

God is not Finished with Us Yet!  
Matthew 13:31-32

One of the great truths of scripture is that God is always desiring to do great things for us and in us. He desires to do great things because He has a great love for us. Just how great is that love God has for us? The psalmist tries to answer that question in Psalms 103:11- *“As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His loving kindness towards those who honor and worship Him.”* I am not an astronomer, I would like to be but I am not an astronomer. Yet I do know that when we start talking about the expanse of the universe, we are talking infinity. We are talking about something that is beyond measure. The measurements we do know is that scientists believe is that the length of the known universe is about 93 billion light years. That doesn't sound real overwhelming until you learn that a light year, the length light travels in one year is 6 trillion miles. You do the math, 6 trillion times 93 billion. My calculator doesn't have that many zeroes available. I will ask Siri.

The point is that His love for us is beyond measure. It is infinite. To say that His love for us is huge is a great big understatement. Yet, this is one of the foundational truths of scripture is that God IS love. We will come back to this in more detail in my sermon series, “What has love Got to Do with It.”

It is out of that love that God desires to bless us. *“If my people, who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.”*

In other words, God is more ready and willing to be bless us and bring healing and wholeness to His people. Now, one of the blessings God has given to us is that we live in a nation where if we can dream it, then

through our trust in God, through prayer for strength, guidance, and blessing and by putting feet in our prayers, He can do it. As I have studied God at work in the history of our world and as I think of what God is doing in my own life, I have found a common truth that comes out of that love He has for us. When God begins something, it starts out small. In whatever God seeks to do it usually starts out like a tiny mustard seed, and it begins to grow and it grows, and it grows, and it continues to grow.

-Look at the birth of our nation. We are considered by all of humanity the greatest nation on the face of this earth. This is held to be true by those who seek to destroy us. I believe that is one reason why they hate us. They are jealous of the greatness we have as a nation. Yet look at our beginnings. The year was 1620. A small ship, about the a third of the size of a football field, transported 102 English pilgrims to America to begin colonizing it. Now here we are today, over 300 million Americans.

-I think back on the history of this church. When I came to Cartersville in June of 1983 there was just a small number of families, about 10-12 families that were ready to take the step of faith and start a new church here in our community. There was no property, no building, just a dream. Today I can't help but thank God for the countless number of lives that have been touched by God and transformed by Him through the ministry of His church, the Trinity UMC

Now I want you to think of something even greater, MUCH, MUCH greater than this church in which we worship and this nation in which we live. I want you to think of a tiny new born baby, born in a small little insignificant town called Bethlehem. That tiny baby would be called Wonderful, Counselor, Everlasting God, Prince of Peace. His name is Jesus, Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Think of the small group of people who would follow Him. That small group would soon bear the name of Christian. They would meet together for prayer, for the study of God's Word, for fellowship, for worship. They would pray for guidance, for power, and that God would reach the world through them. That little group would trust God, and they experienced hardships, trials, persecution, and they put their feet in their prayers and that little group would grow, and grow, and grow, and grow. Today it is estimated that there are now over 2.1 billion Christians which is about a 1/3 of the world's population.

Listen, and please listen to what I am about to say, and write it down. Memorize it and don't forget it.

"Be confident in this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 1:6)

Now please listen. God is going to finish what He started. When He starts something it usually is not finished by the next day. It doesn't happen overnight. It takes time. He plants the seed of change, he works the seed. He waters it with His blessings. He empowers it with the sunshine of His love and grace. It grows, slowly, but surely it grows and it develops. It grows according to God's timing. It is His work, not ours, and He nurtures the development according to His plan and not ours.

I believe this is one reason why He gave this parable. He wanted His listeners to understand that this is how God works. He wanted us to understand this because He knew that we humans have the tendency to become impatient with His work. We ask God to do something big in our life, in our children, in our partner, or in some person that we love. We ask Him to do a great work in our church and we pray over it, we commit it to God, we ask God to bless a need, we ask for His strength and power, and we put feet in our prayers, yet He doesn't work according to our schedule like we would want Him to. Our time frame is

now. He acts and works on His time frame. The problem with us is that we become impatient. We want God to speed it up. The danger in this is that we lose sight of whose doing the work and we end up giving up, quitting, throwing the towel in. "God I need this, and I need it now! God you need to change this." Progress becomes difficult. Change is slow. Impatience sets in and impatience breeds discouragement. We become negative. We begin to complain. Sometimes we turn those feelings inward. Maybe if I had more faith. My faith just isn't big enough.

The negative thoughts and feelings begins to drain our energy and our bad mood begins to affect others and they, too, become negative and want to quit and give up.

God made us and He knows our weaknesses. Jesus knows this about us so He tells us about the mustard seed, a tiny minuscule object that the eye can barely see, but a seed that when planted will eventually bring about tremendous growth and change.

I want you to take a moment and think of the people, the problems and challenges you are facing that have caused you to become discouraged. What is going to bring change to these people and situations is not the size of your faith. Jesus is saying that the size of your faith has nothing more to make the needed changes that a light switch has in brightening a darkened room. We flip the switch, the electricity does the rest. We pray and we trust God. We put feet in our prayers, but the growth belongs to God, not us. What He wants to do is not dependent on us.

Just over 2000 years ago Jesus climbed a hill called Calvary and there he died for the sins of humanity. Three days later He would walk out of a tomb and a mustard seed was planted. A ministry would be launched that now encompasses the world. Don't quit. Don't give up on Him. Don't throw in the towel. The seed has been planted. It is growing!