

The Force of Faith

It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a tree, and birds come and make nests in its branches.

Matthew 13:32

There is strength in smallness. It only takes a spark to get a fire going. A small rudder steers a large boat. One idea can spur an individual to change the world. And faith, regardless of its size, can change a desperate crisis into a hope-filled event.

Jesus' parable about a mustard seed is a parable about smallness effecting greatness. The mustard seed was known for its smallness. In fact, the term was proverbial for smallness. The mustard plant was an herb. There was a particular variety of mustard plant in Palestine in Jesus' day that grew rapidly from a minute seed into a bush and then into a tree. Mustard seeds were so small, the naked eye could barely see them. Yet the result was a strong-branched growth in which birds could not only perch but also build nests.

How often have you said when you felt like giving up, "I wish I had more faith?" Or, how do you respond when you are going through a difficult situation and someone says, "You need more faith?"

According to this parable, more faith is not needed. The issue is not the size of your faith but the object of your faith. Faith needs to be directed toward God. Even the smallest amount of faith can lead you to a strong finish.

In 1972, NASA launched the exploratory space probe Pioneer 10. The satellite's primary mission was to reach Jupiter and complete a life span of three years. Remarkably, by 1997, twenty-five years after its launch and more than six billion

miles from the sun, Pioneer 10 was still beaming back radio signals to scientists on Earth from an 8-watt transmitter, which radiates about as much power as a bedroom night light.

The seed of faith planted within us is like that tiny 8-watt transmitter. We can keep going and going and going. God has implanted with us all the faith we need. As long as we keep our heart focused on him, God can work.