



Childlike Faith *by Tamara Collins*

"Then he said, 'I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.'" - Matthew 18:3-4

When I was in high school, my best friend, Jess, decided to follow Jesus. Jess started coming to church with my family and I. But neither of us cared for that church very much. Since she was a new Christian, I was more than willing to check out different churches and youth groups with her until we could find one that we both liked.

We had been visiting a church for only a few weeks when the pastor announced a new building project. Since I had grown up at a big church and had seen building campaigns before, I honestly wasn't thrilled. A huge, flashy church didn't really appeal to me. That was part of the reason I was eager to leave the church where I grew up. But Jess didn't have any experience with church. And when the pastor announced they would be raising funds for renovations and additions to the building, she did something remarkable.

She went home and pulled out a Ziploc bag full of money she had been saving for a long time. Jess's parents used to give her money for lunch each week. But Jess would never spend it all. She would stash the leftover money at the end of every week, coins and all in this bag. She had been doing it for quite a while so she had saved up a few hundred dollars. The next Sunday when we went to church, she pulled an usher aside after the service and gave him the bag of coins and bills. The usher was surprised to see a teenager giving this large amount of cash, obviously a sacrificial gift.

Jess didn't know about tithing. She didn't know she technically only needed to give 10 percent of the money she had. I'm sure that's the excuse I would have come up with if I had felt like God told me to give away all that money to a church I didn't even go to. But Jess, in her new faith, simply responded when she felt God inviting her to give. Her dad was angry she gave all the money away. I even felt bad about it, because we didn't end up staying at that church. It wasn't as if Jess was investing in something she was even going to see the benefits of.

But I will never forget this incredible example my friend gave me of childlike faith. Jess didn't have to make decisions through a filter of good and bad experiences, cynicism versus faith. She just believed and was excited for action! I feel like, as I get older, I just make my faith more and more complicated. I tend to weigh what is being asked of me against a whole stack of emotions I have about church and what I do and don't like about it. It doesn't even have to be related to giving financially. It takes work for me to respond to Jesus with untarnished faith.

Maybe you remember what fresh enthusiasm feels like from when you first started following Jesus, or maybe you are still there. Today I want you to be inspired by Jess's childlike faith and ask God what you can do to be open to his call.

A prayer for you: *Lord, I pray you would fill me today with fresh faith. I want to respond when you call me, whether it is something big or small. Help me to cast aside my preconceived notions of faith and the church when I feel you ask me to do something.*