

Little Things Sermon Topics

Sunday: **Little Things** (Luke 16:10)

This lesson is an overview of the coming week, both evening lessons and morning classes.

- Matt. 20:21-23 It is not necessarily good to aspire to big things
- III John 9 Our desire to accomplish big things is seldom driven by our desire to serve God.
- Preview the significance of the ideas to be presented in the coming week.

Monday: **Little Things Can Be Big Things** (Luke 21:2)

- I Cor. 16:2 God expects from us only according to our ability.
- Jdgs. 7:19-21 God defeated the Midianites with trumpets, pitchers, and torches
- Give specific examples from modern life that pertain to the overall topic, but are most pertinent to this lesson.

Tuesday: **Little Things Even if You're A Big Thing** (II Kings 5:1, 10-14)

- John 13:1-20 Even Jesus washed others' feet
- Acts 10:34-35 You are no big thing to God.
- I Tim. 3:6 Thinking of ourselves as a big thing is an invitation for the devil to work on us.
- I Cor. 1:18-24 God's way seems like a foolish way to people who think they are big things.
- Give specific examples from modern life that pertain to the overall topic, but are mostly pertinent to this lesson.

Wednesday: **Little Things Can Accomplish Big Things** (Esther 6:1f)

- The king's inability to sleep caused him to hear about Mordecai and disposed him to save the Jews.
- Matt. 14:19 Jesus fed 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes
- Ex. 4:2 If we will trust in God and use what we have available, God can do great things.
- Give specific examples from modern life that pertain to the overall topic, but are most pertinent to this lesson.

Thursday: **Little Things Are Big Things** (Micah 6:8)

- We let things that we think are important over-ride things that God knows are important.
- Matt. 5:18 Every little thing in God's word is bigger than this whole universe
- Summarize what has been studied at camp.
- Give students specific (and/or general) challenges to work on upon returning home.

Little Things

“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” Luke 16:10

The purpose of the Bible lessons in camp this week is to help students understand that being a Christian presents opportunities to and demands responsibility from everyone, young and old. After the completion of each lesson the students should be able to name specific ways in which they can put God’s plan for them into action, and they should feel motivated to do so. After the completion of the week, it is the objective of this lesson series that the students will have concrete ideas in mind that they can put into practice upon returning home (and sooner) that will make them more pleasing to God and more beneficial to those around them.

Lesson 1, Monday: Little Things in the Home (Exodus 20:12, Ephesian 6:1)

Every child at camp lives in some kind of home. What can they do to make that home as much like God wants it to be as possible? Help them develop lists of ways they can “honor their parents” and help/be kind to their siblings. Play out tense and/or improper situations and have students enact better ways to handle them.

Lesson 2, Tuesday: Little Things in the Church (I Timothy 4:12)

What must a student do to be benefitted by worship?” Make a list of tasks that God wants done. Which of these can the students do? Why (and why not)? Can young people lead others to Christ? How would they go about it? What responsibilities do they have regarding Bible class? What about other study opportunities?

Lesson 3, Wednesday: Little Things at School (Colossians 4:22, 23; Romans 12:11)

The teacher is the “master” and the homework is the “business” of a student. How should a Christian go about their business, assigned to them by their master? If students are to please Christ, those at their school should a.) know they are Christians, and b.) respect the life they live and the conduct they exhibit. How do Christian students see to it that this occurs?

Lesson 4, Thursday: ~~Little House on the Prairie~~ (oops, sorry)
Little Things in General (Matthew 7:12)

Living by the Golden Rule means placing yourself in the other person’s shoes, seeing things from their perspective and then behaving in such a way as to satisfy their reasonable expectations. What does this mean to a young Christian? How do they go about doing this? How will they act as a result of doing this (especially in ways that might be different from their peers?) Is there a mess on your table when you leave Burger King, or do you clean it up? Do you behave in a loud, boisterous manner in public? Why not? These are little things, but they are an essential part of Christianity. What are some others? What do they demand of the Christian?

Little Things in the Home

Intro: We spend most of our time in the home and have our most intimate relationships there. Unfortunately, it is also there that we are often least considerate in our treatments of others. What are some ways your students exhibit unchristian behavior in the home? For your students, there are two major areas of responsibility in their behavior in the home: toward siblings and toward parents.

- I. God's word concerning behavior in the home.
 - A. Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:1 tell young people to honor their parents. Before this class is over, you should have them list/discuss specifically what this means they should do (see below).
 - B. I Tim. 5:1-2 are verses in which Paul is telling Timothy to be kind, tactful, and courteous in his dealings with people. It is obvious that Paul expects that Timothy would be that way when dealing with siblings.
- II. Honor your parents (show them respect).
 - A. How do you show respect?
 - 1. You defer to the wishes of the person whom you respect.
 - 2. You change modes of dress and behavior to show respect (funerals, ceremonies, etc.). If you don't you show that you're concerned only with what pleases you, and this is not respect.
 - B. How does this translate into your behavior in regard to your parents?
 - 1. [Have students make lists before discussing anything else.]
 - 2. Do what they want done before they have to ask (or demand) that you do it.
 - 3. Try to make their life pleasant.
 - 4. Don't talk back, argue, whine, etc. Can you voice disagreement?
- III. Be a good sibling [again, have students make lists before offering anything yourself]
 - A. If your brothers/sisters are older than you,
 - 1. Don't demand to do everything they're doing (at 16 when you're only 12).
 - 2. Give them their space
 - a. Let them have their friends
 - b. What belongs to them does not necessarily belong to you.
 - B. If your brothers/sisters are younger than you,
 - 1. Be patient with them. They are not as old nor as responsible as you (are they?).
 - 2. Remember that they look up to you as a very special person.
 - a. Be careful about the example that you set for them.
 - b. Give them some of your time. They will be important to you long after the majority of your present friends have long gone their separate ways.

Conc: Many of the actions that students listed above may seem like little things, and it may not seem like a very big deal how we treat our brothers and sisters or parents, but God said that he who is faithful in little will be faithful in much. In trying to be a successful Christian it is important for us to make an effort with the little things so we can learn how (and be programmed) to be faithful when the big tests come our way.

Little Things in the Church

Intro: No other institution should come close to comparing to the importance we assign to the church and the home. Too often the church is not assigned the proper importance. This is easily demonstrated by the time and money given to it. Young people may not have much money, but we are talking about the little things this week. Are they developing a pattern of giving? How much of the students' 168 hours per week are invested in some kind of church-related activity? Have them make a schedule showing how they use their time. Another consideration is how do we use the time that we do give to the church?

- I. How do we behave during worship service, sadly considered by many to be the only church activity? (I Tim. 3:15 – Paul thought it deserved an entire epistle)
 - A. Remember who it is for and your purpose being there.
 1. I Cor. 11:17-34 (The Corinthians had forgotten that the purpose was to remember our Lord's death and be edified by communing together.)
 2. "Help us put all worldly thoughts from our mind." – a prayer cliché, but a worthy goal
 3. Heb. 10:19-39 Our thoughts should be on God's love, God's sacrifice, God's purity, God's justice, God's promises, and our mortality (not in some morbid way, as some might accuse, but in a realistic and "big picture" way)
 4. Most of the time, what we "get out of" some events tells more about our attitude toward the event than it does about anything else.
 - B. You must immerse yourself in it.
 1. The teenager who sits smugly during the song-service is showing no concern for God. They betray the fact that "worldly thoughts" are what's on their mind.
 2. The difference in sitting at the back or the front of the assembly may be considered a little thing, but do people purposely place themselves at the back of any event they intend to enjoy and benefit from?
 3. It is a time for devoting your thoughts to God. Make an effort to think about the meaning, purpose, and direction of your life in view of God's work and you will be benefitted.
- II. What priority do we place on Bible study in our lives? (II Tim. 2:15 – Paul thought it was something about which we should be diligent)
 - A. Do we take time for our own Bible study (Psa. 1:2; I Tim. 4:12-13, 15-16)?
 - B. Do we make use of the opportunities provided by the Bible classes at our congregations?
 1. Do we study beforehand in order to learn and be prepared (I Pet. 3:15)?
 2. Do we take it seriously, knowing we are in the presence of God (Mt. 18:20)?
 - a. Do behave in such a way as to add to the serious nature of Bible class?
 - b. Do we participate and attempt to make class interesting with important questions and comments?
 - c. Do we help others to be more spiritual, or do we make it harder for them?
 3. Or do we think it is the responsibility of the Bible class teacher to entertain us?
 - a. We must take the function of Bible class seriously. It is not for entertainment; it is for edification. Some people may have a more interesting presentation of a lesson than others. If you are there for the right reasons, your presence in class will make it more edifying, uplifting, and interesting for others who are also concerned about spirituality.

- b. Our responsibility as a Christian rests squarely on our own shoulders. The Bible class teacher, of the kindness of his heart, is trying to help us, but our Christian life and Christian attitude is solely our responsibility.

III. What involvement do we have with church activities outside of worship and Bible class?

- A. What programs does your church sponsor that you are aware of?
- B. If your Christian life is your top priority, what would you do in regard to the time you give to religious activity?
 - 1. Compare your time in religious involvement to (sports, TV, chilling, etc.)
 - 2. What really has your top priority? (for answers, see time record)
 - 3. We should take an active role in church activities
 - 4. The activities of the youth program at your congregation are not a test for your youth director; they are a measure of your love for God.
- C. How many people are led closer to Christ because of their association with me?

Conc: Most of us need to trash the schedule we made out at the first of class and replace it. The replacement should start by listing the church-related activities that we need to be doing to help us grow as a Christian and then squeezing the things that probably fill most of the first list in where time provides. Of course, many activities (e.g., school) must fill certain slots, but we fill our days with many frivolous activities to the exclusion of God. Unfortunately, many young people can't expect help from their parents in this. They must not forget that they are responsible. In fact, quite possibly, they can lead their parents closer to God.

Little Things at School

Intro: School is an institution which is central to the lives of every student at Bible camp. Some may speak disparagingly about it, but all will spend a large percentage of their time involved in an activity that is generated in some way by school. These activities provide opportunity to display a Christian example in one or more of the three following areas: with supervisors, with peers, or in work. Do we take advantage of these opportunities, do we just follow the crowd, or do we exhibit a bad example?

- I. God's word concerning school-related behavior.
 - A. Col. 3:22 and Rom. 13:1-2 plainly show God's desire that Christians should be subservient to whomever has the duly appointed rule over them. For the school child, the teacher is the master, and the student is the servant.
 - 1. I Pet. 2:13-20 show that God intends for all underlings to behave properly in regard to all supervisors, regardless of what that relationship may be.
 - 2. The masters and servants we read of here refers to a slave relationship. Even in that relationship, slaves were expected to behave in an exemplary manner, even if their masters were harsh.
 - B. Col. 3:23, along with Rom. 12:11, emphasize the way that the Christian is to approach their work assignments. Note that the two verses from Colossians cannot be separated from context.
 - C. Col. 4:1 gives some instructions for the teachers which all students wish teachers would follow, but unless your students are teachers, they need not overly concern themselves with this verse. They are responsible to God for their conduct only.
- II. How does the Christian student apply these principles in school-related activities?
 - A. Christians and their teachers
 - 1. Have students list the things they think are implied about their behavior by the verses discussed. (Discussion of this might take the remainder of the class period, so don't forget sections B & C.)
 - 2. Obey them that have the rule over you.
 - a. Not because you might get caught (like a "men-pleaser")
 - b. Not seeing how far you can stretch it (like Eddie Haskell on Beaver)
 - c. As unto the Lord, because you want to please God.
 - 3. When you leave their class
 - a. They should know you are a member of the Church of Christ.
 - b. They should hope for more members in their future classes because of what they saw in you (I Pet. 2:15).
 - B. Christians and fellow students
 - 1. Have students list the things they think are implied about their behavior in this regard also. (Pace yourself to finish the lesson, but don't cut off a good, valuable discussion if you have one on your hands.)
 - 2. You should present a good example, not follow a poor example.
 - a. Follow all school rules and regulations – (on time, seated and ready to work, work completed when due, don't ask to go to the bathroom and then wander the halls, don't be disruptive of class in any way, don't get in fights, etc.)
 - b. Treat other students with respect and courtesy.
 - c. Being a part of extra-curricular activities is an option, not a requirement (is it a right?), but if you join a club, fulfill your obligations, be a positive

contributor to that club (Col. 3:23). If that organization is not “worthy of the calling to which you were called” (Eph. 4:1), get out.

3. Realize your place. No matter how many awards you have achieved, your academic record, your athletic prowess, etc., etc., you are no better than anyone else. You should be friendly with and helpful to the lowliest people at your school. (Do you have to go out of your way to show kindness to disgusting, offensive creeps? How should you behave towards them?)

C. Christians and school work

1. Have students explain how you do schoolwork “heartily as unto the Lord.”
2. Since a Christian seeks to please God, what would be his attitude towards:
 - a. Not doing/finishing homework
 - b. Putting TV before homework
 - c. Sloppy work
 - d. Plagiarizing, copying, or just plain cheating
 - e. Sports vs. schoolwork
 - f. Have students suggest other areas that they may wish to discuss
3. Can one be a Christian without being an “A” student? A good student? What is a good student?
 - Have the class respond to this question: “What are some things that you as an individual student can do to be more like the student God wants you to be?”

Conc: We have looked at what God expects out of the Christian student. We have also noticed areas in which we can improve. We need to develop a plan and put it into action next year so that we can make God (not teachers, not classmates, not coaches, etc.) proud of us.
(Discuss how to implement changes as time permits until the end of class.)

Little Things in General

Intro: Through the course of the week, in class lesson and in evening services, students have been led through a consideration of the importance of little things on the basis that Jesus said, “He that is faithful in little will be faithful in much.” Regarding every facet of our behavior toward others there is a “little” rule that is extremely profound. IF employed by everyone there would never again be an interpersonal problem on this earth. This lesson seeks to cause students to give serious consideration to ways they can employ that little rule in their everyday lives.

- I. God’s little rule, The Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12)
 - A. This little rule defines love and respect
 1. When Jesus says, “this is the law and the prophets,” he means that if you were to sum everything that was taught in the OT into one statement, this is the statement. The OT taught how to treat others with respect due them. Look at the 10 commandments and much of Deuteronomy to verify this statement. (It is another entire lesson, but it might be worth mentioning that manners and social customs, generally, are nothing if not respect defined.)
 2. In Gal. 5:14, Paul says the law in one word is love. Jesus says the same thing in Mark 12:31.
 - B. Putting these two together we see that when God tells us He wants us to love others, He wants us to respect others and vice versa. To find out what that means, we need only refer to the Golden Rule.
- II. Putting God’s little rule into practice
 - A. It doesn’t mean to consider our point of view and then transfer that to the other person.
 1. I don’t want anyone giving me any suggestions about what to do in a certain circumstance, so I don’t give you any suggestions. (You might be looking for advice and help.)
 2. I want a chocolate ice cream cone, so I buy you one hoping you’ll return the favor. (You may not like ice cream, or chocolate.)
 - B. It does mean to consider the other person’s viewpoint and then initiate actions designed to make their life more pleasant and enjoyable. Put yourselves in their shoes before you take action.
 1. I can see that you’re looking for directions, so regardless of how I feel about it, I give you the suggestions you’re wanting.
 2. I can’t stand it, but I’ve noticed you always buy Beef Jerky, so I get you some.
 3. Have students volunteer with other ideas about what this means. Here’s a good one: I don’t really like to volunteer answers and /or information in Bible class, but I know that the teacher is hoping for it, so I willingly participate. Why? It’s a little thing, but it is what God wants me to do. (I grow from it.)
 - C. Some very specific examples of living by the Golden Rule:
 1. How do you leave your table when you’re through at Burger King? The school lunchroom? Your own home?
 2. Have you ever (out of kindness) pushed a shopping cart back up to the store after parking in the grocery store parking lot? Or do you say, “They pay people to do that”? Does it matter that somebody is paid? Where do Christian responsibilities begin and end? (I think with the Golden Rule. If not, what’s it for?)
 3. What does the Golden Rule have to say about cutting in the lunch line at school? Any line, for that matter? Do you suppose those people were hoping someone would come and get in front of them?

4. What does the Golden Rule say about cheating on a test? Do you suppose the others taking the test are hoping someone who cheats will get a better score than they do?
5. How should you behave in a theater when watching a movie?
6. What about going to public places without shirts, shoes, etc.? Do you suppose there could be other people who would rather not be exposed to your navel? As a Christian, do you have any responsibility to them? Why or why not?
7. Should your parents have to tell you to mow the grass when you know it needs mowing? How does the Golden Rule apply in that and similar situations?

Conc: Clearly there is no end to the line of questioning above. The Golden Rule is universally applicable to human behavior towards others. Students must not leave this class without realizing that being a Christian means having their behavior affected by the desires of others. Many times, this has nothing to do with doctrinal or moral issues as we normally perceive them. We want the students to have a real understanding of how they can employ the Golden Rule in making decisions about their conduct. Hopefully, they will have already made some of those decisions.