

IT'S ONLY TWO INCHES

Surely two inches wouldn't make much difference, would it? If you were watching the Olympic finals of the women's gymnastics however, you know that's not true. Mystified, we saw the top female gymnasts in the world tumble off the pommel horse landing face down, face up, and stumbling to the mat. The American said, "I just didn't know, I thought it was me." Commentators and coaches discussed the tragic mistake that threw off the timing and heights for these athletes and the devastating effect it had on their following exercises. And what was the historic blunder? The "horse" was set up incorrectly, two inches lower than the height standard used all around the world.

Believing what Solomon wrote in Proverbs 1:20, "Wisdom shouts in the streets," I began to wonder what lessons were being "shouted" out. The main one that occurred to me was...little things DO count!

Two inches was enough to bring world class athletes stumbling to the mat. Years of work and thousands of hours training meant nothing when their "standard" was ignored.

Little things will mean a lot to each of us also, however. Little things like stopping and spending a few moments now with our children instead of pushing them off until later. Little things like walking across an auditorium or foyer to warmly greet a visitor when that might be left to elders or others. Little things like teaching a class now rather than delaying it until a time when everything is more convenient for me. Little things like stepping forward to be baptized instead of putting it off, or acknowledging our own wrongdoing instead of blaming another. Even a little thing like setting my schedule so I can attend and support the conference next week or any other effort the church makes to reach out or do God's will.

Little things can mean the difference in the long tumbling run of life between "sticking" that landing on one's feet, or hitting the mat as a loser in this "Christian" exercise. Don't ever let yourself believe that little things don't count. No one is going to want to come "two inches" short on judgment day.

Carl McMurray