

Title: "What Comparison Shall we Compare it?"

Scripture: Mark 4:30-34

Speaker: Vic Redding

Event: Sunday Morning Service

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Mark 4:30-34 "And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? 31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: 32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. 33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. 34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

It was once said that "great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together." In this parable, Jesus is using an example of something that starts small, but grows big. Gardens don't just instantly appear fully grown. It takes time and nurturing in order for the plants to grow. In the right situations, certain things will take place.

The kingdom of God began in a humble and insignificant way. It wasn't instantaneously that the church began. First the seed was sown. Then it progressed and developed branches. Jesus wasn't talking simply about a tiny seed. The spiritual truths are much deeper than that. Jesus wasn't very popular with the religious crowd. When the leaders confronted him regarding the things of God they said in John 9:29 "We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."

Look at the men that Jesus called – fishermen. Matthew was a tax collector. Jesus said to them in Mark 16:15 "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*" God's mustard seed, the church, would grow due to the calling of men and women who would bear the message of God in their hearts.

God would use a man like the apostle Paul to carry the message. I Corinthians 1:17-18 "*For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*" Paul also said in I Corinthians 2:1-3 he said "*And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:*"

God used a man named Charles H. Spurgeon to carry the message. God used a message in a small, primitive Methodist church to call Charles Spurgeon to be saved. He never attended a theological school although he started one. Charles Spurgeon knew that God would equip him to do what he needed to do. He preached to thousands. It is said that crowds would be there and they would have to rotate the crowds in and out because they couldn't all fit at once. His church members were in rooms praying during the services that God would anoint him. He once said to his grandfather: "You can preach the gospel better than me, but you can't preach a better gospel."

God used a man named D.L. Moody to carry the message. D.L. Moody never went above the 5th grade. He couldn't spell words and they said his grammar was atrocious. He couldn't speak the King's English. On April 21st, 1855 while he was working in a shoe store, his Sunday School teacher became so burdened for him that he visited him and the store and led him to the Lord that day. He would invite children, prostitutes, homeless, drunks, and anyone else that he knew needed to hear the gospel. His passion came from accepting Christ. He wanted to see everyone saved. It was said that

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approximately 1 million people came to the Lord during his services. He once said: "there are many of us that are willing to do great things for the Lord, but few of us are willing to do the little things."

God used a man named David Brainerd to carry the message. At the age of 19 while he was working on a farm, God began to deal with him about bringing the lost to God. He was led to preach to the Native Americans in Delaware. He didn't know the language but God sent him an interpreter who was a drunk. David Brainerd worked himself to death for the things of Christ. He would spend hours on horseback in order to reach the souls that were lost. After doing his Bible reading and saying his prayers right before he died, he said: "It was delightful to *give myself away* to God, to be disposed of at his pleasure. I had some feeling sense of the *sweetness* of being a pilgrim on earth." He counted it a pleasure to serve the Lord.

God used a man named Leonard Ravenhill to carry the message. He wrote "Why Revival Tarryes." He was born in 1907 in the UK and moved to America. A.W. Tozer said about him "he insists on being a Christian all the time and everywhere." What would happen if we were to get so convicted over Christ that we lived for him constantly? In the house, out to eat, at the store, etc.? One of the best testimonies of your Christian life will be found in your own house. David Ravenhill, Leonard's son said, "My father lived daily in the light of eternity always seeking to please the one who enlisted him as a soldier for Jesus Christ. Before my father stood in the pulpit, he knelt before God." Before God can use anyone, they need to kneel. He held tent revivals and taught that churches should compare themselves to the churches in the book of Acts to see how to hold themselves. People need a relationship with Jesus Christ. They need more than a membership. They need to know him personally. He said "The early church was married to poverty, prisons and persecutions. Today, the church is married to prosperity, personality, and popularity."

God used a man named William "Billy" Franklin Graham to carry the message. He was raised working on a farm. He was saved at a revival meeting held by Mordecai Ham. Billy Graham preached a revival that was supposed to last one week and ended up being five weeks. TIME magazine named him as the Pope of Protestant America. He has preached to millions of people in over 185 countries. His last public sermon was titled "My Home for America." Our country is in a great need for spiritual awakening. I have wept as I've gone from city to city. I've seen how far people have wandered from God."

The church made it from something insignificant because God used them in significant ways. The men and women before us said nothing matters except for God. Today everything matters but God. We should hope that God would take a little crowd of people from generation to generation and expand it over and over so that everyone can hear or know about the Gospel. God can expand our knowledge just like the grain of a mustard seed. We are some of that branch. We need to continue to spread the gospel and grow. What will our generation do to the gospel? Will we water it down? Destroy it? Will we expand it? Matthew 9:35-38 said "*And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. 36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*"

1. Will you and I see the multitudes? Will we see the lost, those who are bound for hell?
2. When we see them, do we have compassion?