

# Faithful in the Small Things

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. During this time, Pastor Garner speaks about being faithful in the small things.

We'll take your Bibles if you would and open them to Luke chapter 16 and verse 10. When Dr. Cornwell told me I was going to speak, I just picked what I did my devotions on this morning.

How about that? But I did enlarge on it. I promise I don't do this in all my devotions. Luke chapter 16 verses 10 through 13. If you would, if you got a sheet of paper, you might want to make a couple of notes about some things.

I want to talk to you about being faithful in small things. The Bible says in Luke 16 10, he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

And he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust or true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

[ 1 : 03 ] No servant can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he'll hold of the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. So I want to give you about four things here that you might write down out of this.

And I think it'll apply for our, all the ministries that we have here. I happen to read this this morning in my devotions. The first thing is the way you handle ministry you have today proves what you would do with a greater ministry.

That's a principle that's in this passage. Whatever you would do with the ministry God's given you so far just proves what you would do if you had a greater ministry. Verse 10, if you'll read that with me again, the Bible said, he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. There's a direct correlation in how I handle the small thing as to how I would handle the big thing. According to the Bible here, we might say if I had more people in my class, I would.

But that is simply not true. Jesus said, no, you wouldn't because if you wouldn't do it with the least, you wouldn't do it the more. We take our class lightly, only proven that we're unable to do a greater ministry.

[ 2 : 14 ] What would you do? And this is a serious question. It really made me think as I thought about it, wrote it down. What would you do if you were the teacher of a class with 3000 people in it? Suppose you had 3000.

Suppose you, I mean, you're this mega ministry and it was like big stuff that you were teaching 3000. Would you study extra hard? Would you pray more than you pray now? Would you get there on time?

Would you miss for the reasons you currently miss? In other words, if you had 3000, how would that affect the whole deal? Someone said that a penny saved is a penny earned.

And interesting, they didn't say a dollar or a thousand dollars. It's always how you handle the little stuff that determines how you can handle the big stuff. And that's the principle found in the, that's the principle found in the verse.

The way you take care of time is by the minute or the second, not by the hour or the week. There's a Bible principle there. How I handle small things will show how I would handle big things.

[ 3 : 15 ]    How do I handle it? Second thing I wish you'd write down. Second thing I wish you'd write down is what does faithful mean? What does faithful mean? Look at verse 10. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

He that's just in the least is unjust also in much. All right, I'm a Sunday school teacher. Have a class. You guys come up here if you want. I have a class. I have a ministry. I have something I'm doing for God. Wherever it is God has allowed me to be.

Whatever it is that God's allowed me to do. And I'm doing that. So when it says if I'm faithful. And what does faithful mean? So I just, I've got you a little bit of a study here. Maybe you could ask yourself these questions here.

Faithful refers to being trustworthy, believable, or worthy of credit. Trustworthy, believable, and worthy of credit. Do you live and act in such a way that people can believe you really care about the ministry God's given you so far?

Do you handle the small things that God has given you in such a way that you're worthy of trust? It's, of course, I've always been a church starter and a church planner. And I've always started with very small things.

[ 4 : 20 ]    The fact is, I suppose that maybe the last two churches, this one and the last one I started in Peru, were just a tad different. We started with more abilities and more. We started the church at the last church in Peru.

Quite a few people from around the city by then knew me. And so when I said I'm going to start a new church, man, people kind of left other churches. Everybody wanted to get involved and help. We probably started with 30 people or 40 people, which is probably more than we had here.

But the question is, how do you handle it when it's little? How do you handle it when it's little? How do you handle it when God gives you one disciple? How do you handle it when God gives you one person?

How do you handle when the job you have isn't that big? The word faithful means dependable. Dependable as in faithful in the performance of a duty. The word faithful means dependable as in faithful in the performance of a duty.

Can your students rely on you? Can the music ministry rely on you? Can the nursery rely on you? Can the ushers rely on you? Can the church rely on you? Are you a dependable messenger, a faithful messenger? That's the, that's the question that that's being asked.

[ 5 : 27 ]    He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much. He that's unjust in the least is unjust also in much. Letters say here, faithful would also mean doing things like you really have faith or believe. When they use the word faithful, it's really like if I'm a faithful person, it says I I'm consistent. I'm dependable. You can count on me, but it also has to do with the fact that I really believe in what I'm doing. I really believe in what I'm doing. That's what faith is all about. Faithful. So do you believe in what you teach? I think it's interesting.

You know, it's not so important maybe that they, that it's not so important that people get my message. I'm not as, I don't have to worry about it as much about convincing them to believe as I have to make sure I believe. And if I believe, then God can take and work with it. But if I don't believe what I'm teaching, that's certainly going to hinder what happens. It's is, is the ministry that we have important enough to give your entire life to it. And we'll get to something really nasty in a minute and probably aggravate you at me. And, uh, but I think I'll have Bible to go with it, but, but it's amazing. And boy, the Lord kicked me as I thought about this, this word faithful means to be loyal, keeping your promises, your word conscientious binding. He that's faithful. And when it's little, he's the guy that can be trusted with a lot. He's when it, when it's little and you can, you be trusted with a lot faithful is used in the meaning to be true to the original. If you say this is a faithful reproduction, that means it's true to the original. So in their word, in there, in this word, are we being like Christ? Are we showing the same, you know, if Jesus were coming to our class, we'd probably really get excited about teaching our class. If he were listening to us saying, if he were watching how he took care of the nursery, if he were doing things, it would really affect us. Faithful speaks of a firm resistance to any temptation to desert or betray.

If you're faithful, you don't desert your master. If you're faithful, you don't betray your master. And so two things so far out of that first little verse, that first verse says he that's faithful in that, which is least is faithful also in much. He that's unjust in least is unjust also in much.

And so however I'm handling my ministry right now shows exactly how I'll handle my ministry later. I didn't say that Jesus said it. And then he, then we've looked at what the word faithful means. Here comes his next thing. Look at verse 11. And this is where things start getting ugly.

And I didn't make them ugly. He did look at verse 11. If therefore you have been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust, the true riches, if you got your Bible, I said, I suggest you circle unrighteous mammon.

[ 8 : 04 ] And true riches. And he makes a big distinction. And what I'd like you to think about here is this. We respect people more who handle money right often than we do who handle truth right.

I grew up in Sunday school where the Sunday school teacher read to me out of a book every week. I said, the fact is I was back at that home church and I wondered what would be like. And so I go to Sunday school and they got a guy teaching and they go get me a copy of the book so I can read along as he reads me the book.

They were doing that when I was a kid and they're still doing that. And I'm 57 years old. I don't, I wouldn't go into that church till I was like 12. So that's however long it's been. So, so, so, so, uh, here's the, here's the, the, the key. How important is it? And what, you know what we do?

If we know a guy manages money big, if a guy has gotten a lot of money or if he, if he, if he, if he, if he runs a bit, we're all impressed by Bill Gates and Steve Jobs and, and, and Walton and, and all these, we all like swoon at their feet cause they they're good with their money.

And yet Jesus says, I want to know something. Are you faithful in the little things? Uh, if you are, you'll be faithful in the big, and if you're unfaithful in little things, you'll be unfaithful in the big things.

[ 9 : 18 ] And then he brings the comparison and here's the comparison gets really ugly. He said, unrighteous mammon, unrighteous money's not neutral. It's basically evil.

Money's not neutral. It's basically evil. Verse 11. If therefore you have been not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, Jesus calls money unrighteous. In first Timothy three, three, three, eight for a second.

10 Thessalonians one, seven, one 11 first Peter five, two, he calls it filthy. Lucre. Only God can sanctify money and use it correctly.

We cannot safely. Richard Foster said, we cannot safely use mammon until we're absolutely clear that we're dealing not just with mammon, but with unrighteous mammon.

Man, money's a corrupting thing. If you ever notice it, it corrupts you. It'll make you, it'll make you change your convictions and make you change your principles. It'll make you change your preferences. It'll change anything about you.

[ 10 : 21 ] Money. Everything's for sale. They say everything's for sale. Jesus is making a big comparison here. He's making a big comparison. Another guy said, I think it's Wiersbe. You can't be right about your theology.

And at the same time, heretical in the way you use money. How's that one? That's a quote. That's one to remember. You can't be right about your theology.

And at the same time, heretical in the way we use money. That was a big deal to Paul. Second Corinthians chapter eight and verse 21. Second Corinthians chapter eight, verse 21. The Bible says providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

He said, I don't want just God to know I do right. I want men to know I do right. And he took along witnesses to watch him when he picked up the money and they traveled with him the whole time. And when they got there, their witnesses see he got the money, he handled the money correctly.

In the old Testament, they actually weighed it and counted it, sent guys with it and got to the other place. They weighed it and counted it and wrote it down in a book here and a book there and made sure the books matched. Big deal. Big deal to God. Big deal to God. Big deal in the Bible.

[ 11 : 21 ] That men would handle money. Right. Yet he said, unrighteous mammon, unrighteous mammon, Matthew chapter six and verse 23, 24.

The Bible said, no man can serve two masters for either. They'll hate the one and love the other else. They'll hold one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. I want to go back to the verse with you. I'll get to the application with you in just a second.

I want to go back to the verse with you that we started in in verse 11. It said, if therefore you have not been faithful and unrighteous mammon who will commit to your trust true riches. This comes as he explains what he was trying to get across to him in a parable.

He just told them, but he's making a big point. You got to get right how you handle money and how you handle small things. If God is our master, then money will be our servant and we will use our resources in the will of God.

But if God is not our master, then we'll become the servants of money and money is a terrible master. We will start wasting our lives instead of investing them. Henry Fielding said, make money.

[ 12 : 22 ] Your God, it'll plague you like the devil. Jesus said, make money. Your servant and use today's opportunities as investments in tomorrow's dividends. If you would go back with me, let me read with you the passage we started with.

And I'll come back and give you some applications. I think the Sunday school teachers verse 10, he that's faithful in that which is least is faithful. Also in much he that's unjust in the least is unjust.

Also in the much stop. How are we handling our small ministries? How are we dealing with our small ministries? How do we start our class?

Do we care about our students? Do we pray for our students? Do we get involved? How do we handle just being a doorman in the house of the Lord? How do we handle the small amount of money he's given us? It is always shocking that as a pastor for years and as a missionary for years, I've always heard this.

If I win the lottery, I'll give God half. If this happens, it's always not what I have. But if God would give me my pie dream, my pie in the sky dream, if God would give me this great thing.

[ 13 : 20 ] Verse 11. If therefore you have been not been faithful in of the unrighteous mammon who will commit to yourself the true riches. He makes a strong comparison. Unrighteous mammon, true riches.

Unrighteous mammon, unrighteous money, true riches. Everybody likes handling money, making sure they handle money right. Man, I mean, popular TV program.

Dave Ramsey, big time. Popular TV program. Whole channels devoted to how you handle your money right now on TV. There's a guy, there are guys on Fox, there's a Fox channel. That's all about how you, there's a CNN channel.

There's an NBC channel all about how you handle your money, how to make money. Well, we only, we, let's work on that. But Jesus said, look, guys, look, guys, that's unrighteous mammon. I'm talking about true riches. That's unrighteous mammon.

I'm talking about true riches. Verse 12. And if you've not been faithful in that, which is another man's who shall give you that, which is your own, the servant. You're not been faithful in how you deal with it. No servant, no servant can serve two masters.

[ 14 : 17 ] Let me give you some application. Use every opportunity wisely. Use every opportunity wisely. I put on my blog this week, a quote out of, right out of Spurgeon's autobiography.

And he said, that man was stupid. And what he's talking about is on a day when the pastor couldn't make it to the church and he showed up at church and this guy got up to preach and he was stupid.

He didn't know enough Bible, but he just knew to be at church. He was faithful. So he got up and he said, look, look into him. All you ends of the earth, you'll be saved. He got me. So, all right, this ain't that hard to look and look just means look.

So look. And it tells us who to look to look to him. So look, look to him. And all you ends of the earth, that means all of you. And you can be saved. He said, God didn't really have a whole lot of stuff to say, but I got saved that day.

That guy was faithful in a very small place. Probably no one will ever know his name and no one will ever care about who he was, but I bet God cares. He was faithful in something very small.

[ 15 : 19 ] Realize that you can't separate the spiritual from the material. I'd ask you now, you know, and I have no idea unless you tell me I have no idea who gives and who doesn't give. If you're not a giver, if you're not a giver, this verse pretty well says if you don't, if you don't give faithfully, if you don't give faithfully, handle your money faithfully, you're not going to get spiritual understanding.

It's like God says, shut the valve off on Bible understanding. The guy won't handle a dollar, right? Anybody can handle a dollar. Lost guy can handle a dollar. Shut the giving and shut the, shut the spiritual.

He said, that's not what it says. You go read it. Spend some time saying it. He's saying, Hey, if you don't know how to do your money, right? Anyway, spiritual growth and understanding are directly related to how you manage money. That's what's going on in the verse.

Managing your money is more than tithing and giving to missions. It's not about getting rid of 10%. So you're free to do with 90% what you want to do. It's another thing that would bother me.

Sometimes Christians seem to develop the attitude or the opinion. Hey, God's like a hit man. Give him his 10% and you can live with you. The rest of it. It's just a cost of doing business. God won't beat you up.

[ 16 : 26 ] If you'll give 10%, that is not a biblical, not a biblical attitude. It's not a biblical person. If God's idea is, Hey, it's all my money. Jews used to give me 10%.

I own it all. What are y'all going to do with it? That's more of the biblical way of looking at money. Take your class seriously. Quit acting like it's a small thing.

Be faithful to whatever you're doing. And I don't know if this affects you like it affects me, but I know if there were 3000 attending here, I'd probably be really, really. I'd probably really study for my messages.

I'd probably really type up real notes. I would probably really pray over this place if I had 3000. I think if I had 3000, I'd probably get here early and I'd want to shake hands and I want to meet people and I want to talk to visitors and I want to text people and I'd want to send them an email and I want to call them.

And I want to, I think I want to do that because if I had 3000, I'd be a big shot preacher, wouldn't I? That'd be something. If you had 3000 in your Sunday school class, do you have any idea what? I mean, it would probably, I mean, honestly, you probably wouldn't present yourself as a businessman or a lawyer or a doctor.

[ 17 : 30 ] You'd probably say, I'm a Bible school teacher. 3000 students, all I got. I mean, that'd be a big deal. But God gives us three and we say, no, God, you left all three zeros. I'm not that into it.

We took our ministry lightly. And he said, if you're not faithful, I'm going to give you a little. Don't look for me to give you a lot. So I'm going to give you some steps and I'm through. Ready? Really study for your class.

I really challenge you. You know, this is the honest truth. I do study as hard as I can for the messages here. I study like you were 3000 and I challenge you.

Let's study for our classes. Let's don't walk in there flippantly like it's nothing. Let's don't act like we got something small going on here because that day when that stupid man, which wasn't stupid, when he preached that message and Charles Spurgeon got saved and Charles Spurgeon would go on vacation to Scotland and 5000 people would hear he landed.

And the boats would come from everywhere. And they would say, we got a Presbyterian church. Will you come preach at that place where you preach outside? People were getting saved everywhere. The man landed. The guy that nobody knows about led him to Christ.

[ 18 : 37 ] Had something small. He was doing. Put it with something awful big in the kingdom. Come on time. Come on time. You know, you wouldn't show up late. You wouldn't show up late if this was important.

I'm always shocked. And this can make you mad. I'm always shocked that people can be sick on Sunday, but they're not sick on Monday. I've always been shocked about that. And I know you're here, but I'm just telling you, this is the study.

And that's what I think we're always sick. But if it was a hunting date, if it was a fishing date, if it was a golf date, if it was a money making date, you know, we would get there.

That's come on time. Stay in touch with your class. Don't miss unless it's something super important. Don't miss unless it's something super important. I don't understand preachers and missionaries. I deal with them and they can skip church on Sunday night.

Like, I don't think they do that if it's a big shot. I don't think they'd do that if they really thought it. I just don't get it. There's a saying we used to say, don't call in, crawl in. How about that one? I'll say this to you.

[ 19 : 36 ] Students need stability. Students need stability. They need to know that the same guys loving me every day and caring about me every day. They need that.

Teach them to be faithful by your faithfulness. Teach them to be faithful by your faithfulness. It's not a lesson that gets it done. It's not a lesson that gets it done. It is.

It is being faithful. One more thing and I'll leave it. But I'll say this to you. I'm reading currently, I'm reading a Baptist history book.

And all it is, is it's like an encyclopedia of all these people have been alive and nobody's in there. I mean, just if it was, they're writing it today. They name all the Baptist preachers right in. And some of the guys get four lines.

And some of the guys get a paragraph. And some of the guys get two or three pages written about them and whatever happened in their life. But one of the things they'll always say is that guy was a faithful servant. He was always there.

[ 20 : 30 ] He was always preaching. He was always doing it. He spent years. And that's the key. Be faithful. Let's do our job so people know that. And then how about getting involved in discipleship? I mean, the comment was made about fundamentals.

That's so important. That's probably one of the least things you could do. I mean, just talk to one guy and share the gospel. One guy and invest in him what the Bible says. But if you train one guy, that guy trades another guy.

And you train another guy, boy, you start making a big difference. Be faithful in the little so God can use in much. Father, I pray you bless this little meditation. I pray you apply it to our hearts. We'll give you praise for it all.

In Jesus' name, amen. You have been listening to Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church. For contact information, location, service times, or more audio and video recordings, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com).