

My Story

“Don’t spend those three dollars; keep it for the babysitter tonight,” Jim told me.

“Okay.” A friend was taking me to a women’s meeting the next morning and driving, so I didn’t need gasoline; I thought, *no problem*.

It was October 12, 1978, and our last payroll check had been spent. The last of our savings was gone, too. I totaled the bills: \$252.00! We had expected to have another job by now, but we didn’t. Jim and I prayed over the bills and gave them to the Lord.

The longer I looked at the bills, the more frightened I became. Jim was a picture of peace. Confused and desperate, I decided to take a shower. I didn’t know it would be with my own tears. *Fear* as I had never known enveloped me. I thought about the words of Jesus after he said not to worry about what we shall eat or drink or wear, “Seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt. 6:33). *But Really? How can this possibly be true for a time like this?*

After my shower, I put away the bills, got out my Bible, sat down, and turned to Ephesians 6. It read, “Wherefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”

I said, “Lord, we have presented ourselves to you, no strings attached, and nothing has happened yet as we had expected. We’ve done all we know to do in order to obey you, and we will stand.” Immediately, peace flooded my soul. I thought: *this must be the peace that passes all understanding that the Bible talks about*, (see Phil. 4:7). I began to see that Jesus and His Word truly are one and the same.

The next morning my friend came to pick me up. The meeting was like nothing I had ever attended. The speaker spoke about victory in all our trials and that we will have many Jordan Rivers to cross in our lifetime. At the conclusion, the attendees were asked to give an offering. Small envelopes were on the table for that gift. I thought about the three dollars in my purse and what Jim had said. Then, my thoughts wandered to the widow Jesus observed giving into the temple treasury. “Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny” (Mark 12:42). Jesus told his disciples that she had put in more than all the others. “They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on” (Mark 12:43).

I wondered, *what happened to that poor widow who gave all she had? The Bible doesn’t say*. So, without hesitating, I pulled out the three dollars and stuffed it in the envelope. After the

meeting, I saw a hand, out of the corner of my eye, put something in my outside purse pocket.

Retreating to the car, heart beating wildly, I opened the envelope. There was \$11.00—a ten dollar bill plus one dollar for the tithe! I was overcome with the feeling I was in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene, who says that whoever believes in Him, streams of living water will flow from within him—a never-ending stream of joy (see John 7:38). I asked my friend if she had put that envelope in my purse. She had not.

Jim gave \$5.00 to our Bible study leaders (to God) that night, leaving \$5.00 for the babysitter and one dollar for us. After the meeting, our leader said, “It’s time we give our tithe to the Lord from the proceeds of these meetings. We do that by giving away one night’s offering.” Then he said it would go to us. We had not told him about our situation, but he said he would call us later with the amount. It was \$254.00—two dollars over our immediate needs we had written down and taken to the Lord, and one dollar was the tithe returned to us. I thought, *in determining our needs, why hadn’t we added in the tithe?*

November 14 came and we were still in Carthage. “You have made your way around this hill country long enough; now turn north” (Deut. 2:3). *But where, Lord? And how do we get across this Jordan?*

A couple verses kept haunting us: “. . . as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing . . . the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan . . .” (Josh. 3:15-17).

It became clear we could not keep our feet on the bank of the river if we were to reach the other side. We gave thirty days notice on our house; the neighbors rented it the next day. We got boxes and started packing and withdrew teacher’s retirement to help with the move. The check arrived in one week, double the amount we expected. “But where are we going, Lord?”

“Northward,” was the answer we received, and then this: “The Lord your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes” (Deut. 1:30). Next, from the Amplified Bible, He quickened Isaiah 40:4, “Every valley shall be lifted and filled up, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked and uneven shall be made straight and level, and the rough places a plain.” He would make our way straight—northward. December 13 arrived and we would be loading the moving truck the next day. We still did not know where *straight northward* was.