



Undoubtedly you are familiar with Gospel Story referred to as “The Widow’s Mite:” Jesus observes a poor widow contributing a couple of small coins to the collection at the Temple. He compares her miniscule donation favorably as compared to the other people who have given much more money. He tells the disciples, *“I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood,”* (Luke 21:3-4). As you can see, the comparison is not concerned with amounts of money but the relative sacrifice of the donations.

I think that the principle expressed in these words can be applied to the levels at which we dedicate time to our Faith. Does my practice of faith only happen in “spare time,” or “surplus time?” What is the quality of the time that I give to prayer, Bible, faith-study, or spiritual growth?

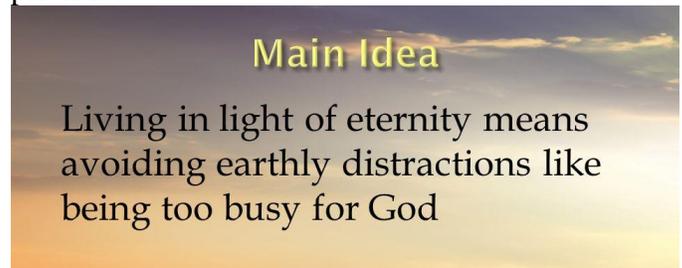


Is that not what everyone tells us in this profit-driven world? And, if this is true, then perhaps it is wise that we judge our use of time for our Faith along the same lines by which Jesus adjudges the use of money.

Consider that if our devotional lives are restricted to any “leftover” time there may be in a week, then we

are not so much short-changing God as ourselves. The story is trite, but it illustrates what is at issue: “A devout poor man dies and goes to heaven and, upon arriving, is escorted down a golden road to a palace which will serve as his eternal dwelling. Shortly thereafter, his wealthy, not-so-devout, neighbor dies and goes to heaven and, upon his arrival he is escorted down a dirt road to an ugly shack where he will spend his eternity. He complains to St. Peter about the accommodations and St. Peter responds, *“Sir, we could only prepare for you with the materials you sent to us ahead of your arrival. Notice that it was because your poor neighbor was spiritually rich that he will dwell in eternal splendor.”*”

Theologically, the story doesn’t much make sense since heaven is heaven, and glory is glory: Anyone who makes it there dines at the same heavenly banquet. However, as an analogy to the building of a house, it does make a good point . . . that time, along with money and talents are real resources, the application of which are real measures of our priorities.



We will never make any sort of progress as a Church or as individual Christians if we are and remain too busy for spiritual growth and growth in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and his work for our salvation. Just as there is no true love without sacrifice, there is no progress in faith without sacrifice. So, we all need to look at the way we order our priorities and wonder, *“What has to give so that I can devote serious time to my growth in Christ?”* and/or *“How can I give to my Lord more than merely my surplus or spare time?”*

Please ponder this simple message in relation to the opportunities for such growth which exist in the parish now and will arise in coming days and months.