

*Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.*

*Proverbs 16:8*

Pennies are just about useless anymore. I don't really like to carry them around because they seem to be more trouble than they are really worth. When I receive some of them in change, I put them in a can as soon I get home. When I get enough, I roll them up and cash them in.

What do you do when you see a penny lying on the ground somewhere? Do you just ignore it because it is not worth much? Do you think it too small a blessing to pick it up? I used to be that way, but anymore I think it a privilege to recognize any blessing from God. It struck me that we ought to not ignore our blessings no matter how small they seemed. Remember the old rhyme: Find a penny, pick it up, and all the day, you'll have good luck!

Some people caution me that it is good luck only if the penny is lying heads up; but bad luck if it is lying tails up. I certainly don't believe in that, so I pick it up no matter what. That is, of course, if the owner is not immediately obvious. And I don't intentionally bump people with change in their hand so that they will drop some of it – that would be cheating!

The idea that I have come to is that there is no blessing too small; we can glorify God over anything and everything. We should appreciate everything Good, no matter how small it is. I have gotten to the point that I take special delight in seeing a wild animal, for instance. A deer on the trail or a rabbit in the yard both shout to me of the magnificence of God's creation. A rainbow, or especially a double rainbow, are also an example of such blessings. And I have begun to search the skies for special events such as a mock sun or flaming sunset.

When Zechariah prophesied to God's people concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple, he said, "Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel (Zechariah 4:10)." He was merely stating that with God's help, great things would be done in the restoration of that empty land.

Many wonderful things have come from a tiny start. The widow that Elijah helped had only a little flour and oil (1 Kings 17:12ff), and she could have moaned about its inadequacy. But she shared it with Elijah and it became a continuing source for her survival. Later, during the drought that occasioned the great contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal, (1 Kings 18:16ff), a cloud as small as a man's hand developed into a huge rain system.

Christ, as you know, came to earth as a baby dependent on his parents. He was very appreciative of the power of small things, too. When he was once confronted with a multitude of hungry people, he could find only a few loaves and fishes. No one with him thought that this amount would be useful in view of such need (John 6:9). But Jesus blessed it and, through the power of God, fed all of the people and had much left over.

Christ also pointed out the value of even a bit of faith. He told us that "if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you (Matthew 17:20)." I think this has a connection somehow with Paul saying that "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough (Galatians 5:9).

Sometimes the most minute thing can be desired above all. Think about the rich man when he saw Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham (Luke 16:24). He called to Abraham and said, "... have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire." How much good could that have done? It seems insignificant, but the rich man coveted it with all of his heart.

Perhaps the greatest story is that of the poor widow that came and put in the two mites (Mark 12:42). Jesus said in the following verses that the value of her gift was more than all that had been put in by the others. The value was not the redeemable amount of the coins (a fraction of a penny), but the faith that was attached to it.

Is anything too small to be worth something? Are we in this same boat in comparison to God? But God loved us enough to send his unique son to die so that we might live (John 3:16). He values us immensely. There is no blessing too small for Him. So the next time you see a penny, pick it up. The penny could be you.

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