

**Gospel Reading: Luke 16:10-13**

"If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?"

"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money."

**Prayer:**

Loving God, for you the little things are always big things because you notice the little things. Please help us to look after the money we have, no matter how much or how little of it there may be. And help us to use it well to help others who may have more need of it than we do ourselves. Help us to be faithful in the small things so that you can trust us with the big things. Amen.

When I was young, my family was very poor and there was never enough money to get even the essentials, much less the luxuries. I remember that for years, I used to get pocket money of 25 Canadian cents a week, that's roughly equivalent to 50p. Looking back on it now, it's such a tiny amount of money that I could only ever buy a few sweets with it, but because I'd never known any different, that 25c was exciting because I had money of my own and I could choose what to do with it.

One day, I remember walking through town with a friend. Every few minutes, she would throw something away and it tinkled when it hit the ground. After a while, I asked what she was doing and she shrugged saying, "Oh they're only pennies. What can you buy with a penny?" I think I probably shrugged and laughed because I was ashamed we were so poor. But to me, that penny she was throwing away was a big deal because 25 pennies was my weekly allowance and she was just throwing them away, seeing no value in them. I went home and I told my mom about it; she replied with the phrase, "Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves."

To my friend, all those years ago, a penny was worthless, it didn't matter if it was just thrown away. And she was right of course, what can you do with a penny, what can you buy with one? But Jesus tells us that if we are faithful with the small things in life, this demonstrates we can be trusted with the big things. For one person, it might be just a penny but for another,, particularly in the current cost of living crisis, that penny might have an awful lot more value because we don't know what their circumstances are. And if as Christians, we want to be considered worthy of having others trust us with big and important things, then we need to demonstrate we can take care of the little things because they matter. So the next time you find yourself with a penny in your pocket, I wonder what you will do with it? Will you throw it away as something useless? Or will you stop and think about what value that penny might have to someone else?