

Dear Friend,

I am writing this cover letter from Abidjan, in Ivory Coast, Africa. We have just finished a conference for pastors who have been through a civil war. In the midst of their difficulty, they found the courage and strength of God to carry on. Some of the more prominent figures in the church here had to flee because of the intensity of the opposition they faced. Those who have stayed are not necessarily the most influential, yet they possess a faith which I believe will impact this society for much good.

The presence of God in this conference of thousands of leaders was astounding. His being among them has given many new hearts of faith to believe that in spite of the littleness of what they seemingly have to offer, Jesus can and will take it to astound and feed many with new life and hope.

I am constantly awestruck at how wonderful Christ is. He loves to work with you and me in our smallness. It is then that He is truly glorified and we, in turn, are eternally grateful.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Yours, in Christ,

Pastor Carter Conlon

## A MESSAGE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LITTLE LEFT TO GIVE

by Carter Conlon

This message is for those who feel they have little left to give. Perhaps today this is your story: "Lord, I don't have any strength left. I am running on fumes and I hope You are not going to ask me to give more, because I have nothing left to give." If you feel this way, I believe you will be encouraged by the time you finish reading this newsletter.

*One day you will know what God has done with your sacrifice.*

*"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:41-44).*

Throughout the Scriptures, we find many instances of people with less than others fully casting all they have into the work of God. As a result, great things are done through their sacrifice. Such was the case with this widow. While

many were casting into the treasury out of their abundance, she took what little she had left—which was only a few cents—and put it all into the treasury.

Notice that this widow's value system deemed the kingdom of God worthy of her gift. She must have felt that the Lord would take her offering and somehow use it for His glory. Not only that, she must have had a measure of trust that as she chose to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," everything she needed would be given to her. And so she freely gave into the treasury out of her own need and difficulty.

Ecclesiastes 11:1 says, "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days" (NKJV). In other words, one day you will know what God has done with your sacrifice. How surprised this widow must have been to get to heaven and realize that her sacrifice would become part of the text of Scripture, offering instruction and insight into the kingdom of God for millions of people over thousands of years to come!

Similarly, consider how many people will approach you in heaven and thank you for not giving up—for continuing to give even when you felt you had so little left. Perhaps somewhere along the way you discovered that life was not working out as you thought it would, leaving you with little hope for tomorrow.

Nevertheless, you took that shard of hope, that little bit of strength you had left, and tithed it into somebody's life. You allowed that limited understanding, that small word of encouragement, that listening ear to be used for a greater good beyond your own need.

Someday what you "cast upon the waters" will come back to you. When you get to the throne of God, people will thank you for speaking to them and ministering to them. One day your sons and daughters will rise up and say, "Thank you for not giving up on us! Thank you for continuing to take us to church. You could have taken that little bit of strength you had left and used it for yourself. You could have chosen to get some extra sleep on Sunday morning, but instead you got up and faithfully prayed for us. You took us by the hand, you made us get dressed, and you brought us to the house of God. Now we are eternally grateful!"

#### ■ HANNAH

The Scriptures speak of another woman who seemingly had little to give, yet she chose to bring her sacrifice to the Lord. Her name was Hannah, and she and her husband, Elkanah, went to the house of the Lord frequently. Elkanah had a second wife who bore him several sons and daughters, yet Hannah remained barren (see 1 Samuel 1:2–3).

It was Hannah's deepest desire to have a child, and so she came in great desperation to the altar of God. *"And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall*

*no razor come upon his head"* (1 Samuel 1:10–11). God granted her request and gave her a son. Soon Hannah felt it was time to bring that little child to the house of God so that he might be given for His work, just as she had vowed.

### *Time and again we see that God takes these little sacrifices and multiplies them, doing what is impossible for man.*

Think for a moment how difficult it must have been for Hannah. I am sure that she had questions in her heart, just as you and I do. "Don't I have a right to some personal happiness? Don't I have a right to keep something for myself? Shouldn't I be able to come to the house of God and expect that my needs will be met, too?" Nevertheless, Hannah took this son that God had given her and, out of her own need, offered him to His service.

The Scriptures do not tell us whether Hannah lived long enough to see the impact her sacrifice had in the world. What she had given to God was a prophet named Samuel—one of the greatest prophets of his generation and a judge of Israel who led the nation back to the ways of God. Hannah was just a little person with a little sacrifice, bringing it to the house of the Lord. Yet time and again we see that God takes these little sacrifices and multiplies them, doing what is impossible for man.

#### ■ A LITTLE BOY'S SACRIFICE

In the book of John, we find another story of a seemingly small sacrifice making an incredible difference. As

Jesus was preaching to a crowd of people, He became aware that they were hungry. *"He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"* (John 6:5–9).

Seeing more than 5,000 people before them in the crowd, none of the disciples could figure out how they would be able to feed so many. Yet somewhere in that crowd was a little boy with five barley loaves and two fishes. I do not know if it was his lunch or if he was on his way home from the market. All I know is that it was all this little boy had. I can picture him tugging at Andrew's sleeve, telling him to give it to Jesus.

Others would never even consider bringing this seemingly small sacrifice to the Lord, for what good could it possibly do in light of the magnitude of the need before them? However, Jesus once said that unless you have the faith of a child, you will not see the kingdom of God (see Matthew 18:3). You will not be able to understand how the kingdom of God works unless this kind of faith gets into your heart.

And so Jesus took this little boy's sacrifice and multiplied it, feeding the 5,000 men, plus women and children. There were even twelve full baskets left over after everybody was fed.

#### ■ ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW

In 1 Kings 17, we read of another widow whose small sacrifice was grafted into the testimony of Scripture. At the time, there

was a major battle going on between the powers of good and evil, light and darkness. Spiritual apathy had taken hold of the nation of Israel, and Baal's prophets proceeded to lead the people astray from the truth. But God had a prophet named Elijah whom He had prepared for a confrontation on the top of Mount Carmel. God intended to do the miraculous and, for a short season, turn the nation back to the worship of the true God.

During the time of famine that preceded the clash atop Mount Carmel, God led Elijah to a widow in Zarephath. Although she had hardly anything left to give, Elijah approached her and said, "Make me a cake to eat." The widow replied, "I don't even have enough for myself and my son. I am just going to gather a few sticks so that I can bake what I have left, and then we are going to die."

Elijah refuted, "No, give first to the work of God (which Elijah represented at that point). As you give the little that you have to the work of God, I promise that your supply will not fail. God will be an endless source of supply to you." The widow did as she was asked, giving what little she had left for the kingdom of God. Just as Elijah had said, God was faithful to supply all that she needed. *"And she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah"* (1 Kings 17:15–16).

#### ■ HALF AN ACRE

1 Samuel, chapter 14, tells us of another occasion when there was a major battle going on in the nation. It seemed as if Israel would be defeated by its enemies one more time. Yet King Saul's son, Jonathan, along with his armor bearer, decided to climb

up a hillside on their hands and knees, determined to take back from the enemy a parcel of land that only measured half an acre.

To the natural eye, the offering of their lives must have looked pathetically small in contrast to what they were up against. No wonder the Philistines looked over the brow of the hill and taunted, "Look at the Hebrews who have come out of the holes where they were hiding. Come on up here, and we will show you a thing or two!" (see 1 Samuel 14:11–12).

***You and I  
must take what  
we have and  
sow it into the  
kingdom of God.  
Even if you  
feel weak, you  
must believe  
that Christ can  
use you.***

When Jonathan saw this mockery of God, something got into his heart. He turned to his armor bearer and said, "Let's go! The Lord has given them into our hand." Throughout the Scriptures, we see that God takes the weak, the marginalized, and that which is foolish to the natural man, and touches it with His hand to perform the miraculous—so that He alone can get the glory!

In this case, Jonathan and his armor bearer went up and fought, and they victoriously took that half acre of land. In the scope of what they were battling, it was merely a small and seemingly insignificant victory. But the Bible tells us that as a result, a trembling went

through the host of the Philistines (see 1 Samuel 14:14–16).

Keep in mind that these enemies of Israel were demonically inspired. Suddenly all of the demonic powers knew that they were being threatened, for faith had risen up once again. This is exactly what happens when a child of God finally realizes that his sacrifice is not small and insignificant; when he is willing to stand and say, "God is able to do miracles. He does not change—He is still the God of the impossible. Therefore, I am going to get up and give what I have to the kingdom of God. I am going to cast my life into His kingdom. I am going to take my five cents; I am going to take my little bit of strength; I am going to take my testimony, and though it may look small in comparison to everybody else's, I know that God can take it, and great good will be done for His kingdom!"

#### ■ GIVE WHAT LITTLE YOU HAVE

God's ways are not our ways; they never have been. Yet, sadly, in this church age we have succumbed to strategists and boardrooms; surveys and committees. For the sake of Christ, I say we throw the whole thing out and get back to faith in God's house!

Where do we start? You and I must take what we have and sow it into the kingdom of God. That means that even if you feel weak, you must believe that Christ can use you. Just like Jonathan and his armor bearer, you have the potential to send a trembling through the hosts of hell. So do not let your circumstances or your natural thinking rob you of what the Lord is able to do through you. Don't let the devil convince you that your life is too small or that what you have is too insignificant to make a difference. You are not a marginal player in the kingdom of God. He has chosen you to be alive in this very hour, at this point in the history

of our nation, so you would be highly unwise to count yourself out in this battle!

***Do not let your circumstances or your natural thinking rob you of what the Lord is able to do through you.***

I encourage you today—even if you have only a little left to give, bring it to God. Take the little bit of faith that you have, with the little bit of strength that is yours, and the little song that is still left, and cast it into the treasury. If you feel you do not have anything else, you can at least be kind to somebody.

Remember, that which is esteemed in the sight of God is not always esteemed in the sight of man. His eye falls on those things that the church world has a tendency to overlook. He sees the seemingly small sacrifices—the seemingly insignificant victories. The eyes of God see the single mother bringing her children to the house of the Lord. He sees you making a sandwich for that child across the hall who does not have a lunch. The eyes of God see it all, and He will reward everyone who gives to His kingdom. So give what you have to the work of God, and then obey what the Lord speaks to your heart.

Someday you will see the results of your sacrifice, for whatever you bring to the kingdom of God, He will be faithful to take, multiply and use for His glory!

Carter Conlon  
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### CARTER CONLON

Carter Conlon is senior pastor of Times Square Church, where he has been on the pastoral staff since 1994.

### TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of “The Cross and the Switchblade.” It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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#### WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday	10:00AM	3:00PM	6:00PM
Tuesday	7:00PM	Prayer Service	
Friday	7:00PM	Church Service	

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This newsletter is an edited version of “A MESSAGE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LITTLE LEFT TO GIVE,” a sermon given on **November 25, 2012** in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in New York City. Other sermons are available by visiting our website at [tscnyc.org](http://tscnyc.org). You are welcome to make additional copies of this sermon for free distribution to friends. However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission existing copyright laws apply. This sermon cannot be posted on any website or webpage without permission from Times Square Church. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references are from the King James Version.