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The Tragedy of Waste

To each of us God has issued a certain store as it has pleased Him: to one more, to another less. And since God owes us nothing, anything He gives us may be put down to His unearned generosity. The man with a smaller store dare not complain against God for having given him less than his neighbor received. God's gifts are not debts which He pays us, but gratuities bestowed out of pure mercy.

One thing taught large in the Holy Scriptures is that while God gives His gifts freely, He will require a strict accounting of them at the end of the road. Each man is personally responsible for his store, be it large or small, and will be required to explain his use of it before the judgment seat of Christ.

The "store" is nothing new, just the old familiar list of human possessions: time, talents, earthly goods, and opportunities. Though they are as common as the grass

beside the path, the waste of them constitutes one of life's most appalling tragedies.

First, there is *time*. None of us has much of it. The crow that flaps across the meadow will probably live longer than the oldest one of us. The tree that shades the sleepy cow in the pasture may have looked down on our grandfather when he was a boy, and it may remain to watch the passing of our children's children. And that we have so small a store of time constitutes a powerful reason for our making the most of what we have. Yet how many hours have we spent doing nothing or doing the wrong thing? Our cynical waste of precious time could be a reason for our not having more of it given to us, who knows? Jesus once said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

Time wasted is lost beyond recall. While we sympathize with the emotional content of the old song, "Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight," it is yet hard to

conceive of a more futile appeal. Time does not run backward. The old man does not become young; the young man becomes old. So it has always been and so it will ever be. The bird of time flies past us and is gone; "the leaves of life keep falling one by one, the wine of life keeps oozing drop by drop." We must work while it is called today.

Then there are *talents*. These are included in the total store granted us by our Heavenly Father. Whether we have one talent or many, we must render up account finally, and the factor that will decide for us is not how many talents we had but what we did with them. The story of the man who hid his talent in the ground makes disquieting reading for the careless Christian who is failing to make use of his gifts. Some with modest gifts have made a brilliant record of spiritual achievement; others with far

greater abilities have played through the summer of life like the grasshopper in the fable and have let their gifts lie unused while time idled by. This, we repeat, is tragedy, and that it is common does not make it any the less tragic.

Money is another item. American Christians make so much of it and spend it so lavishly that they have unconsciously learned to take it as a matter for granted and have forgotten that they will be strictly judged for their use of it. The Lord still stands by the treasury and observes what is placed therein. This has been turned into a joke by humorists who are ready always to find something funny in every reference to money. But it is safe to predict that there will be little laughter when the Lord with eyes like a flame of fire looks into our accounts and makes His just audit. We might do well right now to do a little auditing ourselves while there is time to make amends for our families.

God has also given us a wealth of *opportunities*. An opportunity may be defined as a providential circumstance, which permits us to turn our time, our money and our talents to account. Of all gifts this is the most common, and it is the one, which makes the other gifts of value to us and to mankind. The wise Christian will watch for opportunities to do good, to speak the life-bringing word to sinners, to pray the rescuing prayer of intercession.

The foe of opportunity is preoccupation. Just when God sends along a chance to turn a great victory for mankind, some of us are too busy puttering around to notice it. Or we notice it when it is too late. The old Greeks said that opportunity had a forelock but was close-shaven behind; if a man missed grabbing for her as she approached, he would reach for her in vain after she had passed.

Possibly the worst effect of waste is the mental habit it creates. To allow time or money or talents to go to waste is to do something harmful to ourselves. It is to injure ourselves inside where it is most serious.

A.W. TOZER

From the Pastor...

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 For which cause we faint not: but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Men always judge according to what they see. Faith judges by the unseen. The banker says its over but, the tithing man can by faith stand on the Word of God and watch the unseen *Hand of God* move on his behalf. The doctor says I'm sorry but there is no hope but the woman that has had an encounter with the Healer can stand and see the salvation of the Lord. The wicked may say to the church you are making no difference in your community but the people that do KNOW their GOD shall be strong; and do exploits. Don't be moved by the seen; be moved by the *unseen Eternal Hand of God*.

May the Lord keep you and your family in the days ahead.

In Christ,

Pastor Ken Geisendorfer



Words of the wise...God's Working...
 The reason He sanctifies us is that we may witness to others of His power to save to the uttermost. He delivers us that we may show forth His salvation to the world. He heals us that we may go home to our friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for us. He answers prayer that the blessing received may be a testimony to encourage others to trust Him.
A.B. Simpson

