

## Coins in the Pickle Jar

“Hey, we should save that,” Louis said to his wife, Julie, as she rinsed out a pickle jar before putting it in the recycling bin.

He placed the jar on the kitchen table and then dug into his pockets for change. The sound of the coins clinking against the glass made him smile.

“When I was a kid, my dad kept a jar just like this on the side of his dresser,” Louis said. “Every night when he came home from his shift at the mill, he’d empty his pockets into that jar. ‘You won’t have to work at the mill,’ he’d say to me. ‘Your future will be better than anything this town has to offer.’”

“Dad saved faithfully for years. Anything extra left over after the bills were paid went into the jar. When it was full, we would count out the coins and place them in wrappers before taking the money to the bank.

“It was my college fund,” Louis said, picking up the jar again. “I guess it’s never too soon to start planning,” he said as he bent over to kiss his their 11-month-old son seated in a high chair.

Later on that day, they packed up the car and made the four-hour drive to his parents’ home where they were going to spend the few days leading up to Christmas.

As a new parent standing in his childhood home, Louis was aware that although they never had a lot while he was growing up, they always had enough. Life was not extraordinary, but it was simple ... and good.



He touched the headrest on the back of his father’s easy chair. He and Julie surprised his dad with it on Father’s Day months earlier to replace the well-worn chair that had occupied the same spot for decades. His father was humbled and appreciative that day, but he gently scolded them for spending too much money. “You’re parents now and have that little one to care for,” he said.

Julie suddenly appeared wide-eyed in the living room and motioned for Louis to join her in his parents’ room. “Look,” she said, pointing to the corner. The old pickle jar sat next to the dresser, already half-filled with change.

Louis wondered if he would ever fully realize all of the sacrifices his parents had made and would continue to make on his behalf.

(more)

A couple of lessons are drawn from this story:

1. A savings plan – be it a pickle jar or some other systematic method of putting back “extra” money – can produce more cash than one might imagine to fulfill needs.
2. We can be grateful for the sacrifices of parents, and others, who helped us get where we are in life.

*Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it*  
(Proverbs 13:11 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter