in respect of my giving. Like the poor widow who gave in spite of her destitute situation, help me to rise above my own personal challenges and obstacles and to give in faith, believing that I will receive my supernatural blessings in due season. I silence the voices of doubt, despair and discouragement, and choose to exercise my child-like faith with my giving. In Jesus' name I pray with thanksgiving. Amen."

Memory Verses: *"for we walk by faith, not by sight."- 2 Corinthians 5:7*