**LITTLE IS MUCH**

Sunday School Lesson 15

*Lessons from the Hymnbook*

John 6:9

1/22/2023

**Introduction:** For our fifteenth and likely final lesson in this series, we are going to be looking at the hymn “Little Is Much.” While there are still so many hymns left that we could study, I believe the theme of this hymn is a great one to finish the series on. The hymn was written by Kittie Suffield in 1924, so it’s one of the newer hymns in our hymnbook. Mrs. Suttfield was born in New York in 1884, and her husband Fred was a traveling evangelist. They would often travel together, and Mrs. Suttfield would routinely sing during the meeting. Surprisingly, the hymn history on this song was very hard to come by, and it seems like there really isn’t much known about the inspiration of this song. Perhaps, that’s the way the author would prefer it. After all, it’s a song that reminds us that God takes our little bit and turns it into much. It doesn’t really matter who we are. If we will yield ourselves to the Lord and give Him what we have, He will take it and make it of great use. There are so many examples of this in Scripture. One example of this would be Gideon and his three hundred men. The Lord reduced the number of soldiers to demonstrate to us this principle of little being much. Of course, the most well-known example of this has to be the feeding of the five thousand. The Lord took a boy’s meal and used it to feed at least five thousand people. Let’s take a look at some Biblical principles we can learn this morning from this beautiful song:

1. **EVERY BELIEVER HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER IN OUR LABOR FOR THE LORD.**
2. **Notice that the fields are ripe for a plenteous harvest. We just need believers who are willing to go and reap (Matthew 9:37-38; Luke 10:2; John 4:34-38; 1 Corinthians 3:6-8).** The opportunity in the Lord’s work to do something great is tremendous. The Lord tells us in His Word that the harvest truly is plenteous. What does this mean? It means that if we are willing to go and labor for Him, there is plenty that can be accomplished. There are many souls that can be won. There is no lacking for opportunity in the Lord’s work. If believers would truly grasp this thought, I’m certain we would all be amazed at all the things that God would do through us. The Lord is telling us that the ground is ready for us to plant the seed. Some get to be the ones who do the planting. Others get to be the ones who do the watering. Notice what 1 Corinthians tells us after this. It says that God gives the increase. The person who plants isn’t anything special. The person who waters isn’t anything special. The God who gives the increase is special! As we labor, we don’t have to worry ourselves with the increase. God has that taken care of. This is how we know that our little can easily become great. We are not responsible for the results of the harvest: just our labor.
3. **Notice that every believer is called to go and give of themselves in labor to the Lord’s work (Matthew 21:28-31; 25:14-30; 11:28; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Corinthians 5:9; Revelation 2:3).** All of us are called to give of ourselves in labor for the Lord. The parable of the talents and the unprofitable servant is a great example of the Lord’s teaching on the subject. It really doesn’t matter how many talents have been given to you. The point of the parable is to invest that which you have back into the Lord’s work. If you don’t, it’s not just a casual disappointment from the Lord. He expects us to labor. He expects us to give something of ourselves in service to Him. Knowing this, we cannot claim that God has given us nothing that we can offer. It wouldn’t make much sense for the Lord to expect for every believer to serve Him and at the same time give only some of those believers any necessary talents for the service. He is faithful who has called us, and He will also help us to do that which He has called us to do. Just give to Him what you have!
4. **EVERY BELIEVER HAS SOMEWHERE THAT THEY CAN SERVE THE LORD IN.**
5. **Notice that our Lord is with us even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Psalm 22:27; Isaiah 62:11; Romans 10:18).** My friends, what a wonderful promise we have in Matthew 28! We are called to go out and labor all around the world. The best part of that is that the Lord is with us. He promises to go all the way to the end of the world with us. Now, I’m not exactly sure where that would be (maybe Kansas!), but it gives me great peace to know that the Lord is with me even in the most obscure location. Perhaps, we feel that it is not worth it to do anything in our little place of service. Perhaps we have convinced ourselves that it will not amount to much. I would say that this place must be important to the Lord if He is willing to come and be in this place with us. We know that He desires for His Word to be spread to the end of the world.
6. **Notice that the greatest significance about a place is the work that God is doing there (Matthew 13:57-58; Exodus 3:5; Acts 4:31).** We’ve observed previously how the disciples were slow to go outside of Jerusalem after the Lord ascended. Jerusalem was a special place for them. I’m sure they hoped that the Lord was going to do a tremendous work there. After all, if He was going to do something special, one would probably think that Jerusalem would be the place. Paul had a burden for Jerusalem, but the Lord sent him out to the Gentile cities. I wonder if Paul ever felt like he was getting a second-class assignment. Considering the works of the early church, I think it’s fair to say, though, that Jerusalem was no different in the mighty work done there than in other cities. We have some great things happening there for sure, but there was also a great work being done in Galatia, Thessalonica, Berea, Ephesus, and many other places. The Lord makes it clear to us in His Word that it’s not about the place. It’s about the power and presence of God! The Lord did not do mighty miracles in His hometown because they lacked faith.
7. **EVERY BELIEVER HAS SOMETHING REMAINING THAT GOD CAN TURN INTO MUCH.**
8. **Notice that God is able to make much out of little physical strength (2 Corinthians 12; Judges 6:12; Exodus 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:22; Proverbs 20:29).** In the third stanza of the song, we sing about the weariness of the body. We often tie our abilities to our physical strength. This is certainly understandable. One is not going to be able to go and play a sport if they don’t have the physical strength to do so. A person who lacks physical strength might have a difficult time finding an occupation and performing basic duties. Our physical strength is a big part of our livelihood. This is why folks who struggle with infirmities often feel a bit lot in their purpose in life. When it comes to the spiritual world, how much does physical strength really matter though? Does God need our physical strength? Do we lack usefulness to the Lord if we are lacking in physical strength? Throughout the Bible, we see God use inanimate objects to accomplish His will. If He can do that, then certainly He can use a Christian who is lacking in physical strength. He just wants you to give Him that little bit that you have. Don’t keep it because you think it has not value to Him.
9. **Notice that if prayer is the little bit that you have to give, God can use it just like anything else and turn it into much (James 5:13-18; Philemon 1:22; 1 Timothy 5:5; Colossians 4:12; Acts 12:5; 16:25).** This is a good place in the lesson to remind us again that God is the One who gives the increase. We must simply give our little bit to Him and watch it grow. Knowing this, why do we undervalue the things that we give God that aren’t physical in nature? The primary example of this is prayer. If God is the One performing the work, then it doesn’t really matter what we give to Him, as long as it is what He wants. God knows our physical condition. God knows our limitations. He also knows what we have to offer. He knows if we have a small lunchbox that we can give up. Let me encourage those of you who only have a lunchbox of prayer to offer. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Your prayer can be just as powerful as the physical actions of another believer. Give God what you have, and I’m certain you have something!
10. **EVERY BELIEVER THAT KEEPS THEIR LITTLE BIT WILL BE LEFT WITH NOTHING.**
11. **Notice that there is no potential for increase if we bury the little bit that we have (Matthew 25:24-27).** We come back now to the parable of the unprofitable servant with his one talent. The Bible tells us that he did nothing with the little bit that he had. He did not have as much as other servants had. Maybe that is why he chose to do nothing with his talent. The Lord shows us that this attitude is unacceptable to Him. If we do nothing with our little bit but go and bury it, we ruin any potential for an increase. What sense does that make? Why not invest it into the Lord and see what He can make of it? Sadly, we’d often rather complain about getting a little bit than take that little bit and ask God to make something greater out of it.
12. **Notice that we are ultimately left with nothing when we try to hold onto our little bit (Matthew 25:21-23, 28-30; Mark 12:42-44).** The servant with the one talent was not allowed to keep that little bit that he had. What was the end result then? He ended up with nothing. That’s what we can expect if we hold on to our little bit. That’s because our little bit really does not have any eternal value. That little bit of time we have will be gone soon enough. That little bit of money we have will eventually fade away. That little bit of health that we have will soon be diminished. Our little bit is not going to last for eternity. Even more so, the Lord may even take away our little bit now and find someone else who will put that little bit to use before it is gone. Let’s give our little bit to God and see what He will do with it. It does not matter if all we have to offer is two little mites like the widow had. You don’t know what those are worth!