

Jesus gave value to the most humble people. (June 29, 2014)

Wherever Jesus was people were blessed and he always added value to them. He took notice of the simple acts that people did that caught his attention. When mothers brought their infants to him to touch and to bless, his disciples rebuked them and tried to turn them away. See Luke 18:15. But Jesus called them unto him and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He went on to say that whoever doesn't receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus loved the children and he refused to allow his disciples to consider him too important or too busy to stop and bless them and touch them. I often wonder how many of those same little ones grew to become disciples of the Lord. We need to be very careful how we look upon children for the word says that it is better to have a millstone put around the neck and cast into the depths of the sea than to offend the least of the little ones that belong to him. See Luke 17:2. He used a little boy's lunch to feed 5000 men plus women and children. Imagine how that child felt to have the creator of heaven and earth single him out and increase his lunch to feed thousands of hungry people. Look at John 6:5. Jesus lifted up his eyes and saw a multitude of people coming to him. He asked Phillip, "Where can we buy bread that these people may eat?" Philip felt overwhelmed as he said, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one of them may take a little." Andrew, Peter's brother said, "There is a lad here which has 5 barley loaves and two small fishes! But what are they among so many?" Jesus told them to set the people down and when they were all set down, Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks and then distributed them to the disciples and the disciples passed the bread and fish to the crowd of people. When everyone had eaten and was filled, Jesus told his disciples to gather the fragments that none would be lost and there was 12 baskets filled with bread and fish. Jesus has the answers to all of our circumstances; he just waits to see if we will believe and step out and trust him. He knew what he was going to do even as he asked Philip about buying bread to feed everyone.

If we are willing to give him what we have, he will multiply it to meet the needs. So many people refuse to give up anything because they don't feel that what they have will make a difference. Little is much when God is in it.

In Luke 21:1-5, Jesus looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has cast in more than they all; for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God; but she of her poverty has cast in all the living that she had.

I find it fascinating that Jesus took note of this woman and has honored her by having her story told in the New Testament Scriptures where she has been remembered since the time of Christ. I imagine this woman quietly walking into the temple with her eyes cast down so she didn't have to see the scornful faces of those who looked down upon her. Like the little boy's lunch,

their attitude would have been “Two mites! How is that small amount going to make any difference? She should not come here for she doesn’t fit in with us.”

Yet Jesus commended her and said that in heaven’s view, she gave more than all of them because she gave out of her poverty and they gave from their abundance.

There is a new employee at my office and while all of us were sitting around the table at lunchtime, I spoke about how much I enjoy ministering to prisoners and their families.

After a few minutes of silence as no one seemed comfortable talking about this subject, the young woman asked me a few questions and then said, “My brother is in prison. His fiancé is waiting for him and our whole family can’t wait for him to come home in two years. We love him very much.” I was surprised and pleased that she had the courage to speak about her brother with such love and devotion. How many people would be ashamed to admit that their family member was an outcast of society and would refuse to speak publicly about the issue within their family?

Look at Luke 23 as Jesus is stripped of his clothing, nailed to an old cross and placed between two criminals to die an agonizing death and one that was shameful and disgraceful to society. Over the top of the cross where Jesus was dying were these words “This is the King of the Jews.” The criminals on each side of him even railed on him and mocked him. One said “If you are the Christ save yourself and us.” The other one had listened to Jesus’ words and now he has a change of heart. He rebuked the man and said “Don’t you fear God, seeing that you are in the same condemnation? We are getting what we deserve for we receive the just reward of our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Look at verse 43 and read this. “Verily I say unto you, Today you shall be with me in paradise.” What an amazing promise. It wasn’t a person of means, or a person that society looked up to as a wonderful role model in society, or someone who had lots of wealth who would deserve to be honored by Jesus to accompany him into paradise, but a thief who was dying because of his sinful lifestyle. Somehow he got faith and courage to ask Jesus to remember him when he attained his kingdom. Jesus not only promised to remember him, but told him that he would be with him that very day in Paradise. Jesus would take him with him in to the place of peace and rest and he would be with him. I find that amazing. “Amazing Grace”.

When the disciples were commissioned to go and preach the gospel, if you read the book of Acts, you will find that the rulers and the religious leaders could tell by the men’s speech that they were not learned men. Look at Acts 4:13 and read these words. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. They beheld the man which had been healed standing with them and they could say nothing against it.

Many of us came to Jesus broken in spirit without courage or hope, but Jesus took our burdens and gave us a song and a testimony of the delivering power of Jesus Christ. Everyone who comes to God walks away with more value than they had before the encounter. AMEN