

# Who Has Despised The Day Of Small Things?

Joe Slater

Zechariah prophesied during a discouraging time in Judah. Over a decade previously, a relative handful of Jews had returned from captivity and started rebuilding the temple. Even then they mourned that the new edifice would never match the splendor of Solomon's temple. To make matters worse, enemies had convinced the ruling Persian king to halt the construction.

Now that work had resumed, God encouraged His people. Through the faithful prophet Zechariah, the Lord said, "*The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it*" (Zechariah 4:9). Those who had "*despised the day of small things*" (v. 10) needed to change their tune! The Lord was rejoicing to see that even Zerubbabel (the governor) was engaged in the project. God's power, not human strength or wisdom, would bring the task to completion (v. 6).

Everyone likes to accomplish big things! But large undertakings often have small beginnings! We ought not despise the day of small things. Jesus began with twelve apostles among 120 disciples in one room of a house in Jerusalem. How could they possibly impact the immense crowds gathered for the feast of Pentecost? Maybe they should call for reinforcements! But no, when that day ended, 3000 lost souls had been saved and added to the body of Christ. And that was only the beginning of the explosive growth of the church during the remainder of the first century A.D.

Our congregation has no apostles and far fewer than 120 disciples. Woe is us! We can't accomplish anything noteworthy, right? Wrong! We have the powerful gospel and our Savior's promise to be with us. Who has despised the day of small things?

# The Service Station

Remember the service station? When the car needed fuel, you pulled up to the pumps at your favorite full-service gas station. The attendant came out and pumped your gas, washed your windows, checked the oil, water and air in the tires, and "serviced" what was required.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no more full-service stations in our area. They have gone the way of drugstore fountains and drive-in movies. A lot of our service today comes from a machine rather than a nice man in a spiffy uniform. We've eliminated much of the human contact in our busy daily lives. We pay at the pump, have online bill pay, use the ATM for our banking needs, and even check ourselves out at the grocery store.

Technology is great and I'm thankful for it, but I fear we're slowly losing the human touch of service. One area of service that we should never want to automate is our service to our God and Christian families. The interaction of family members helping and serving each other should never be replaced with computers, video games, robots, or anything else. Christian family members should support each other physically and spiritually in all that they do. This week make the commitment to serve your family better than you did in the past.

*"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods."* (Matthew 24:45-47)

--Jay Launius (Maud, TX)

# Would You Grow Up, Please?

For those who are "vertically challenged," this is a comment frequently heard. But, sadly, there isn't much that can be done about shortness.

In Proverbs 1:4 Solomon says that the intent of the proverbs is to give "*prudence to the naïve.*" The word translated "naïve," is also translated as "simple." The word typically refers to youth who are still raw, green and immature. These youthful (and frequently ill-thought-out) behaviors have elicited many a rolling of the eyes to weary parents. They sometimes ask: "Will he/she ever grow up?"

Sadly, some never do. They may grow up physically, but emotionally and spiritually remain in infancy. Yet the Proverbs are designed to help transition one from simplicity to maturity. But this doesn't happen by accident. How does one "grow up"?

First, by recognizing the need to grow up. Teens have to understand that the free-spirited days of youth will not last forever. They cannot forever live off of mommy and daddy (Note: I'm hoping my kids are reading this!). Paul said that when he became a man he "*put away childish things*" (1 Cor. 13:11).

Second, by recognizing that education helps one grow up. One interesting (but not always appreciated) fact is that the Proverbs are designed for youth! Solomon goes on to say that this book is to give "*to the youth knowledge and discretion*" (1:4). We need to study this book a lot more than we do. Youth need to read this book. No, youth need to **study** this book.

Third, by recognizing the need to listen and apply the things learned. One might memorize the entire book of Proverbs and still need to grow up. Yet this book will teach one, show one, how to grow up.

Solomon asks the right question in 1:22: "*How long, O naïve ones, will you love simplicity?*" There comes a time to grow up. Please?

--via Athens, AL