

Being Faithful with the Least

I would like to share something with you that has been making me meditate a lot lately, and this is about our lives, about the Bible, and the advice that we can find in it. The title of this article is “being faithful with the least.”

Why should we be faithful with the least? This is something the Bible actually discusses in many places, and it all lies in how we perceive success. How do we see success? This message is mostly for believers.

What do we esteem as a success? If we're talking about the world, how the world perceives success, we're talking about something (of a huge volume), about the great lights and great success. It is about achieving something great. Even when we talk about the Christian faith, most people perceive success as achieving much for the Lord, and this is not wrong. We obviously need to strive to seek more from the Lord to achieve more for Him and for His glory, but success in His eyes is actually something different. If He allows us to do a lot, yes, this will be right, but sometimes God uses us the way He wants to, and that means that He is the master and the owner, and He uses each one of us the way He likes and best fits for His glory.

Many times, we Christians might see success as becoming ministers or pastors of great ministries and great churches, leading many people to the Lord, and maybe preaching to stadiums and large congregations of thousands. We generally see it as performing something great for the Lord, but often this is success in our eyes and the way we imagine it. I'm not saying that seeking growth and achieving more is wrong. Obviously, we need to strive to bring more fruit for the Lord, but He perceives success differently. He actually gave us many times in the Bible examples of those who had to be faithful in the little. He gave us the example of the parable of the talents. It is about a man who, before traveling to a far country, distributed talents to each of his servants. To one he gave five, to the second one two, and to the last one, He gave one talent.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.” (Matthew 25:14-15)

Why is that He gave this exact example in the Bible? We see that the first two succeeded with their talents, but the one who received only one talent hid it under the ground. He didn't do anything with his talent, and in the end, what he said was all excuses and justifications. He attempted to justify himself for what he had done, but that was wrong. He wasn't supposed

to hide his talent. He was supposed to do something with it, even if it was only one. And why is that the example of this person receiving only one talent and hiding it, is given to us? That same example could have been applied to the one who received two or five talents, but it is said that the person with one talent hid it. It wasn't wrong that he had received only one talent. That fact didn't depend on him; it depended on God, as it is said that He distributed to each one according to their capabilities. We know that God doesn't make mistakes. Many times, we can think less of ourselves, believing that what we have received is not enough or not as effective as what others have received. This is what we do when we compare ourselves with others. I am talking to believers here, since the example given to us in this parable is primarily for Christians. Thinking this way, we fall into complex and spiritual depression.

It all lies in how we perceive success, too. If we look at it through our eyes and way of thinking, or the way the Lord does, which might be difficult at times, as faith is required, and most of the time we won't be able to see it happening straight away. We are the ones who could plant or water, but the Lord is the one who gives the growth. Many times, even those who have actually received two or five talents can think the same way as the one who has received only one talent and hide their talents as well. They may also think they don't have enough, since they probably don't see spiritual success or fruit at the moment.

Not understanding the way the Lord sees and perceives success may lead us to lose courage and, in this way, not be productive in the right way for Him and not live a full and satisfied life with Him, and be prone to falling into sin. In the Bible, we see many times when the Lord gave importance to the "least of these". He is not like us; He values and gives importance to the little. For Him, that boy bringing his five loaves and two fish to Jesus was important, even though he had little to offer. Jesus managed to feed over 5000 people with them. The Lord doesn't add; He multiplies. That means even a little is an important and necessary detail for His glory. The parable of the talents encourages us to do something with our talent. It doesn't tell us about the insufficiency of what we have from Him; it tells us to do something with what we have received from Him. This is also the way, at times, to have more. There are other cases found in the Bible in which we see that we need to ask the Lord to receive something from Him, and that is clear. We need to desire more of Him. Still, the case of the talents is when we need to step forward and put our talent into use. He is the Master, and He knows how much He needs to distribute to each one as He wants to use us in specific ways for His specific purposes. This is His part. He gives us gifts and equips us; on our part, we need to do our part and not hide what we have received from Him.

So even if we have received only one talent instead of two or five, we need to be content and practice what the Lord has given us. This is true even if we can't share the gospel in full

stadiums or large congregations, and even if we don't have the gift of teaching or healing that we desire. I repeat that I'm not saying we shouldn't desire to have more, achieve more, or grow in the Lord. All of this should be done according to His way and measure, as He has established it to be.

Even if we minister to one hundred, ten, or one person, we need to be content. Why? Because this is the gift that God has entrusted to our hands, and there is a purpose in it. This message is for believers; for those who are used by the Lord for His glory. At times, we would have only one talent, but this would actually be important for the Lord and His glory. Why? Because He established things that way. There may also be the case when we will be the ones thinking that what the Lord has given us is not enough, or we cannot cope (handle it). We might be even of those who have five talents but still think that we received only one and it is not enough.

See, this is a kind of complex, and that was the purpose of the parable of the talents. It is not a matter of how much we have received, but whether we have the faith that God gave it to us and that it is valuable to Him. That means that the main message of that parable is not to hide our talents. Sometimes we are the ones who don't see the value in what we have received from Him. This is mainly because we want to be used the way we would like or think, instead of the way He has for us. If we are equipped with a spade, we certainly cannot break a rock with it. We need a chisel and a hammer. That means that we are meant to do what the Lord had appointed us to do in that moment – to dig in the ground. This is just a random example, but it is similar to what might happen in the spiritual world. We develop our full potential when we do what we are appointed to do and in the way we are appointed to do it.

That's why the Bible talks so much about God's will for our lives. It talks about us as members forming a body in which Christ is the head. That means that He is the one giving the commands. Each one of us is then a particular part that is used in a specific way. The feet have a specific function, as do the hands and so on. At times, we may need to be used as any other part, according to the situation, but we will grow most when we do what God intends for us. He established things to be that way, that not only those with much, but even those with little are equally important to Him.

Even to the servants having five and two talents who, after achieving something with them, came back to Him, He said: [“Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”](#) (Matthew 25:21)

He told them that they were faithful over a few things, because that's the key. We need to be faithful even in the little and even in what we esteem as little, but has a great value in the

Lord's eyes. This is important to Him. He doesn't see things and situations the way we do. He gives value to the lonely old lady or the beggar who needs to hear about Jesus. I am not assuming what exactly the will of God is for you. I am providing random examples to illustrate my point. So, we see that even those with five and two talents were faithful with the little. At times, it is not just doing something that we esteem as great. We don't actually know what is really great for the lord and what will really bring fruit for His glory, because He is the one who makes us bear fruit; He produces it in us. He alone can glorify His name.

“Now therefore, our God,
We thank You
And praise Your glorious name.
But who *am* I, and who *are* my people,
That we should be able to offer so willingly as this?
For all things come from You,
And of Your own we have given You.” (1 Chronicles 29:14, emphasis added)

This passage emphasizes the fact that if we can glorify Him, it is through what He has given us. See, those who intend to do and accomplish things they esteem great in their own eyes, might be those who think that they are capable and good enough to give Him glory with their own strength. The glory comes from Him. We are just channels. At times, we might be entrusted with something that apparently looks great, but it will probably be the least thing that we expected or the least way that we expected it to happen because the Lord's ways are mysterious and unknown to us most of the time.

In both cases, when we are entrusted with much or with less, we need to be faithful, but it is important to have that attitude when we are with the little. If all people were great teachers or pastors having great ministries, or all people were aspiring to just that kind of service, where would the humble servants be, or those who dedicate themselves entirely to reach and save the one lost person only? The Lord Himself provided an example with the shepherd going after the one lost sheep (Luke 15:1-7). He established the church as a body made up of different members. Not all have the same function, and He shows us that even small parts are important to Him. These parts need protection from the stronger parts of the body. In fact, one part cares for another, and even the smallest parts can sometimes look after the greater ones.

This is the character of Christ, and it should also be the character of believers. Why? Because the character of Christ is to protect, take care of, and cure.

Many times in Scripture, He gave examples with the least of these, referring to persons in need, little ones, referring to children, and people who are weak and new in the faith. These

are people who usually aren't given too much importance. Even in the Christian world, we tend to give importance to great pastors and teachers, which is obviously good, but we give less importance to other believers who are not in a high position in the church or don't have certain titles. We would take more heed when we listen to the word of God coming from someone who is in a high position or the pastor than the word coming from other brothers in faith, which is also to be paid attention to, as it comes from God. The Bible gives us an example of giving a cup of water to one of the little ones.

⁴⁰ “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.”** (Matthew 10:40-42, emphasis added)

In this example that Jesus gave, He says that whoever receives one of His disciples receives Him. This applies to all who believe in Him, not just certain people considered more important. Clearly, some people know more about God's word, are more skilled in teaching, and have more experience, and the Lord blesses us by having them and listening to them. However, He also states that anyone sent by Him as a prophet or a righteous person should be accepted. Lastly, He gives us a comparison with the little ones in verse 42, saying that anyone who gives them a cup of water and honors them will be rewarded. What matters most is that these people carry the word of God.

God often raised great people for His glory from those who are least and humble. We have the example of David, who, from a humble shepherd, became the king of all Israel. Before becoming a king, he faced the giant Goliath with a sling and a few small stones. It only took one small stone to take the giant down. In people's eyes, he could never have succeeded doing it that way. They expected a great soldier with a big sword to defeat the giant. Instead, God showed His power by giving him victory over the giant with just a small stone. This is the other reason for which He also uses the smallest parts of the body and the humble people to bring victory—to show His power. This way, it could be clearly seen that it is God who brings the victory. It could be clearly seen that David trusted in Him to defeat the giant. “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; 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,” (1 Corinthians 1:27-28)

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Through these passages, we understand why God often chooses those who are weak to carry out His work—so His glory and power can be revealed. Even our Lord Jesus Christ took on human form and became a servant. He was the perfect example of humility. He could have appeared with all His glory, but He chose to come as a servant and among the least to set an example for us. That was one of the reasons He came that way.

Being humble is one of the keys to following God’s will, and this is an attitude that comes from God in our lives. He works in us so that we can have it, and it should accompany us throughout all our lives here on earth, not just in certain moments.

We need to see success in our Christian lives the way He sees it, and this can sometimes be difficult. Why might it be hard? Because sometimes we won't see the fruit right away, in the way we expect. Perhaps in our eyes, a fruit for God's Kingdom seems like something great, but in His eyes, a fruit doesn't always look the same. At times, it could be something small but valuable to Him that will bring fruit in time. We might not even meet the people who benefited from what we did for God’s glory. At times, a seed sown for His glory could grow and flourish after a long time. We are instead used to seeing success suddenly. The Bible speaks about a small seed that becomes a tree (Matthew 13:31-32). In the beginning, it is small, but **in its time, it bears fruit**. We're not able to see the way God works.

At times, it is hard to see success the way He sees it because He is omnipresent and all-knowing, while we are not. He knows the purpose of all, and we are limited. In our limited ways, we want to see the results quickly. He instead knows beyond what we know and knows the purpose of all. That’s why it is not for us to wait and see success. It is for us to use the talents He gave us and to scatter the seed without knowing which will succeed and in which way. We just need to be obedient and to leave the success to God.

“In the morning sow your seed,
And in the evening do not withhold your hand;
For you do not know which will prosper,
Either this or that,
Or whether both alike *will be good*.” (Ecclesiastes 11:6)

As believers, we may be used to perceiving and seeing success in the spiritual world as something great. This might seem normal because we live in a world that also considers success to be something great in its eyes, and that’s why we might have adopted this perspective. Even if we are born of God, we still have the world’s manners stuck on us. This is something that we need to put off, as the Bible teaches us (Ephesians 4:22). We need to

become more like Christ and, in this way, to begin to view things in life, including success, the way He sees and perceives it, and value more what He values. This is a lifelong process. That's why God, at times, gives value to the smaller but important things in His sight, and we need to do the same.

Many times, it happens that when we don't have the right understanding of success, we might fall into desperation and lose sight of the purpose of God's will for our lives. This may lead us to be more vulnerable to falling into sin and not walk on the path with the same eagerness, when at first place we need to do all of that because of God, and not because of circumstances. Still, we are human, and we seek results. In a way, this is how our nature is. Understanding properly what is important in God's eyes and the way He perceives success will help us on the path. At times, misunderstanding this could discourage us, and this is what the enemy waits for. He will be there waiting for us and will attack and tempt us when we are at our weakest. Falling into sin is not always because of our weakness in something. It could also happen because of discouragement.

That's why it is so important to see success the way God sees it and to have faith in Him for the fruit that will bring Him glory. The enemy uses discouragement, which often comes to us because of the lack of success and fruit in our eyes, and he accuses us. He wants us to lose our faith and, this way, stop fighting. He wants us to lose our purpose and let us think that we are not enough for the Lord, that we won't be able to achieve His will. Often, discouragement comes from the fact that we see how other brothers in faith have more than we do and are more capable than we are. That may lead us to think that we are not good enough. Obviously, we need to put maximum effort into the Lord's work and not slumber, but we need to know that we will have different capabilities and gifts than others. We will not be used the same way. This doesn't make us less than others; it makes us fit for the particular purpose for which we are made and created in Christ. The person who received one talent was no less than the others. He was simply given what he was meant to do for God's glory and was intended to be used for a purpose. As we mentioned, sometimes we might feel we don't have enough and develop a kind of complex, which causes us to stay in fear and become paralyzed, preventing us from using our talents. In the Lord's eyes, what we have is precious, since it was given to us by Him. Remember that the main purpose is to follow the Lord's path and obey Him. Still, most of the time, we also want to see a fruit and reap what we have sown. At times, what we will reap will be in heaven. The Bible talks more about the reward the believers will receive in heaven than on this earth. There will be blessings here anyway, and we will also see fruit at times, but our sight must be placed on the Lord's glory and in heaven.

We and people in general might see success according to numbers and multitudes, great churches, or numerous followers on social media. While it is always good to reach out to more people, Jesus also spoke of small groups, underlining that the genuineness of the believers is more important than just the size. We need to serve even the few people. This example could be applied to many areas in our lives.

I repeat that we see many instances in the Bible where God values what is least and weak in the eyes of man. We talk of the poor widow who left only two mites in the treasury ([Luke 21:1-4](#)). She was given as an example by the Lord, though what she gave couldn't have been compared to the abundance that the rich men were offering. Still, they were giving out of their abundance, and she gave all that she had, and she did it wholeheartedly. This is what the Lord looks for – our hearts. This was an example given by Jesus to teach us a lesson, and spiritually it is about a person who has faith in what they offer, as they know it is given to them by the Lord, even if it is apparently a little. Here we can mention another example given by Jesus about faith as a mustard seed that moves mountains. Something seemingly small, but when in the hands of the Lord, it becomes effective enough to accomplish much. She had faith and gave importance to what she offered, even if it was little. Even if it is a little, we need to offer what we have and have faith that God can do something with it. This is the attitude we need to have and the way we need to serve.

We see other examples in the Bible, such as the one of King David, who, at the time when he was still a simple shepherd, went to face the giant Goliath with only a few small stones. He achieved success by using just a stone and a sling, something that, in people's eyes, wasn't enough. Still, the Lord granted him victory by His power and strength. People probably thought that whole armies and great weapons were needed to face the giant. Still, the Lord gave the victory to David because it was He who fought for him. The victory also came because David submitted to the Lord and went into battle the way the Lord wanted and had established for him – with a stone and a sling. It wasn't exactly the weapon that brought victory, but David's obedience and submission to the Lord. He put into practice what the Lord had entrusted to him with boldness, having faith in Him. Even if it was small, it could move mountains and defeat giants. All of this was because it was the Lord fighting for him.

Another curious fact of this battle was that before it started, King Saul clothed David in his own armor and gave him his sword, but David refused because he wasn't comfortable with them ([1 Samuel 17:39](#)). He wasn't used to it, and it probably wasn't his size either. At first glance, that armor looked much stronger than a sling and a stone. Still, David acknowledged that it wasn't the way the Lord had established for him to fight. This is a moment in which we see good discernment on David's part about how the Lord wanted to use him. He didn't trust

what his eyes were seeing—a great giant and apparently a weak weapon; he walked by faith, trusting in what the Lord had said and the way He had established things to be.

One of the keys to grow into the potential God has prepared for us and to succeed in His eyes is to focus on ourselves and not on others. Other people and members of the body are there to encourage us and support us with their gifts because this is also how the body grows and heals—when its members care for one another. That’s why they are so diverse: so where one cannot reach or see, another can do for them. This is what the other parts of the body are for, not to fix our eyes on them and aspire to what they have become; they exist to give us an example and reach where we cannot. All the parts, with their respective gifts, complete the body for the purpose of fulfilling God’s will on earth. God’s plan and will, will always be accomplished, but He uses believers to accomplish that. We need to aspire toward God’s will for us and to who He is, collaborating with others. This is the way to grow into His measure and to serve Him, doing it wholeheartedly (**Ephesians 4:13**). Yes, we will make mistakes, and we will need to seek more wisdom from Him to show us the right way of how we can be more useful in His hands.

This way, we won’t always see ourselves as failures, and we won't fail, because failing is actually not practicing what He gave us and hiding our talent. When I am talking of not failing, I am not talking of perfection, because many people relate failure to making mistakes and sin. This is also an important point that we need to improve with, but I am not referring to it. The people who didn’t hide their talents and did something with them were surely not perfect; they did it even knowing they would make mistakes, but allowing God to work in them, sanctifying them, and making them perfect.

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