

trucks were used - on railway siding 1 mi away - James was busy. Todd Supt. again - Have your Brick Masons on the ground in the morning - The S.S. Sup. plowed until dark, fed trucks, ate supper, Hitched trucks to waggon & began loading bricks. Missions joined him. Today Barnette is in charge of our entire S.S. program.

Like Elisha Plowing in the Field - Elijah said his Mouth - Elisha said I will now put God in 1st Place -

IV. Guaranteed blessings -> No Way to get V. 14-16

No person can lose by putting God first. The loss will be turned into gain. You not only get your rewards now, but you will get your rewards later on in the life to come. Luke 4:25-26. We are like children wading in the shallows along the shoreline of the unlimited ocean of God's power.

The blessing of God's fulness. Our lives are empty if not filled with God.

This blessing of widest usefulness.

How are you going to do it tonight?

(For the Christian) -> Agree now to give God some of your time. all of us have to make a living -> Decide now to give God a little more time

then you now give to civic organizations - (For Backsliders) -> Go back to your Bethel with Jacob.

(For Sinners - Non-Christian) When stove not connected with Pipe & chimney - smoke & soot get in room - intolerable. Devil in 1st place while life burned with soot of Hell - Need a connection -> like Zacharias

Introduction:

An outstanding sin today is the widespread practice of putting God in a secondary place. The church is weak today because we have not put Christ at the center and great numbers of Christians have never given themselves to the Lord. They are not living a holy life of separation from evil. They think in terms of dollars and cents - profit and loss.

The Macedonian Christians experiences a great blessing - II Cor. 8:5. They first gave themselves to the Lord. The dedication of oneself to God is possible only for the Christian. The yielding begins with a crisis involving a specific decision and act, depends upon our attitude. The believer either has or has not made this decision to yield to God entirely, or to a certain degree.

Our story today tells of a widowed woman who had an unusual experience.

I. The question why

This is usually the question, "Why should I give myself to the Lord? Why should I put Him in first place? Is not His service enough?" Perhaps this question could be answered with many statements but I think it can be summed up in the fact that we are not our own - we are bought with a price. John 17:5 says that the Lord gave himself for us. We belong to Him by virtue of creation and then following the fall of humanity when Satan took over I Cor. 6:19-20. Therefore, for none other reason, we are under obligation to put God first. I AM FREE - 21 & CAN DO AS PLEASE -

The Christian will never enjoy life until He does. The world will lead him astray - pleasure and temptation will overcome him. I do not believe this question bothered this woman in the story that we are to discuss.

II. Done by willing Faith V. 13.

The matter of putting God first must be through faith, trusting. Our fears and misgivings must be met by full surrender through faith.

Some people react as though they were asked to jump off a cliff. You must remember that you are placing your life in the hands of a friend, in the hands of one who loves you.

Therefore, this faith must believe that God is, Heb. 11:6. We must be persuaded that God exists and that He really lives and take Him as the scripture reveals him, as the creator, redeemer of the world.

The widow illustrates the importance of this faith in dealing with God. She believed the word of God as it came from the prophet - even though it was a staggering request when we think of her poverty. She had only enough food for her son another meal and should she give it to a complete stranger? But she believed that God existed and she listened to the prophet in v. 14.

This faith also led her to believe that God would reward a believing faith. She believed that God would provide some way. So this test was given her - perhaps the easier one first when the prophet requested (water) to drink. This was not too easy, however, for a drought had been on. But the widow's faith met the test. And then when the test concerning the (food) was presented, faith met the supreme test. This was similar to a test that Abraham faced.

III. Done by completely yielding.

A window glass is clear and so we get a clear vision of God through this story as we witness the yielding upon the part of this woman in putting God first. This means

1. service above gain V. 12

This widow was ready to be of service for God rather than to accept the gain for herself. In fact, this meant a real sacrifice. This service called for the surrender of the nearest and dearest to her life for it would mean certain death to her son. Even as (Abraham) must be willing to give up Issac, as (Moses) was willing to give up a throne, as (Hannah) was willing to give her little boy, as (Jesus) was willing to give himself - so this widow was willing to give her last handful of meal.

Would you surrender just to save souls above all - Comm. Ask the Conductor Primal - Now we do not have money etc - forgot the money - souls above money -

2. duty above desire.

She wanted first of all to fulfill her duty to God. ObeY God Throu our OR fancy -

3. essentials above non-essentials

This widow placed the spiritual above the bread. Waste time on things that do not count. Woman not serve - Be With My Husband - Then you & husband fight like cats -

4. eternal above momentary

Her faith could see far beyond the circumstances of the moment to the great future. This is amply illustrated in a story by Mr. Middleton who tells of a girl who came from the Tenn. industrial school. She had been placed there because of a broken home - 1930. Her father died ~~XXXXXX~~ before her birth and when she was 12 years of age, her mother was able to bring her back home. Enrolled in S.S., First Baptist Church, Nashville. Made a public profession while in the Intermediate Dept. Last two years of high school talked of going to college. Frances was sent to Ridgecrest. She worked on the staff. When she returned home, she felt happy because there she had found young people who felt the same way about God that she did. She wanted to be a missionary. a S.S. class of women provided tuition, spending money, for four years at Carson-Newman College. After graduation, she married a Christian man. They attended Louisville Seminary Rev. and Mrs. George Jennings were presented as foreign missionaries in 1947 to work in Spain. "My mother was unable to send me to college but God took care of me. He always does you know for He, said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God".

5. God's will above my will

This widow did not hesitate to put herself in the background, nor did she rationalize and ask questions, but she simply obeyed God, yielded to his will. She did not think of half hearted service, or giving with a grudge, or reservations or some substitute offer. There were no ifs. It involved all that she had. Even as the S.S. teacher some years ago gave the life history of J.N. Barnette - Young Man and his devotion to God. He was the Sup't. of a little country church. He always put God's will first. He helped to enlarge the program of his S.S. The pastor of his church said that he met this young suplt, plowing in the field. Told Him that the time had come to launch a new Bldg. Program. Barnette said, had decided to build a new house to live in, but if you feel we need a new Bldg. I will postpone my new home & pull all in the Church Bldg. - The Program was under way - The carpenters had caught up &