

Small Things That You Can Do

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Introduction.

- A. As a rule, we Americans like big things. This is especially true in Texas, where “big” is basically a synonym for “good,” but it’s true everywhere. Americans want to have the biggest, nicest house they can, with every upgrade they can think of. There are people who pay more for kitchen countertops than I would pay for a car. Speaking of cars, we want the biggest, flashiest car we can have too, at least until the time comes to fill up at the gas pump. We want to have the biggest office and best title at work, we want our kids to be the quarterback or the star in the school play, and when we go to McDonald’s, we want the biggest bucket of fries money can buy. We like big. We like loud. We like important.
- B. Now, this can get us into trouble in a lot of areas, but it can really get us into trouble when we consider the Lord’s church according to this way of thinking. At a guess, if some worldly person who knew nothing about the church saw one of our assemblies, he would conclude that there are only a few things in the church worth doing. He would say that being a preacher is worthwhile, that being a songleader or Bible-class teacher is worthwhile, and maybe that leading a prayer is worthwhile, but he would write off everything else that people do in the church. Those other, quieter things don’t attract enough attention. They aren’t big enough.
- C. The Christian outlook on the importance of bigness is very different, and it’s nicely expressed in the hymn “There Is Room In The Kingdom,” which is one of my favorite quartet-style hymns. Friends, doing work in God’s kingdom isn’t about doing big things. It’s mainly about doing small things. It’s mainly about all of us working quietly together toward a common goal, and this is a work that all of us can participate in. Because this is so, let’s spend some time this morning looking at, as the song says, small things that you can do.

I. Why Do Small Things?

- A. Before we look at some examples of small things that all of us can do, though, there’s a question we need to answer: Why should I devote myself to small things in the first place? Why should I spend my time on something that will never attract much notice? Here are the Bible’s answers:
- B. The first reason why we should do small things is that **GOD COMMANDS US TO DO THEM**. Look with me at Romans 12:4-7. This verse is important for two reasons: first, the connection that it makes between our membership in the Lord’s body and the gifts that He has given us, and second, how it describes those gifts.
 1. Let’s look at the first point first. It begins by using the same kind of language that we looked at last Sunday morning, by describing each one of us as members of the Lord’s body. We are different, we are separate, yet we are one in Him. What makes us different, though, is not the differences in outward appearance that the world puts so much stock in. We are different in the Lord’s body because of our different functions, and we have different functions because of the different gifts that God has given us.
 2. This verse also has a lot to say about what these gifts from God are. A lot of the time, when we think of spiritual gifts, we define that category much more restrictively than we should. We say that spiritual gifts are miraculous powers that the first-century Christians got from God, and we don’t get spiritual gifts anymore. This verse tells us that we need to broaden our definition. The category of spiritual gifts does include the miraculous gifts, like the gift of prophecy mentioned here, and it is true that we don’t receive those miraculous gifts anymore. However, it also includes things that aren’t miraculous, things like the ability to teach others about Jesus, or the ability to serve other Christians in humble, quiet ways. Basically, anything that God gives us that we can use in His kingdom is a spiritual gift, and He expects us to use those gifts for Him. This includes even the things that we take for granted, like the good health that allows us to hop in our cars and go places without a second thought. Brethren, that is a huge gift from God, and if you have any doubt about that, go talk to Brother and Sister Lee or Sister Hall. We need to be using all of these gifts from God, even the ones we forget about, in the service of the kingdom.
- C. In addition, we also should do small things because **THE CHURCH DEPENDS ON OUR DOING THEM**. We find this in Ephesians 4:15-16. This passage describes the way that the church grows and matures. The body itself is connected to Jesus, and through this connection, the body is able to build itself up in love. However, in order for the body to accomplish this task, two things must be true of it: it must be held together by what every joint supplies, and every part must be working effectively and doing its share. Notice the repetition of the word “every.” It’s extremely important, because it tells us that if we here at Margaret Street want to maximize our potential, every member of this congregation needs to be involved. If we aren’t involved, if we aren’t doing our share, we’re hurting this entire church. We’re keeping this body of the Lord’s people from doing all the work that it could do for God. This church depends on every member doing his or her part.
- D. Third, we should do small things because **OUR ACTIONS INFLUENCE OTHERS**. Look at what Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12. Although this instruction was given to Timothy, it’s something that all of us can

take to heart too. We need to remember the force of our example in service to God. Our brothers and sisters especially watch us much more closely than we think. If we're doing what we should be doing, both publicly and privately, they know it, and by our example, they are encouraged to do the same. If, on the other hand, we're not serving as we should, our brothers and sisters know that too, and they are discouraged from service by our bad example. Let's resolve to be a force for spiritual strength, brethren, not spiritual weakness.

- E. Finally, we should do these small things because **WE WILL RECEIVE A REWARD**. It's not just our brethren who are watching us; Jesus is watching too. He explains the consequences of this in Matthew 10:41-42. Even the smallest things that we do for other people and for the Lord's church, things that we may even forget about half an hour after we do them, those things will be remembered forever. Jesus is watching, and Jesus will never forget the service we offer Him. On the day of judgment, we will not be without our reward.

II. Small Things That You Can Do.

- A. Clearly, there are many reasons why we should be willing to do small things for the Lord. Now, let's look at some examples of small things that we can do, things that every one of us can offer to the Lord's work. This is obviously not a complete list, but it should be enough to spark thought and hopefully action.
- B. The first small thing on the list is straightforward: **BE HERE**. Now, we've all heard this before. We all know that Hebrews 10:25 tells us not to forsake the assembly, but there's so much more to that passage than just being here. Let's look at it now: Hebrews 10:24-25. There are reasons why we're supposed to assemble here: so we can stimulate one another to love and good works, and so we can encourage each other.
- C. Brethren, the opportunities that we have to do these things here are gifts from God, and, as we just got through studying in Ephesians 4, the church needs for us to use those gifts in the work of this church. As the church at Margaret St., we rely on each one of our members. We are most effective when every joint is supplying unity, when every part is doing its share. That means that whenever we choose to be somewhere else, wherever that somewhere else may be, by our absence we are hindering the work of this church. This church needs every member at every service. Sometimes, this is not possible. Sometimes, we cannot assemble here, whether because we're traveling, because we're sick, or because we're working and can't get out of it. However, whenever that is not true, whenever we have a choice, we need to choose to be here.
- D. Here's another small thing that we can do: **BE ON TIME**. We need to remember what I like to call "The Governor Principle." It's found in Malachi 1:8. The problem was that the Jews were offering blemished sacrifices to God. They were giving Him animals that were sick and blind and lame. God asks, "If you were going to give your governor a present, would he be happy with a present like that?" Here's the point: if we will do something to please a mere human being, we should do at least that much to please God, because God is more important. There's a pretty obvious application here to punctuality. If we have a job interview, a job we really need and want, are we going to show up to that job interview 15 minutes late? And if we do, do we think we're going to get the job? Why, then, do we think it's acceptable to God to show up 15 minutes late?
- E. This is important not just for God's sake, though. It's important for our brethren's sake. We harm our brethren and the worship in a number of ways when we aren't punctual. First, as any songleader will tell you, there are few things more distracting than when someone comes barging into the auditorium in mid-hymn. It's disruptive. Our lateness also makes a statement about our priorities. It tells everybody else that we thought something else was more important than worshiping God, and that statement encourages no one.
- F. Third, we also contribute to this church when we **PAY ATTENTION TO THE SONGLEADERS**. Now, I think the singing here is excellent, but we still need to obey the principle of 1 Thessalonians 4:1, which tells us to abound still more. No matter how well we are doing, there is always room to improve. In our singing, one of the ways we can do this is by paying attention to the songleader and following him in his efforts to provoke our hearts to worship. When a church does pay attention, it elevates the worship to a whole new level.
- G. One last small thing we can do for this church is to **INVITE OTHERS** to our special visitor-friendly services. This is a work in which all of us should be involved. Consider the example of the Thessalonian church in 1 Thessalonians 1:8. This passage makes clear that evangelism isn't a preacher thing; it's a church thing. The word of the Lord should sound forth from all of us, that through our work many will be brought to God.
- H. In fact, within the next month, we'll all have an opportunity for this sort of outreach. It's centered around one of the biggest problems facing this country today: the temptations that are trying to lead our young people astray. Sometimes, to many teenagers, it sounds like the advocates of sin are shouting, but the voice of righteousness is whispering. That's why we're going to have a sermon called, "Why Should I Listen To God?", on Sunday, July 9. Young folks, this is especially for you and for your friends. Here's what I'd like to see: I'd like to see you bringing more of your friends to this than the grownups brought in a month ago. Your goal is to have at least seven friends here, and I'm sure you guys can do it! However, even if you aren't in that group, you still need to come and invite others. This is an important lesson for parents because it's designed to give them things to tell their own kids. This is a lesson for anyone who cares about the young people in their life, and it's a lesson for anyone who needs to listen to God himself. Let's be diligent about inviting folks.

Conclusion. If you haven't been doing the things for God that you should, now's the time to change.