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Presbyterian Women Sunday
Bush Hill Presbyterian Church
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Psalm 139:1–10
Matthew 19:16–23
Colossians 3:12–17

HALF A PERCENT: 7 MINUTES FOR GOD

There are people in this world who are doing amazing things:

- Chris Seay travels the world drilling wells so that villages lacking financial wealth can have clean drinking water (bless him for helping out the Todee mission).
- Executive Chef Steve Badt and his crew at Miriam's Kitchen feeds hundreds of people every weekday.
- The Gates Foundation, the Dell Foundation, and the O'Donnell Foundation give away millions of dollars a month to improve the lives of children through better homes and education.

I am in awe of these people. What they do is so big, so overwhelmingly wonderful ... so completely out of my reach.

I'm just an average parent of a couple of teenagers. As I run my zone defense on them, I work all day; and then, I cram my evenings and weekends with practices, games, rehearsals, grocery shopping, church and school meetings, and tons of laundry. I feel my time and finances are stretched.

I imagine a lot of people feel that way.

The question is when it comes to amazing things: what do us average folks do.

Matthew, Chapter 19, verses 16–23, quotes Jesus as telling the rich man who was seeking eternal life, "... If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor."

Okay, there we have it. Let's get organized.

We could set up a multi-family yard sale for next Saturday. It will be huge! We will sell off all our stuff and its associated demands. Hmmmm, wait, this is too big for me. Even the front part of Jesus' quote is too big for me: "If you want to be perfect...."

Perfect.

Let's set that as a goal and let's take a divide and conquer approach. We can start small and work our way up. How about a half of one percent? Would you donate one-half of a percent? Would you? Would it help if I told you that I'm not talking about money?

I'm talking about giving one-half of a percent of your day to be God's hands, to be God's representative, to be God's disciple. A one-half of one percent of a day is 7.2 minutes; but God's a good fellow, so let's just round it to 7 minutes, he won't mind ... after all, we are giving.

What is 7 minutes?

- 7 minutes is about the time it takes to get dressed and brush your hair, ... *if* you know what you are going to wear.
- 7 minutes is about the time it takes to spend \$50, ... umm, I mean, to pump a tank of gasoline.
- Or with 7 minutes, one of those store bought pizzas can be 1/3 cooked.

Seven minutes is not much time; but, if each of us gave away 7 minutes to be God's helper, every day, WE, could change the world.

Now, I am not suggesting some specific task or specific charity, but rather that each of us start the day with the goal to GIVE AWAY 7 minutes—just give it.

Who do you give it to? How do you give it? ... That's up to you.

Colossians 3:12 says, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Did you get that? It says to be nice to one another.

For example, you could donate 3 minutes of your day by letting another car easily in front of you during a merge. I know that letting a car merge in front of you only takes a few seconds, but I also know that in my case, when I let the car merge in front of me, that car makes the green light and I won't; so I end up waiting for the next green light. Hence, the estimate of 3 minutes. But let's give it, give that 3 minutes away.

OR

You could give away 1 minute as you break your stride, pausing to hold the door for the person a few steps behind you. Give that minute in patience, as God would.

OR

Maybe, when you greet someone with: "Hi! How are you?," you could stop for a couple of minutes to actually listen to the answer and then share some of your personal warmth—your inner caring Christian attitude—with this person, giving the few minutes of time to be compassionate and kind.

It does not take much time to make someone's life easier, to show basic courtesies to one another, or to lift someone's spirits. It does not take much time to be God's disciple.

There is a scientific concept called "The Butterfly Effect." Maybe you are already familiar with it, but have not considered how it applies to you. The Butterfly Effect was introduced in a college thesis and to paraphrase it quickly, it says that the flutter of one butterfly's wings here in this country can change the weather in another country on the other side of the earth. Pretty astounding concept, especially when you consider how much more significant than a butterfly's flapping that our own actions can be, even just 7 minutes worth of our actions.

I am sure many of you have seen the commercials where someone provides a moment of help to someone else and that good deed is seen by a third person, who in turn helps someone else. And a series of simple helps travels around in a contagious circle; it returns back to the first person who helped someone. That's how goodness works. That is how God's works can influence the world. But it only works, if someone starts the chain.

So, what are you going to do with your 7 minutes today?

- Help someone lift a bag of groceries into their car?
- Wash the dish that got left in the sink because someone had to race off to practice and did not get time to wash it yet?
- Pick up a piece of litter off of the ground to make our world more beautiful and make sure that piece of trash gets into a trash can?
- Make a new pot of coffee for the office so that it will be ready for someone else who otherwise might not get a chance to grab a cup?
or
- Offer a simple, honest compliment to someone that you may not know, but shares your world.

How can you change the world?

Be creative.

Be loving.

Be God's representative.