

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

The Greatness of God

Mark 4:30-32

As you enter your time with God today, take a moment to quiet your mind. Breathe this prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, come. Fill me with your Spirit. Open my heart that you might share your words of life with me."

We read today from Genesis 1:24-25. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What does this passage teach us about the greatness of God?

A few years ago, I was outside with Kristin doing some trimming on our bougainvillea vines. If you are not familiar, they are flowering vines that show color most of the year. The vines also come with thorns which were helpful in our case because we used the vines to protect our fence from getting destroyed by our dog Shadow. This simply meant that Shadow destroyed other parts of our fence...but I digress.

Because of the thorns, I was using gloves to stuff the trimmings into our yard waste bin. I was wearing shoes and socks, but at one point, a thorn went through the sole of my shoe and pierced my foot just enough for me to yelp, jump back, and say some choice words in the depths of my brain. Later, I checked my foot for damage. There was a mark, but I didn't see that any part of the thorn remained. A little Neosporin and I was all good...at least for a couple of days.

Then my foot started to get tender in that spot. I kept checking, but I couldn't see anything that would cause an infection. I kept cleaning it and using antibiotic cream. Despite that, my foot continued to hurt, and I started to limp when I walked because I could not walk on that sole.

Finally, I decided to really go after the problem. I got my hiking knife which has a very sharp point, sterilized it, and began to probe into the affected spot. I started to cut. Nothing. A little deeper. Nothing. Then after going deeper into the cut, the blade came out with a little dark spot of 'dirt' on it. The point of the thorn had broken off and lodged in my foot causing an infection. The cut to discover the thorn hurt like crazy, but the relief was immediate. Within hours the infection was less, the swelling was down, and the pain was gone. One little speck in the wrong spot and life was not fun. Upon its removal, relief returned.

Even more than the wrong 'speck' in the wrong spot doing great damage, the right 'speck' in the right spot can bring immeasurable beauty, light, and joy.

"Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

A mustard seed is in fact a speck. It could easily get stuck in one of the creases of your hand and you would miss it, even if you looked right at it. The mustard bush (we had some growing wild on a road near our house as a kid) is big. I remember them being 20 feet across and covered in tiny yellow flowers at the right time of year. Everything about that big bush was 'imprinted' and came from that tiny speck.

What Christ speaks of his kingdom here is shown to be true in the work that he has already done through the 'seeds' of his people. We see the 'bushes from those seeds today.

How many hospitals, clinics, and movements for public health and well-being have begun with a seed of love from one believer who wanted to share Christ's love with their community? Dive into the history of many hospitals and you quickly run into people of faith at the start.

Movements for providing resources for people who live on the street have often begun with one person in one park who wanted to show Christ's love to the people who seemed to have no hope. The reason many "rescue missions" carry the name they do is because they were started by churches, believers, or parachurch organizations. HomeBoy and HomeGirl ministries, CarePortal, and the LA Dream Center are all such 'mustard seed' organizations.

Schools, colleges, and universities have often started by addressing the needs of those facing the barriers of poverty because of a lack of education. These institutions started with one person having an idea to follow Christ into helping other people learn. They talked to someone else, and the two believers started the movement. Harvard, Yale, Pepperdine, Baylor, Brown, and even the University of Redlands started with a speck of faithfulness that grew to be a bush bearing the fruit of Christ's harvest.

So many big movements that bring light, joy, and hope to our world began with little speck of faith in a follower of Jesus. But so have many smaller, "little bushes" of the kingdom started with faith. Neighborhood support groups, community Bible Studies, weekly city prayer breakfasts have started with one person who held a speck of faith in their hand planted by the Spirit. They asked the question, "What if...?" and God did his work. Each of these little plants in God's kingdom bear fruit for the world to be changed. Each little thought or idea became something else when God's power was shown through faith. And each in its own way has changed the world.

What speck has Christ given to you? What little thought, little idea, little calling have you been given that can grow through the Spirit's water and the light of Christ to be a flowering, spreading plant in God's kingdom? You may not think it's much, but it's not about what we think.

God's kingdom is always about his plan, and his glory. In Christ, we are more capable of seeing abundant fruit through his work than we can possibly imagine.

It all begins with the faith to plant to the seed.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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