

A Day of Small Things

Zechariah 4:8-10

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** Through inspiration Paul tells us the value of the Old Testament:

Gal. 3:24: *“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”*

Rom. 15:4: *“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”*

1 Cor. 10:11: *“Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”*

2. With these thoughts in mind I want to turn to the Old Testament and study a time in Israel’s history that provides us with a valuable lesson.
3. The time period I want to consider is just after the return of Israel from the Babylonian Captivity.

A. Recall:

- (1) The wickedness of both Israel and Judah.

- (a) Israel had 20 kings and every single one of them were wicked: e.g., dozens of times the Bible speaks of the kings of Israel walking in the “sins of Jeroboam.”

- (b) Judah was a little better; they had 20 kings but only about five had any really redeeming qualities and only two were “righteous” (i.e., Hezekiah, Josiah).

- (c) Judah sailed past *Redemption Point* during the reign of Manasseh:

2 Kgs. 24:2-4: *“And the LORD sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. 3 Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.”*

- (2) **3** Due to their wickedness and obstinance, God sent both Israel and Judah into captivity.

- (a) Israel was defeated and made captives by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

- (b) Judah was taken into captivity by the Babylonians ~100 years later in three waves:

- ☛ 606 B.C. (e.g., Daniel and his three friends),

- ☛ 596 B.C. (Ezekiel, priests and craftsmen)

- ☛ 587 B.C. (Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem, destroys its walls, temple, etc.).

- (3) Israel (i.e., northern kingdom) never returned from their captivity (at least as a nation), but the Babylonian captives (i.e., Judah, southern kingdom) returned after 70 years; there were three waves of returnees:

- (a) 536 B.C. Cyrus the Great (as prophesied; Jer. 29:10) allowed Jewish captives, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, to return to Jerusalem.

- (i) Cyrus issued a decree and financed the return of Jews to Jerusalem and granted permission for them to rebuild the temple (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4).

- (ii) A total of 49,897 Jews returned to Jerusalem in this wave (Ezra 2:64-65).

- (b) They begin working on the temple in 536 B.C., but work stopped in <2 years.
 - (c) The prophets Haggai (520 B.C.) and Zechariah (520-518 B.C.) encouraged the people to resume work on the temple; it did in 520 B.C.; temple completed in 515 B.C.
 - (d) About 80 years after the first wave of captives returned; a second wave returned to Jerusalem in 457 B.C. under the leadership of Ezra.
 - (e) Thirteen years later (444 B.C.) the third and final wave of captives return under the leadership of Nehemiah.
 - (f) Under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah the wall of Jerusalem is rebuilt in 432 B.C.
4. As you might imagine, when that first wave of captives returned to Jerusalem there was great excitement and optimism for the future.
- A. **4** Zerubbabel led the first wave of less than 50,000 people back to Jerusalem.
- (1) There was a lot of work to do because Jerusalem was completely destroyed.
 - (2) Worship resumed immediately; altar constructed and sacrifices were offered (Ezra 3:3-4).
- B. The next year work began on the foundation for the temple (Ezra 3:9-11).
- (1) It was joyful and sad at the same time:
 - (a) When the foundation was completed the priests held a ceremony complete with trumpets, cymbals *“and they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord... Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.”* (Ezra 3:10-11)
 - (b) But there was also an air of sadness:

Ezra 3:12-13: *“But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers’ houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.”*
 - (2) Then local resistance to the project arose (**Ezra 4:1-5: vv. 4-5:** *“Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.”*).
 - (3) Eventually those opposed to the rebuilding of Jerusalem got a government order to stop work on the Temple; the enemies of the Jews wrote a letter to the Persian king (Artaxerxes) accusing the Jews of rebellion against the king and claiming that once the Jews completed the reconstruction of the city *“they will not pay tax, tribute, or custom, and the king’s treasury will be diminished”* (Ezra 4:17-23, esp. v. 13).
 - (4) When construction of the temple was halted, the people began focusing on building their own homes (Hag. 1:4). The initial enthusiasm had dried up and vanished in the face of opposition and persecution.
 - (5) So only about a year was spent on the Temple.
- C. The prophet Haggai comes on the scene about 14 years later to stir the people back up; to energize them to regain their faith and resume the work.
- (1) The work resumed, but after a month the people again become discouraged. The temple would never be like the glory of Solomon’s temple.

(2) Haggai again stirred the people up (Hag. 2:1-9).

D. Zechariah delivered a message about the same time:

Zech. 4:6-10: "So he answered and said to me:

*'This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:
'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,'
Says the LORD of hosts.
7 'Who are you, O great mountain?
Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain!
And he shall bring forth the capstone
With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"'
8 Moreover the word of the LORD
came to me, saying:*

*9 'The hands of Zerubbabel
Have laid the foundation of this temple;
His hands shall also finish it.
Then you will know
That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.
10 For who has despised the day
of small things?
For these seven rejoice to see
The plumb line in the hand of
Zerubbabel.
They are the eyes of the LORD,
Which scan to and fro throughout the
whole earth.'"*

(1) The Jews were a despised people:

- (a) They were beaten down from the captivity and opposition to their rebuilding of Jerusalem; their land was in ruins; all its wealth was gone.
- (b) Only a small portion of the population even returned (~50,000 out of over a million).
- (c) No doubt they brought it upon themselves!

1 Kgs. 9:8-9: "And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?' 9 Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the LORD has brought all this calamity on them.'"

(2) But they've paid the price; they've repented and returned to the Lord.

- (a) They are working hard, but the problems are great and the people are few.
- (b) They just don't have the resources to restore things back to their former glory.
- (c) They become depressed and dejected; they're on the verge of quitting!

(3) ****** At this juncture they need to learn an important lesson: **God works through small things!**

Zech. 4:10: "For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth." (NKJV)

Zech. 4:10: "Do not despise this small beginning, for the eyes of the Lord rejoice to see the work begin, to see the plumbline in the hand of Zerubbabel. For these seven lamps represent the eyes of the Lord that see everywhere around the world." (TLB)

- (a) **5** Through His prophet God is encouraging the Jews by telling them that glory would come through their godly efforts despite how small and insignificant those efforts seemed (i.e., either by their own people or by their opposition).
- (b) The "small things" they would accomplish, with the Lord's help, would not be small and insignificant!

- (c) On the contrary, what they would accomplish would be glorious and very significant!
- (d) It would produce a glory that would prove to the world and to Israel that God accomplishes His will even through small things!

II. DISCUSSION:

I. 6 God accomplishes big things through small steps:

- A. Our daughter Dawne is an excellent example.
 - (1) When we adopted her she was five years old and could not speak a word of English.
 - (2) When we brought her home to Michigan the language problem really came to me: “How in the world are we going to teach this child to speak English?!”
 - (3) I decided the first step was for her to learn the alphabet; the ABC’s.
 - (4) We bought a child’s toy; an electronic alphabet; it had 26 buttons, one for every letter of the English alphabet; push the button and the toy would pronounce the letter.
 - (5) Day after day, just a few minutes each day we went over that alphabet.
 - (6) In just a few weeks Dawne learned the alphabet.
 - (7) In a few months she began to communicate in basic English.
 - (8) Now as a high school freshman she is taking “Honors English”!
- B. The notion that big things are accomplished through small steps is a consistent message in the Bible.
 - (1) The lesson of the ant is that significant results come from small things (**Prov. 6:6-8**: “Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, 7 Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, 8 Provides her supplies in the summer, And gathers her food in the harvest.”).
 - (2) There are many other examples in nature:
 - (a) Thunder storm: Only a microscopic grain of dust is needed to form a droplet of water in the atmosphere; in short order these droplets can result in a thundercloud towering to a height of over 40,000 feet with a diameter of 15 miles or more.
 - (b) Pearl: An oyster can turn a tiny speck of sand into a beautiful pearl in 2-3 years.
 - (c) Forest fire: One smoldering ember can burn down thousands of acres of forest.
 - (d) Blue whale: The largest creature on earth, the blue whale begins life just like we do with a sperm and egg so small they can only be seen with a high power microscope.
 - (i) But it grows into an adult weighing 360,000 pounds (180 tons; ~5 loaded semi’s)!
 - (ii) ** At maturity it is ~100 feet long; its heart is the size of a Volkswagen Beetle and pumps 10 tons of blood!
 - (iii) Heart beats 8-10 times per minute and can be heard for 2 miles! Hummingbird heart rate is ~1,260 beats per minute when feeding.
 - (iv) Blue whale tongue is the size of a full-grown African elephant!
- C. ** Man has a tendency to ignore or discount small actions; we think everything has to be done on a grand scale to be of any importance (e.g., size of a congregation).
- D. But God doesn’t measure things by their “size”!
 - (1) Recall what Jesus said about giving a cup of water

Matt. 10:40-42: “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. 41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.”

(2) The deeds that lead to eternal life are individually quite small: Matt. 25:31-46

- ☛ Feeding a hungry person,
- ☛ Giving a drink to a thirsty person,
- ☛ Giving shelter to a stranger,
- ☛ Giving clothes to the naked,
- ☛ Visiting a person in prison.

(3) Each of these things are small; they would never make the headlines on the evening news.

(4) But even though they are small, they are important to the Lord!

Matt. 25:37-40: “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”

Matt. 25:41-46: “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ 44 Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

E. So there are many “small things” we can do that have an enormous impact:

(1) Helping a needy saint (e.g., drought victims in Zimbabwe and the Philippines).

(2) Visiting or calling a fellow Christian (e.g., Wilma).

(3) A brief chat with a stranger might seem like a very small thing.

(a) But consider Jesus’ short chat with the Samaritan woman at the well (Jn. 4).

(b) In this “small” setting Jesus revealed one of the greatest fundamental truths: **Jn.**

4:24: “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

(c) As a result of this “small” thing the entire town was converted:

Jn. 4:27-30: “And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, ‘What do You seek?’ or, ‘Why are You talking with her?’ 28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 ‘Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?’ 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.”

Jn. 4:39-42: “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’ 40 So when the Samaritans had

come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of His own word. 42 Then they said to the woman, 'Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.'"

- F. We need to take advantage of "small" settings because they can have a big impact:
- (1) Mention the gospel to a friend, relative or neighbor (*Is It Worth Investigating God?*).
 - (2) Encourage a young person to be baptized.
 - (3) Encourage a young Christian to participate in the services.
 - (4) Encourage a young mother with a crying baby to come to every service and ignore the dirty looks.
 - (5) Encourage the discouraged Christian to hang on.
 - (6) Encourage the elderly Christian to come to services despite their aches and pains.
 - (7) Encourage the broken-hearted Christian by sharing their burdens.
 - (8) Encourage the preacher even though he is not a polished orator (as long as he preaches the truth!).
- G. These things appear small from a human perspective, but if you're the one who needs to be baptized, encouraged, helped, etc. it is a "big deal"! It's certainly a big deal with God!
- H. So we need to be very careful not to devalue things because we perceive them as small:
- (1) Some criticized the Lord's work in Michigan because we were "small"! Give up! Throw in the towel!
 - (2) But the gospel was preached! **Isa 55:11**: "*So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*"
- I. Many would say similar things about the work here at Westside; but would they have made the same criticism of Noah?
- 1 Pet. 3:20**: "*who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*"
- J. Just a little salt and a little light can make a big difference (Matt. 5:13-16). Don't ever think you are too small to accomplish great things for the Lord!

2. **7** God chooses to work through things the world overlooks:

- 1 Cor. 1:27-29**: "*But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.*"
- A. God often doesn't want the mighty to accomplish His plan: **Matt. 11:25**: "*At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. 26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.'*"
- B. Gideon (Judges 6-8):
- (1) Israel was being oppressed by the Midianites (Judg. 6:1-10).

- (2) God raises up Gideon as a judge (deliverer; Judg. 6:16).
 - (3) He was from the smallest clan in one of the smallest tribes (Judg. 6:15).
 - (4) God instructed Gideon to raise an army and fight the Midianites (Judg. 6:34).
 - (5) Initially Gideon's army consisted of 22,000 soldiers.
 - (6) God said that was too many and made Gideon reduce the size of his army:
 - (a) First cut: *"Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once..."*; that cut it down to just 10,000 (Judg. 7:3).
 - (b) Second cut: those who drank water by cupping their hand; that cut it down to just 300 (Judg. 6:48).

Judg. 7:2: *"And the LORD said to Gideon, 'The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'"*

Isa. 31:1: *"Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, And rely on horses, Who trust in chariots because they are many, And in horsemen because they are very strong, But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, Nor seek the LORD!"*
- C. Think about Noah's ark (Gen. 6): Eight people built an ark that saved the world (**1 Pet. 3:20:** *"...when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water."*).
- (1) It was 450 feet long x 75 feet wide x 45 feet high.
 - (2) The ark's displacement was over 22,000 tons.
 - (3) The ark had over 1.5 cubic feet of cargo space, over 100,000 square feet of floor space.
 - (4) Total cargo space would equal about 570 standard railroad livestock cars of today.
- D. How often has God used a single, seemingly insignificant person to turn the world upside down?
- (1) Abraham (Out of one measly male child→**Gen. 13:16:** *"And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered."*),
 - (2) Moses (Went from a lonely shepherd in a barren land to a leader a people numbering in the millions!),
 - (3) David (1 Sam. 16ff; David was just a "punk kid" so to speak (i.e., 1 Sam. 17:28: *"for you are a youth"*):
 - (a) Goliath was 9' 6" tall,
 - (b) His armor weighed about 125 pounds,
 - (c) The tip of his spear weighted about 15 pounds,
 - (d) He was also "motivated"! **1 Sam. 17:44:** *"And the Philistine said to David, 'Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!'"*
 - (4) Faithful worthy saints: Heb. 11:32-40
- E. That God employs few versus many to achieve His will and glorify His name is the rule and not the exception.

- F. God always accomplishes His Will and glorifies His Name, despite the seeming impossibilities of the odds (**Isa. 55:11**: “So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”).
- (1) By human standards and criteria we here at Westside are weak and puny.
 - (2) Even some of our brethren would say, “Well you need to reach a ‘critical mass’ before you can really accomplish anything.”
 - (3) But they are using human standards, not God’s standards!
 - (4) Like Gideon’s 300 we can accomplish great things if we simply put our faith and trust in God and His word and do what we can; we don’t have to “pull off” something worthy of fireworks and the blasting trumpets!
 - (a) Evangelism: **1 Cor. 3:9**: “For we are God’s fellow workers...” when we sow the seed of the kingdom, even if nobody ever obeys the gospel!
 - (b) Benevolence: **Matt. 25:40**: “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”
 - (c) Edification: **Eph. 4:16**: “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

G. God’s power is shown in weakness:

2 Cor. 12:7-10: “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

3. **8** God’s people have never been numerous: Matt. 7:13-14

A. So many times God’s faithful are referred to as a “remnant” (Dictionary.com: “1. A remaining, usually a small part, quantity, number, or the like.”).

- (1) 7,000 faithful in all Israel (1 Kgs. 19:14-18: **v. 18**: “Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”).
- (2) Only a small number returned from captivity (<75,000 out of over a million), but Isaiah said they would take root and grow:

Isa. 37:31-32: “And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear fruit upward. 32 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, And those who escape from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

- (3) Only a small number of Jews became Christians (Rom. 11:1-6: **v. 5**: “Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”).

B. I have no illusions of Westside becoming a congregation of 500 members.

- (1) Numbers should never be the goal!
- (2) I would suggest our goals should be (individually & congregationally):
 - ✓ A firm determination to believe, follow and teach the truth,

- ✓ A total dedication to do all that we can to help one another make it to heaven,
 - ✓ An unshakeable commitment to share the gospel with as many people as we can.
 - ✓ An unyielding conviction to help needy people as we can within the scope of our ability and opportunity.
- (3) Whatever “size” the Westside becomes is immaterial; we just need to do the work and remember it is “*God who gives the increase*” (1 Cor. 3:7).
- C. I am a firm believer in a form of “predestination” in the sense that I believe God’s providence will provide every person who has a “*noble and good heart*” (Lk. 8:15) an opportunity to hear and obey the gospel.
- (1) Remember the “Macedonian call”? **Acts 16:6-10** (v. 9: “*A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’*”).
- (2) God “reveals” Himself to man:
- (a) Through His creation we come to know He exists (Rom. 1:20),
 - (b) Through His revelation we come to know His will (**Acts 17:26-27**: “*And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;*”).
- (3) This is why it is so important that we take every opportunity to share the gospel with others: **We are the instruments of God’s providence in this regard!**
- D. Of the seven churches in Asia, the church at Philadelphia was described as being weak (**Rev. 3:8**: “*...for you have a little strength*”).
- (1) But they were strong in the sense that they “*have kept My word, and have not denied My name*” (Rev. 3:8); and they “*have kept My command to persevere*” (Rev. 3:10).
- (2) They were only 1 of the 2 faithful churches of the 7 addressed (Rev. 3:8-10).
- (3) And it is the members of the Philadelphia church whose members would become “*a pillar in the temple of My God...I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven...and I will write on him My new name*” (Rev. 3:12).
- (4) They are worthy of imitation because even though they were a “small thing” in the sight of men; they were huge in the sight of God!
4. **9** We may be small and despised, but there is a mighty big God behind us (**Psa. 119:141**: “*I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts.*”).
- A. Paul spoke of this in **1 Cor. 4:13**: “*And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.*”
- B. The world doesn’t think highly of Christians and most “Christians” don’t think highly of NT Christians: **Lam. 3:45**: “*You have made us an offscouring and refuse in the midst of the peoples.*”
- C. But, regardless of how small and despised we might be considered by man; we are important to God: God cares!
- 1 Pet. 5:7**: “*casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*”

Psa. 34:15: “The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.”

Psa. 142:4-7: “Look on my right hand
and see,
For there is no one who acknowledges
me;
Refuge has failed me;
No one cares for my soul.
5 I cried out to You, O LORD:
I said, ‘You are my refuge,

My portion in the land of the living.
6 Attend to my cry,
For I am brought very low;
Deliver me from my persecutors,
For they are stronger than I.
7 Bring my soul out of prison,
That I may praise Your name;
The righteous shall surround me,
For You shall deal bountifully with me.”

- D. Regardless of how much, or how little, talent we might have; no one is unimportant to God and the same should go among us as brethren (**I Cor. 12:14-26; vv. 25-26:** “that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”).

III. CONCLUSION: 10

1. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time!
2. How do we succeed spiritually as individuals or as a congregation? One small step at a time!
3. To be a great baseball player you don’t have to hit a home run every time at bat...just get on base (even it’s just a walk!).
4. Let us pursue spiritual success and bring glory to God in small things.

Adapted from a sermon by Jeffery Hamilton, preacher for La Vista church of Christ, La Vista, NE.