

SERMON SERIES: OVERCOMER
SERMON: THE SMALL, THE COMMON, THE FEW
6-30-19
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OPENER:

GOD LOVES TO USE SMALL THINGS.
GOD DELIGHTS IN USING COMMON,
INSIGNIFICANT THINGS.
GOD ACCOMPLISHES GREAT THINGS WITH ONLY A FEW.

God delights in using small things. In fact, it is his preferred way. To be an overcomer, we need to understand how great power can come from small things, common, every day things. Things that we take for granted.

1. SMALL THINGS

Zechariah 4:10, (NIV) "Who has despised the day of small things?"

• A SEED

Matthew 17:20 (NLT)Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."

mustard seed= one of the smallest seeds around but grows into a 20' tree

We know now there are objects tinier. But it's rare to encounter anything significantly smaller than a mustard seed. If one does find something smaller, it is likely to be a grain of sand or a speck of dust.

#1-JESUS IS TELLING US THAT EVEN A LITTLE FAITH CAN DO GREAT THINGS.

He is using the analogy of a mustard seed to a mountain to show us how potent faith is.

#2-JUST LIKE A SEED, WHEN FAITH TOUCHES SOMETHING IT PRODUCES RESULTS AT AN EXPONENTIAL RATE.

Note: Faith is exponential

The basic idea behind exponential growth is doubling: one doubles to two, two doubles to four, four to eight, and so on. At first, it doesn't seem that impressive, but after just ten iterations we're over 1,000 copies, and in twenty iterations we exceed 1,000,000 copies. If the cells of a mustard plant are doubling, we can

begin to see how that one tiny cell can produce something so big in a short period of time.

We don't commonly witness exponential. Most things that we make, grow linearly. As children, before we can even speak, we can stack one block on top of another on top of another. Pretty soon we have a nice tower, but it can only grow one block at a time. We write one word at a time, we walk one step at a time, we score goals one at a time—all the ways we can mark our progress are done on a linear level.

#3-JUST LIKE A SEED, TRUE FAITH MUST BE PLANTED

IN ORDER FOR THE MOUNTAIN TO BE DEFEATED - FAITH MUST FIRST BE PLANTED.

THERE IS NO FAITH IF THERE IS NOTHING PLANTED.

James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

ILLUSTRATION: APPLE

To get a better understanding I am going to take this apple, cut it open, and take out the seeds. There are seeds in my apple. Now, imagine that we planted these seeds and each grew into an apple tree. How many apples do you think each tree might grow/produce? Fifty? A hundred? Two hundred? I read that an apple tree can produce from 150 to 300 apples each year and that an apple tree will produce apples for about fifty years. 15,000 apples from one seed. Just think how many apples that is! It isn't hard to see how we have enough apples to feed the entire world.

FAITH WHEN PLANTED IS POWERFUL!

- **A LUNCH**

The lunch of a young boy feeds 15,000 people. That would be like this Chik-fil-A lunch feeding half of the population of Ardmore.

He could have said if I give you my lunch I'll have nothing to eat. It's my lunch. I'll do without. Whose going to take care of me?

WE PRAY FOR GOD'S BLESSING BUT WE NEVER GIVE ANYTHING TO GOD TO BLESS.

Our selfishness keeps us from witnessing mighty miracles, because we won't let go and put some things into the hands of God.

- **A STONE**

Stone came from the brook in the Valley of Elah in Israel where David faced Goliath.

Goliath, the giant from Gath. The Philistines' mighty warrior. Stood 9 1/2 feet tall.

The Bible says David took 5 stones and his sling to face him head on. He put the first stone in his sling and he shot it toward the giant Goliath. It hit him in the head and he fell to the ground.

**WHAT A SMALL THING THIS STONE IS.
BUT A POWERFUL THING WHEN USED IN FAITH AGAINST THE ENEMY.**

What small, insignificant thing can you use to defeat the enemy?

DO YOU DESPISE THE VERY THING THAT COULD BRING YOU VICTORY?

2. SMALL GIFTS

- **STORY OF THE THREE SERVANTS**
(Tell Story)

Matthew 25:29 To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.

**GOD GIVES US GIFTS TO USE.
NOT TO HIDE THEM.
NOT TO KEEP THEM TO OURSELVES.**

**IF WE DO NOT USE WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN US FOR HIM EVEN WHAT WE HAVE
WILL BE TAKEN AWAY.**

What gift or talent or ability has God given you?

Are you using it? Have you put it to work in the Kingdom of God? Are you investing it for Him?

3. COMMON THINGS

- **A STAFF**

Exodus 4:1- 4 But Moses protested again, "What if they won't believe me or listen to me? What if they say, 'The Lord never appeared to you'?" Then the Lord asked him, "What is that in your hand?" "A shepherd's staff," Moses replied. "Throw it down on the ground," the Lord told him. So Moses threw down the staff, and it turned into a snake! Moses jumped back. Then the Lord told him, "Reach

out and grab its tail.” So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it turned back into a shepherd’s staff in his hand.

When Moses questioned God....God asked WHAT IS THAT IN YOUR HAND? He said, “It’s just my staff.”

**THAT THING THAT IS SO COMMON TO YOU.
THAT THING THAT YOU TAKE FOR GRANTED IS THE VERY THING THAT GOD
WILL USE TO BRING GLORY TO HIM.**

> When Moses wanted to bring the plagues on the people he had only to stretch out his staff, and they covered the land.

> He stretched out his staff and the water was turned into blood.

>When the people came to the Red Sea and they wanted to go across, he had only to lift up his staff and the waters separated, so that the people could pass through dry-shod.

>When they were in the desert and wanted water to drink, again he lifted this rod and struck the flinty rock, when the water burst forth, and they drank and were refreshed. That contemptible rod became mighty indeed. But it was not the rod; it was the God of Moses, who condescended to use it.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN YOUR HAND?

GOD ASKS US TO USE WHAT WE HAVE - NOT WHAT WE DON'T HAVE.

4. SMALL MOMENTS

**MOUNTAINS ARE MADE OF MANY GRAINS OF SAND AND LIFETIMES ARE MADE
OF MANY LITTLE MOMENTS.**

WHEN WE WASTE OUR MOMENTS, WE WASTE OUR LIVES.

Ecclesiastes 10:18 Laziness leads to a sagging roof; idleness leads to a leaky house.

Proverbs 19:15 Lazy people sleep soundly, but idleness leaves them hungry.

The Bible is showing us that those who use their time well -do well and are blessed. Those who don't use their time don't do well.

ILLUSTRATION:

How important is time? In the Olympics, a fraction of a second can be the difference between victory and third place.

**A LITTLE BIT OF TIME CAN BE A POWERFUL THING.
WE NEED TO USE OUR TIME WISELY.**

**YOUR ONE ACT OF OBEDIENCE WILL DETERMINE TEN THOUSAND THINGS
ABOUT THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.**

5. SMALL PEOPLE

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 **26**Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. **27**Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. **28**God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. **29**As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

**WRITE IT DOWN IN BIG LETTERS.
GOD LIKES TO USE NOTHINGS AND NOBODIES.**

ILLUSTRATION:

If God can take a 16-year-old farm boy from the North Carolina dairy, one who had done nothing to that point to distinguish himself, and make a Billy Graham out of him, He can do something with you and me.

The next world-changer may be the small child in your class on Sunday morning. You cannot look at a child and see his future.

**ANYONE CAN LOOK AT AN APPLE AND
COUNT THE SEEDS.
ONLY GOD CAN LOOK AT THE SEED AND COUNT THE APPLES.**

We no longer have an excuse for not giving our lives and our gifts, our talents, our time to Him.

We cannot hide behind the excuse..... "Well, I am a nobody," "I don't have anything He would want," "I can't sing," "I can't preach," or "I can't go and share my faith."

**WE NEED TO QUIT TELLING GOD WHY IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA TO SHARE OUR
FAITH.**

**WHY WE ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO BE USED BY HIM.
WHY WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH RESOURCES.**

**WE NEED TO QUIT THINKING THAT OUR FAITH IS TOO SMALL.
OUR FEARS ARE TOO MANY AND JUST DO WHAT HE IS ASKING US TO DO.**

**NO ONE BUT GOD KNOWS WHAT GREAT THING CAN COME FROM THE SEED
OF OUR OBEDIENCE.**

SMALLNESS BECOMES GREATNESS IN THE HANDS OF GOD.

God loves to do the surprising thing and pluck a nobody from obscurity and elevate him/her to great effectiveness in the Kingdom.

ILLUSTRATION:

When Gabriel told the teenage Mary of God's plans for her, he had to strengthen her faith.

He said, "*For with God nothing will be impossible.*" (Luke 1:37)

You're trying to decide to do something God has placed in front of you. It's tough...

- Should you volunteer to teach that class? You aren't a natural teacher and the task would be enormous until you got the hang of it. But you could be a real influence on that class of boys or those young ladies.
- Should you not make that luxury purchase and give that offering to the needy family in the church whose father just lost his job?
- Should you obey the Lord no matter the cost and inconvenience?
- Should you give your small offering even though you know it's only a drop in the bucket toward the actual goal?
- Should you go next door and reach out to your your neighbor even though he has shown no interest in going to church with you in previous years?

6. SMALL NUMBERS

Gideon defeated the Midianite army of 135,000 with 300 men and no weapons.

Jesus revolutionized the entire world with only 12 disciples.

IT ONLY TAKES THE FEW.