

## **Building the Church**

In 1386 Lombardy, Italy, Viscount Barnabo desired to build a cathedral to honor himself, forbidding anyone from contributing anything to its construction in order that the credit might be all his. A sign was placed on the site with the ruler's name as builder. However, the viscount was informed that an aged woman was seen carrying something nightly to the site while the church was being built. Furious that one of his subjects would disobey him by putting unauthorized hands on his work, he ordered his guards to watch for the woman and bring her to him.

That very night the guards apprehended the aged widow and brought her before the king. He demanded to know what she has been doing. The trembling woman replied, "I love the Lord and longed to do something for His name and for the building of His church. Since I was forbidden to touch it in any way, I brought wisps of hay for the horses that drew the stones." He commanded that his own name be removed from the cathedral before the end of the day.

Shortly afterward, the church building was dedicated by Archbishop Antonio de Saluzzo to the working class men of the city of Milan who had suffered under Barnabo's selfish rule. When the Milan Cathedral was finished, in the vast throngs of people assembled to witness the dedication to the workmen was a little girl who was heard to cry out in childish glee as she pointed to the great building, "I helped to build that!" "What!" exclaimed one of the guards who was standing nearby. "Show me what you did." "I carried the dinner pail for my father every day while he worked up yonder," she replied. Her part, though humble, helped to complete the plans of the architect.

Our part in the service of the Lord in the local church may seem small to ourselves and insignificant to others. But in the eyes of God the Architect and Jesus Christ the Master Builder, your place in the church is vital to its growth and purpose, as well as to the glory given to God by those who have been blessed by it.

God is able to multiply the cup of water you bring to Him in service into a sumptuous feast. He took a man who lived 4000 years ago and made him a 21<sup>st</sup> century hero of faith and patience. He took a lad's lunch and fed a multitude. He took a poor widow's pension and used it to teach millions how to live and to give. He took the blood of the son of a carpenter and washed out the impossible stains of sins from all penitent believers. God can take what you bring to Him and use it to build the church.

**2Cor. 9:8-15**