

GROWING IN generosity

2 CORINTHIANS 8:9



time
talent
treasure

What Difference Can Your Gift Make?

In 1886, Rev. Russell H. Conwell was the young pastor of a small, but growing church in Philadelphia called Grace Baptist Church. The little sanctuary, as well as an adjacent house used for Sunday School, were often over-flowing with people. So crowded was the church, that tickets of admission for the services were sometimes obtained in advance.

On one Sunday as Rev. Conwell approached the Sunday School house, he discovered several children outside the building. The rooms had become so crowded that these children were unable to enter. One small six-year-old girl moved him to compassion. There she was, standing, waiting, and hoping to be able to gain admission to Sunday School. Rev. Conwell picked her up, carried her into the Sunday School house, and found a place for her in the back corner of the room. The young girl's name was Hattie Mae Wiatt.

The next day as Rev. Conwell was walking down the street, he encountered Hattie Mae as she was walking to school. Rev. Conwell thanked her for attending Sunday School and said, "Hattie, we are going to have a larger Sunday School room soon," and she responded, "I hope you will. It is so crowded that I am afraid to go there alone." "Well," replied Rev. Conwell, "When we get the money with which to erect a school building, we are going to construct one large enough to get all the little children in, and we are going to begin very soon to raise the money for it."

Several weeks passed and Rev. Conwell was contacted to go to Hattie Mae's home. Little Hattie Mae had fallen ill and alas, she passed away. The family was heartbroken. At the funeral, Hattie Mae's mother handed Rev. Conwell a small bag that she had discovered. Inside the bag was fifty-seven cents and a small note written in Hattie's handwriting. The note stated that this money was "to help build a bigger church...for all the little children."

The young minister took the bag and converted the fifty-seven cents into all pennies. Then he offered the pennies for sale and raised \$250. Fifty-four of the pennies were returned and these again were auctioned off. Hattie Mae's gift of fifty-seven cents kept multiplying! Soon the church organized the "Wiatt Mite Society" and entrusted these people to share Hattie Mae's story and continue to raise funds for the church.

On Sunday morning, December 1, 1912, Rev. Conwell shared the history of the fifty-seven cents and how God had multiplied little Hattie Mae's gift over the past twenty-six years. The minister explained that Hattie Mae's gift of fifty-seven cents had been multiplied by God into a church with a membership of over 5,600 people (Grace Baptist Temple), a hospital where tens of thousands of people had been treated (Good Samaritan Hospital), 80,000 young people going through the university (Temple University), and 2,000 people going out to preach the gospel. All this happened "because Hattie Mae Wiatt invested fifty-seven cents!"

Yes, friend, your gift can make a massive kingdom difference. What we cannot accomplish through our own addition, God accomplishes through multiplication. So, commit, give, and grow in your generosity, and watch God work!



Both Temple University and the Good Samaritan Hospital claim their origin from the Temple Baptist Church property purchased from the seed money of Hattie May Wiatt's 57 cents.

To learn more visit...

"My Soul Pants for God and God Alone!" \ accessed August 20, 2024, <https://soulpants.wordpress.com/2018/08/16/the-history-of-57-cents/>

"Temple University Libraries | *The History of Fifty- Seven-Cents,*" accessed August 20, 2024. <https://library.temple.edu/webpages/the-history-of-fifty-seven-cents>



Stewardship in Action

Over the years our church has witnessed stewardship in action through the lives of many people who have felt God's call to leave the comforts of home and go out on mission. Some of these have chosen a career in missions, still others have felt God's call to serve on short term mission assignments. The latter of these choices is relevant in Cary McMillan's life.

Cary grew up as a member of FBC Montgomery, and her parents Kirby and Sarah Susan Smith nurtured her in maturing as a believer, and as one that took missions seriously. Before Cary's retirement, she had already been on 17 short term mission trips in the United States and International Missions. She also served on our missions committee and completed one term as chairperson. In addition, Cary has been extremely active in our missions conferences and it was during one of these GMCs that she developed a relationship with the Glover family.

Jake and Dodie Glover (along with their four girls) are serving with our International Mission Board in Lima, Peru. Recently, our church sent a vision team to Lima to see how we might partner with the Glovers. It was during this trip that Cary felt The LORD calling her to do more for Him. She felt a special love for the people and the work the Glovers were accomplishing. Cary's heart was touched with the work of building relationships and praying for people with disabilities, and their care givers. The team also prayed for God's direction in ministering to at-risk women and children with a church that welcomes people in Jesus' name and meets their needs.

Cary states, "Leaving Lima, during my quiet time with The LORD, The Holy Spirit called me to be more involved in sharing Jesus in the Ville El Salvador area of Lima." In addition, "Jake, Dodie, and I felt the LORD calling me to a partnership with the Lima Team developing a ministry plan for the churches to minister to women and children that are at-risk. I will be returning to Lima on a ninety day language learner visa. I will attend Spanish school in the mornings and work with IMB missionaries in ministry in the afternoons and evenings. The dates are January 11 through April 10, 2025."

Answering this call was not easy, nor without sacrifice for Cary. And, she is quick to say, "This is not about me, and I am blessed to be a very small part of The LORD'S work." Yet, in answering The LORD'S call she has shown stewardship in action, by committing her time, talents, and treasure for God's kingdom efforts. Please continue to pray for Cary in the days ahead. May God use her in a tremendous way as she serves in Lima, Peru.

Committing Ourselves to Growing In Generosity

Understanding that all you possess is a gift from God, and seeking to be a good steward of these gifts, will you choose to give as God leads and provides? As an expression of your love for Christ and your desire to serve Him through the ministries of First Baptist Church, will you...



Commit to stewarding the time God has blessed you with to further His Kingdom?



Commit to using the gifts God has blessed you with and finding a place of service in our church?



Commit to Growing In Generosity in giving to our church's budget to fuel missions and ministry?

Please join with us in completing and returning your commitment card.

You may use the commitment card that was mailed to you, or visit montgomeryfbc.org/stewardship.