

MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

Doing Without

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Samuel B. Pierce was a good man and a devoted follower of Jesus. I'd like to share a brief story from his life that should give us pause to think.

The story is told that one year, when Sam's oldest daughter was about to start a new school year, Sam bought his daughter a new outfit to wear to school, for each day of the week. Money was scarce, and the little girl was thrilled with her unexpected gift. Not long after she received her gift, she was sitting by her dad in church when he happened to cross his legs. When he did so, he exposed to his appreciative daughter, a hole in the bottom of his shoe. Rather than buying a new pair of shoes, which Sam needed, he instead purchased several new outfits for his daughter to wear to school. His sacrifice wasn't "heroic," (except for in the eyes of a little girl), but it was definitely motivated by love.

Friends, can I ask you when you've done something similar...not for your flesh and blood family, but for your God and your brothers and sisters in Christ? Can you remember the last time you "did without" for the cause of Christ?

- Have you ever foregone a vacation to use the money saved for the work of the church?
- Have you ever decided not to upgrade or purchase the latest techie gadget, but instead, lay that money at the feet of your bishops/shepherds?
- Have you ever skipped a meal or decided not to eat out, and take that money and give to missions?
- Have you ever, as a family, had a yard sale to get rid of your unwanted possessions, and used the proceeds, not for yourselves, but to support a young man training to become a preacher?

Do you see what I'm saying? The church doesn't need to be the beneficiary of an improbable billionaire; all it needs is an army of faithful servants who are willing to make sacrifices with the little they have.

I want to challenge you to live more sacrificially, and more intentionally. I suspect that the hole in Samuel B. Pierce's shoe was a badge of honor whenever he recalled the joy on his little girl's face. Likewise, our sacrifices, whatever they may be, won't be difficult or regretted. Rather, they too will be badges of honor when viewed in light of serving the Lord (1 Peter 4:13).

I'm happy that two little girls got to have Samuel B. Pierce as a daddy, and I'm thankful that I got to have him as a father-in-law.

By Steve Higginbotham, 2017. Permission is granted to copy these articles.