



ACORNS DEVOTIONAL

GENESIS 1:29

“Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit.”

“Within our faith there lies glory, even as the oak sleeps within the acorn.”¹ -Charles Spurgeon

EXPERIENCE

Crack, crack, crack! The sound of acorns falling and hitting rocks below is a jarring sound amidst the stillness of the woods. My walk home from the camp office on October afternoons can feel like a game of dodge ball against oak trees. I try to duck and dodge these small falling projectiles, because a well-placed acorn on the top of the head stings! I take out my frustration by stomping on the acorns, crushing them between the pavement and my foot. Crack, crack, crack! They sound off as I step on them in quick succession.

¹ <http://www.spurgeongems.org/sermon/chs2055.pdf>

By late October, the acorns will be a beautiful, deep brown. I love their texture. I will often pick one up and carry it with me for a few moments, working it around in my hand and then testing my aim as I throw it at a tree close-by. In my better moments, I follow the lead of the founder of our summer camp who collects the acorns from the pavement in a bucket and then scatters them in places around property where they might grow. I sometimes wonder if the squirrels get a little frustrated by this large two-legged forager who steals all their food and carries it off. However, someday people will be enjoying the shade of a giant oak tree because of our founder's foresight and care for creation.

CONTEMPLATION

“Someday”—think with me for a moment about someday! Someday, I hope that people will be enjoying the shade and the fruit of my faith because of foresight and constant care for my relationship with Christ Jesus. To a degree my life is fruitful right now, but just like oak branches yearn and stretch upward towards the sun's light, I long to grow stronger, deeper, wider, and more fruitful in my faith.

For an oak tree, it all starts with a small little seed tucked inside the shell of an acorn. The acorn is an emblem of unseen potential, it speaks of dormant faith and future fruitfulness. Charles Spurgeon



said, “the oak sleeps within the acorn.” The acorn must first fall from the tree, it must find good soil, it must receive the nutrients of water, sun, and soil to grow. The seed of an acorn does not grow fast, but it grows steadily, and it grows strong. An oak tree is one of the slowest growing trees, but that is the secret to its size, strength, and longevity.

This process for the acorn is not unlike our faith. Faith does not grow fast either. Our faith was born through death, through finding the good soil of fellowship with believers, receiving the nutrients of God's Word, and years of slow and steady growth.

When I pick up an acorn, I cannot help thinking of the latent power of faith and of my faith's beginnings. I was spiritually born because of death, the death of Christ first and foremost, but also because of a camp counselor named Rick, who died to himself and gave of himself for the needs of 4th grade boys who needed to hear the gospel. Out of death grows life. How did someone dying to themselves precede and contribute to your own spiritual birth?

One interesting fact about acorns is that unlike so many other seeds that blow in the wind, an acorn must be carried away from where it falls by animals (or camp directors). It is often squirrels that make it possible for the seed of an oak to find its way to good soil. More often than not, an acorn relies upon others to find good soil. Who were the people who helped you find good soil for your faith? Furthermore, who are the people that you are helping to find the nutrients from God's Word so that they might grow? Helping acorns find good soil so that they might grow into big, strong, fruitful oak trees is important kingdom work.

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, acorns cause me to contemplate the beginnings of, growth of, and the potential of faith. I have so much to be thankful for when I think of how my faith was born. I give you thanks for your grace and for the Holy Spirit. I give you thanks for people who died to themselves to share their faith with me. I give

you thanks for the good soil of the local church where my roots began to grow and still are growing. I give you thanks for all the people who have nurtured my faith by speaking God's Word into my life. O Lord, help me to grow steadily and strong in faith. I long for my faith to be increasingly strong and fruitful. I long to be a believer whose faith is a great blessing to others' faith. I long to help others find good soil so that they might grow strong and fruitful. I ask this in Christ's name and for His Kingdom's sake. Amen.

CONFIRMATION

Acorns are not mentioned in the Scriptures. However, oak trees are mentioned multiple times and are known for their strength. In her book, *All the Plants of the Bible*, botanical artist Winifred Walker explains that the ancients all viewed the oak as a symbol of strength and long life.² The Jewish people were familiar with acorns as the "fruit" of oak trees (Gen 1:29). According to botany professor Lytton John Musselman, "the acorns of . . . the oaks that are common in [the area surrounding Israel], are edible In some regions, acorns were an important food source because of their high starch content and storability."³ The above meditation contemplates the truths spoken through these seeds of the oak tree.

Jesus appears to have spent a good bit of time thinking about the seeds of another tree, the mustard tree. In all three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), he mentions the seed of a mustard tree multiple times. Jesus relates this seed to the kingdom of God and to faith. The seeds of trees (mustard, oak, or otherwise) is an emblem of the potential of faith, the latent power of faith to become fruitful. A

² Winifred Walker, *All the Plants of the Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1979), 134.

³ Lytton John Musselman, *Figs, Dates, and Myrrh: Plants of the Bible and the Quran* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 2007), 206-207.

seed, in itself, is not strong or fruitful. However, if a seed grows it possesses powerful potential. Likewise, a believer's faith possesses powerful potential to bless others and to glorify God. A vibrant and growing faith will become increasingly strong and fruitful.



Charles Spurgeon

FROM SERMON #2055 - "THE TRIAL OF YOUR FAITH"

"If you have faith, you have infinitely more than he who has all the world, and yet is destitute of faith. To him that believes it is said, "All things are yours." Faith is the assurance of sonship, the pledge of inheritance, the grasp of boundless

possession, the perception of the invisible. Within your faith there lies glory, even as the oak sleeps within the acorn. If you have faith, you need not ask for much more, save that your faith may grow exceedingly, and that all the promises which are made to it may be known and grasped by you."⁴

In another sermon entitled, *Small Things Not to be Despised*, Spurgeon wrote: "It is a very great folly to despise 'the day of small things,' for it is usually God's way to begin His great works with small things. . . . How tiny is the seed that is sown in the garden, yet out of it there comes the lovely flower! How small is the acorn, but how great is the oak that grows up from it!"⁵

⁴ <http://www.spurgeongems.org/sermon/chs2055.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.spurgeongems.org/sermon/chs2601.pdf>