

## Daily Devotional, August 19,2020, Training Our Faith for a Better Future

***Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. Luke 6:10 (NIV)***

It's the little things—the small details—the things we would rather not have to do.

If you want to be a good baseball player, you don't just step on the field and voila! You have to practice, to put in the time. That means hours of batting practice and hours of fielding practice, lifting weights, running, watching a strict diet, conditioning and more. While batting practice is generally higher on the list of things people would rather do, after the fourth time in the batting cages that day, it might start to get far less interesting—even laborious. Wanting to get better also means taking instruction from coaches whose job and expertise is to point out where things can be made better. Knowing which foot to push off of when starting to chase a ground ball can make the difference between getting the runner out at first and the ball getting through to the outfield which can result in runs scored for the other team. These little things must be practiced until they are habit - until your muscles and mind react automatically.

There are plenty of similar details found in our Christian walk. Some seem trivial or unpleasant. Those things can take up time that we could use doing something more interesting. There are passages in the Bible, even whole chapters or lists of genealogies that seem to go on and on into infinity. Some sermons seem to say nothing to us when we first hear them. And that may be true—*today*. Just as the Lord leads people into our lives for a reason, He puts passages of scripture in front of us to chew on, to contemplate. Maybe not for today, maybe for tomorrow, or just like mathematics where addition and subtraction are required to learn multiplication and division it includes a layer that is the foundation for something bigger. The layer upon layer of learning can seem to go on forever through algebra, geometry, and calculus. But, once you own it, that knowledge becomes a powerful learning tool.

Gratitude is one of those elements we build upon. It is not so difficult to do, but sometimes hard for us to remember. It's not only about remembering to say thank you, although that is certainly part of being gracious, it is meaning what we say and saying it because we mean it..

Do you have a Bible? There are people in countries where the Bible is forbidden, who hand-copy whole chapters of the Bible as they get the chance and hide them to read in secret in fear of their lives.

Can you read and write? There are those in this world who have no access to education or have no right to learn in the places where they live, or perhaps because of who they are. Clothes, food, clean water, doctors, medicine, and a roof over their heads are not available to many people. These are simple things that we mostly take for granted, things we don't care to bother with.

Learning to see and appreciate the little things that we often take for granted can take an intentional effort to stop and think about what we just saw, or what just happened. I have felt a personal challenge to be more aware of things I often take for granted. I hope you will join me. Things that seem tedious can with practice develop into the foundation for the next layer in our daily walk with Christ. Never allow this labor to interfere with the gracious free gift that awaits us.

***Prayer: Lord Jesus - Thank you for all the things You so kindly have lavished on us as we see so often that they lose value in our hearts and minds. Open our eyes again to be more aware of your grace and provision. May we then be a blessing to others as we walk through the hours and days You give us to prepare ourselves for the coming of Your kingdom. We pray in your most glorious name. Amen.***