

## THOSE FEW SHEEP

**“With whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness”? (1 Sam. 17:28)**

Yes! It's true! David was a poor man from a poor family. They had only a few sheep. When Michal, the king's daughter, wanted to marry him, David felt that his family was too poor to be associated with royalty. In fact, the only dowry he could afford involved killing 200 Philistines (1 Sam. 18:18 - 27).

Yet, notice the loyalty David had to his little flock. As Jesus would later say, the good shepherd will lay down his life for the sheep (Jn. 10:11). David was a good shepherd. When a lion or a bear carried off a sheep, David risked his life to rescue his sheep. In fact, on one occasion he caught a lion by the beard and killed it (1 Sam. 17:34 - 37).

We should not despise the day of small things (Zech. 4:10). The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth looking for men like David (2 Chron. 16:9). David's faithfulness over a few sheep is important for God declares that he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much (Lk. 16:10). Those who are faithful over a few things God will make ruler over many (Matt. 25:21). David's faithfulness over a few sheep was preparation for becoming king. No matter how little you are intrusted with, you are still required to be faithful (1 Cor. 4:2).

Most of us can relate to a shepherd watching over a few sheep. Most people are poor and unknown. It often seems that nobody knows or cares what poor people do. David was not only overlooked by society, but even by his own family. Note that when Samuel came to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his sons to be the new king, David was not even in the running. Jesse had eight sons, but only seven were considered worthy of the honor. One by one these seven brothers stepped before Samuel to see if he was the one. First was Eliab, then Jesse called for Abinadab. Then Jesse called for Shammah. After all seven had been called for and rejected Samuel had to ask if there were any others? That's when they finally sent for David. Samuel reminded them that while man looks on the outward appearance, the Lord looks on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). David was chosen to be the new king because he was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22).

What about you and me? If God has not yet called us to do great things, then let us do little things as though they were great.

To illustrate how God keeps track of unknown and obscure people, just notice how widows have found their way onto the pages of Scripture. Widows were invariably poor and without power, yet God knew about them even if society didn't.

- Tamar was a widow who was mistreated by her father in law but overcame his prejudice to become an ancestor of Jesus (Gen. 38:1 - 30; Matt. 1:3).
- God commanded a widow with only a handful of flour and a little oil to care for Elijah during three years of famine. God even raised her son from the dead ((1 Ki. 17:7 - 24)
- Jesus noticed a poor widow give only two small copper coins, and said she had given more than rich people who threw in large amounts of money (Mk. 12:41- 44).
- A widow named Anna was one of the first to welcome the baby Jesus (Lk. 2:36 - 38).
- Jesus raised a boy from the dead who was the only son of his widowed mother (Lk. 7:11-15).
- Jesus used a powerless widow to teach the importance of persistent prayer (Lk. 18:1 - 8).
- Godly widows over 60 were supported by the early church to do good work (1 Tim. 5:9, 10).
- It was perhaps these older women who trained the young women to love their husbands and children, and to be self-controlled and pure (Titus 2:3 - 5).

You don't have to be poor, or a widow to be noticed by God, but you do have to be faithful with the "few" things God intrusts you with before He will promote you take care of "many".