

# The Woolworth Opportunity

Some years ago, an energetic young man began as a clerk in a hardware store.

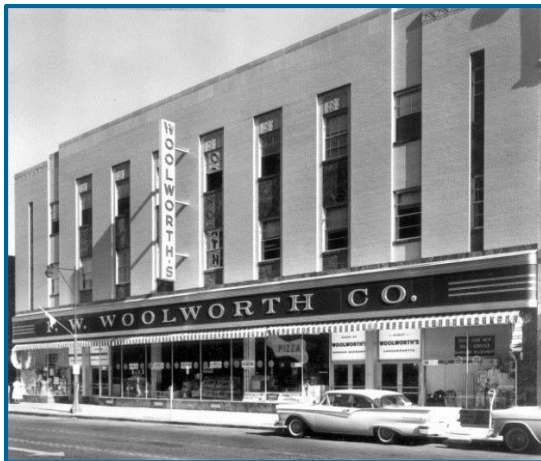
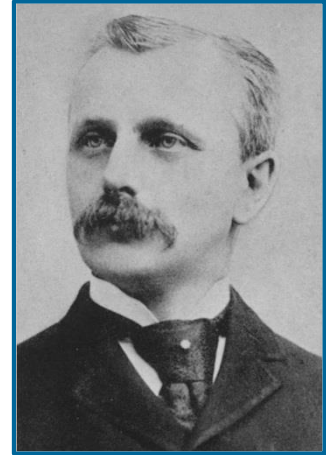
Like many old-time hardware stores, the inventory included thousands of dollars' worth of items that were obsolete or seldom called for by customers. The young man was smart enough to know that no thriving business could carry such an inventory and still show a healthy profit.

He proposed a sale to get rid of the stuff. The owner was reluctant but finally agreed to let him set up a table in the middle of the store and try to sell off a few of the oldest items. Every product was priced at 10 cents.

The sale was a success and the young fellow got permission to run a second sale. It, too, went over just as well as the first. This gave the young clerk an idea. Why not open a store that would sell only nickel and dime items? He could run the store and his boss could supply the capital.

The young man's boss was not enthusiastic. "The plan will never work," he said, "because you can't find enough items to sell at a nickel and dime."

The young man was disappointed, but eventually went ahead on his own and made a fortune out of the idea. His name was F.W. Woolworth.



The F.W. Woolworth Company featured a selection of merchandise priced at 5 and 10 cents, just as young Woolworth had proposed to his boss. The stores became known as "Five-and-Dimes." Woolworth created the modern retail model that stores follow worldwide today.

He pioneered the practice of buying merchandise direct from manufacturers and fixing prices on items, rather than haggling. He was the first to use self-service display cases so customers could examine what they wanted to buy without the help of a salesclerk.

F.W. Woolworth saw an opportunity as a young man and launched a very successful career.

(more)

What about us? Do we find opportunity before us? Maybe we don't see one that will ultimately make us millions of dollars, but we do discover opportunity to ...

- Offer encouragement to someone struggling with the impact of some adversity encountered.
- Provide hope to a young family beginning their lives together and considering career options.
- Visit with an elderly person who has no family to care about them.
- Pray for the sick child of worried parents.
- Listen to the dreams of a student considering his or her future.
- Purchase a sweater for a resident on a long-term-care wing who often speaks of chills.

Opportunities? They are all about us.

And while they may not launch a chain of retail stores, they nevertheless have heavenly consequences.

*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers (Galatians 6:10 NIV).*

– Beecher Hunter