

# Ordinary Things

Reconstructed from a message  
preached at The Church of God Outreach  
by Wayne Murphey on March 19, 2006.

Wayne Murphey • 405-282-6170  
waynemurphey@gmail.com

# Ordinary Things

I have a lot of pleasant childhood memories of visiting the Guthrie City dump. That may sound strange, but you don't find dumps today like you did back then. When we went to the dump, it was an adventure. There were all kinds of things. When people cleaned out their garages or back yards, they took all the stuff to the dump. You could find knickknacks of all kinds; even refrigerators, washers or cars.

I remember there was a man who lived next to the dump. I believe he was the caretaker. He would systematically go through the dump, pulling out things he thought was worth keeping. He even had a building that he had built from dump materials.

Times have really changed. Today you don't find people's unwanted possessions in the dump; you find them at yard sales or on eBay. I guess it goes to prove the old saying that, "One man's trash is another man's treasure."

How does God view what we have? Spiritually, could our ordinary stuff be His treasure?

Listen to Exodus 4:1-3: "And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it." This particular day to Moses was like any other day. He walked the same path through the same dusty, desert trail, to the backside of the same mountain—Mount Horeb.

Moses had something God wanted to use: a stick. It was most likely a crooked sapling, curved at one end, anywhere from three to six feet long. Little did Moses realize that this insignificant piece of wood would become a symbol of victory. There were undoubtedly thousands just like it in that country. There was nothing to distinguish it from any other, except Moses gave it to God.

In verse two it was just a "rod." In verse three it was something God had used. I wonder what that rod would bring on eBay after God had turned it into a serpent and back into a rod again? By then, it would probably be so valuable it would be more appropriately sold at Christy's Auction House! The ordinary had become priceless; the lowly had become mighty.

God wants to know what we have. Could it be something comparable to two loaves and five fishes, or a cake of barley meal, or an earthen pitcher, or a slingshot, or a mustard seed? Did not Jesus say that every one of us has been given at least one talent? (Matt. 25:14-15.) Perhaps you have faith and can pray, have the time to write cards and make telephone calls of encouragement, have an interest in children, have a little bit of money, or have the ability to sing. God is looking for the small, common things in our lives. "And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." I Cor. 1:28.

Just whatever we have God wants us to dedicate to Him. It seems there are some Christians who are always looking for another sacrifice to make to God. After Moses had thrown down his rod and it changed into a serpent, he could have thought, "That's great! What else can I find to throw down?" He could have run around the mountainside, looking for more sticks to throw down. He could have had the whole desert landscape full of wriggling snakes. But God didn't need a hundred snakes. He only needed the one rod that Moses carried.

It is possible to get carried away with throwing the rod down, and not hear God say, "Pick it back up and go use it." It is good to go to church service and be moved to sacrifice all we have to God, but don't forget to take what is dedicated to God and use it in your daily life.

God can turn the common, ordinary tasks of life into significant events. Do you know how the battle of Gettysburg came about? Some Confederate soldiers were sent to Gettysburg to get a supply of shoes. Perhaps the Confederate soldiers thought it a boring task, but they were discovered by some Union soldiers, and three days later 53,000 lay dead on the battlefield, and Lee's army was in full retreat.

God can make the usage of your ordinary talent to vibrate throughout eternity. When the battlefield at Gettysburg was to be consecrated as a National Cemetery, Edward Everett, one of the greatest orators of all time, was selected to give the keynote address. Possessed of an extraordinary memory, a melodious voice, and a brilliant style and delivery, this statesman, who graduated from Harvard at the age of 17, delivered a two-hour oration. In the days that followed, his address was front page news and met with unqualified praise.

A tall, thin, scraggly-bearded man was also invited to speak, primarily out of courtesy because he was President of the United States. His speech was only two minutes in length and the report of it was relegated to the inner pages of the newspapers. Abraham Lincoln himself said in that two-minute address, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here." How wrong he was!

You may feel like what you have is of no comparison to what someone else has, but God isn't looking for things that we consider priceless. He is looking for ordinary things.