

The Day of Small Things

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Date: 16 January 2022

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[0 : 00] Father, we confess that sometimes because the things that you offer for us seem very small, that we don't think they're very powerful or very important, and we just sort of disregard them.

Father, we confess that this is a mistake on our part. We ask, Father, that you help us not to despise the small things that you offer and the small things that you give us, but to recognize them, Father, as means of grace that will grow and flourish into something, well, glorious.

We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would prepare our hearts and minds and lives to receive your word this morning. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.

Please be seated. Thank you.

True or not, I mean, I have no idea that that, I guess, might or might not eventually come out. But generally speaking, we don't like the idea that we can be under surveillance all of the time. If you read, if you see a movie where there is people are always under surveillance, generally speaking, we see that as an evil thing.

[1 : 39] If we read a novel that has somebody always under surveillance, we tend to see that as an evil thing, not as a good thing. Occasionally we might see it as a good thing.

But generally, if we have a society where everything is being observed by somebody all of the time, we find that as going against our rights, the dignity of us as a human being.

So there's a bit of a puzzle. I don't know how many of you are paying very close attention. I'm not judging or anything like that. But in the gospel text, which I just read, it seemed to say that God keeps us under constant surveillance.

So the question is, why is it that it's bad for the state but good for God? And why is it that Christians actually would even, like, why would we even want a God that constantly keeps us under surveillance?

So we're going to look at this. And actually, it might sound like a very, very oppressive idea. And a lot of us resent this idea and hope it's not true.

[2 : 40] But actually, if we press into it and look at how it's talked about, it's actually profoundly good news. So if you take your Bibles and turn with me to Mark chapter 4, verse 21, we'll look at this and other ideas connected to it.

If you're online with us for the first time, we preach through books of the Bible and we're going through the book of Mark. Sort of we're calling the series Jesus is King with a bit of a nod to Kanye West.

And so what's just gone on before this is Jesus has sort of talked about two things. One of them is, why is it that God is sort of a, both reveals himself but is also hidden, which I talked about more last week.

I'll talk about it a little bit today. And a famous parable in Christian circles called the parable of the sower. And that's what's just happened. And now the story continues with verse 21.

And it goes like this. And Jesus said to them, actually, what I should just back up and say, what we're going to get today is we're going to look like at a couple of, in a sense, sayings or proverbs or aphorisms.

[3 : 50] And then two parables. So these are a couple of sort of like proverbs or sayings that comes first. Verse 21. Now just pause because it's going to continue.

The rest of the sort of the insight about that's going to continue. Generally speaking, the Bible is translated very, very well into English. But sometimes, some of you here, I know there's at least one person in the room who knows four languages.

Many of you know two or three. And you know that sometimes when you translate from one language into another, there's a bit of a problem sometimes that the sense of the original doesn't

translate very well into the second language.

And this is one of those verses where it is. And so I'm going to mention it because it's sort of like what's translated is good, but it's actually even more powerful if you hear it in the literal sense. And what and the issue is, is that in the original language, sorry, a bit of a grammar moment. But in the original language, in the text, if you look at the text again, is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand.

[5 : 09] And in the text, it's talking about an object and somebody or something is, somebody is bringing the lamp in and all. But in the original language, the lamp is the subject.

And on top of that, in the original language, the grammar implies that the lamp is a person, not an object.

And so it would really be better if it's translated. So more literally, it says this. Does the lamp come in in order that it might be placed under the bowl or under the bed?

Does the lamp come in in order, and it should really almost be in order that he might be placed under the bowl or under the bed? And you can see how that's sort of just a bit awkward in English. But that's what it's actually saying. And so that's the image. It's actually, for those of you who know the Bible at all well, it's very similar in John chapter 1, 1 to 14.

[6 : 09] And we've been at church over Christmas, and it talks about the light. You know, the word is the light, and the light comes into the world, and the light, the darkness tries to overcome it, but the light, you know, reveals. It's the same idea as John chapter 1, 1 to 14, only put in the words of this little aphorism or proverb.

So, you know, so does the lamp come in in order to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand? And then it goes on, for nothing, verse 22, for nothing is hidden except to be made manifest, nor is anything secret except to come to light.

If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. So anything hidden except to be made manifest, in other words, to be able to be seen, and any secret will eventually come to light.

And you can see that this, well, here, actually, if you could put up the first point, here's the first point. The true and greater light has been revealed, will be fully revealed, and will fully reveal all things.

The true and greater light has been revealed, that's Jesus, will be fully revealed, that is, when he comes again in glory, or when we see him face to face.

[7 : 27] And will fully reveal all things. So, I mean, that's, in fact, actually, this is one of the doctrines, one of the things which separates the Christian worldview from basically how most Canadians think.

This idea that there's absolutely nothing, that every second, every thought, every imagination, every desire, every word, every action is seen by God, with no exception.

There's absolutely nothing which is secret. He sees all. Now, for most Canadians, and probably for most of us, I mean, part of the problem for us as Christians is we don't really live most of our lives as if that's the case.

We often still function as if we get away with keeping things hidden from God, that we can do things in secret without him seeing it. But this is a Christian doctrine, and I have to confess, it does sound like a very frightening doctrine or idea, and something which almost seems a bit oppressive.

And if, in fact, the gospel just ended with this, we'd probably have, you know, probably would be pretty reasonable to find this emotionally repulsive and not very helpful.

[8 : 55] But Jesus says this in the context of this larger story of the gospel. And what we see by the time the gospel comes to an end is that the light, the true and greater light, dies for human beings like you and me, who are a mixture of light and darkness.

That's one of the ways that the gospel of John describes us, that every human being is a mixture of light and darkness. Some human beings, you can see a fair amount of light, some very little.

Some human beings, you see an awful lot of darkness and some very little. I mean, the Bible also say that ultimately no light that we see in any human being ultimately comes from the human being. It comes from God.

Human beings are mirrors in that sense. We reflect back the light of God rather than our source of light ourselves. But the Bible ends up finishing the story by making it very, very clear that when you come to Mark chapter 15, what you see is the darkness swallowing the light.

And in a sense, what you see there is that lies have swallowed the light. Injustice has swallowed the light. Envy and pride and greed has swallowed the light.

[10:13] Insecurity has swallowed the light. Imperial power has swallowed the light. Religion has swallowed the light. And chapter 15 ends with the darkness having swallowed the light.

But chapter 16 reveals this mystery. That out of God's love for us, that the true light that sees every single thing there is to know about human beings, willingly, even though the true light knew every single thing about you, including the darkness in your life that you have not yet come to recognize or understand, that seeing all of that, the true light died for you.

And the true light was swallowed with darkness so that the true light could swallow darkness. That that's how the true light defeats the darkness.

So it looks at the end of chapter 15 as if the darkness has swallowed the true light. But by the end of chapter 16, you understand that the true light was swallowed by darkness so that the true light could swallow darkness.

And that in fact, this is actually the most profound description of love. This is actually the most profound description of love.

[11:34] We all keep things away from other people. I mean, we all don't express all of our thoughts and judgments and prejudices and hatreds and pettiness and greed and envy.

Like we keep that from them. We keep how we maybe are in a crowd and we evaluate the type of shoes that people have or how their clothes match or whether they're well-groomed or whether they're good-looking or bad-looking or whether they look stupid or foolish.

Like we hide those things all of the time. And we worry if all of a sudden, if even for a day, our loved one, our family member or our close friends, we're actually able to be privy, actually we're able to understand and hear every one of our judgments that we make throughout the day where we all actually probably would believe that we wouldn't have a friend at the end of the day and that our marriage might be at an end at the end of the day, that our family would have broken up at the end of the day, that we sort of believe that to maintain love, we have to maintain privacy and secrecy.

In fact, that's not even counting the fact that some of us just so easily and effortlessly make judgments about people that we don't even recognize that we're doing it.

We don't even recognize the fact that we go through the mall or go through some other place, making judgment after judgment after judgment. And we've just become so part of our inner life that we don't realize that we're doing it.

[13:07] And it might be that all of a sudden, even me saying something like this, we realize, well, actually I do do that. And if even for only 24 hours that was completely revealed to our loved ones, they wouldn't love us. Because we see that our evil, our darkness, is a barrier to love.

And so this small little saying of Jesus, obviously referring to himself, actually shows like a type of love that's almost incomprehensible to us.

like a perfect love, like a love that would actually die for the darkness, yet has a perfect, clear-sighted, clear-eyed knowledge of the darkness in each one of us.

And yet he chose to die for you and for me. Now, some of us might actually say, well, there's a bit of a pushback to all of this, and say, well, okay, George, that's good, I guess.

But, George, don't you think there's something a little bit unfair with how God, I mean, on one level, yeah, that is really, that is something, that the light would die for the darkness, and that the true light would know every single thing there is to know about you and me, and yet still die.

[14:29] But, George, don't you think it's, like, don't you think it's a little bit unfair that the darkness within us is sort of evaluated by God's perfect standard?

Like, don't you think it's a little bit, George, like God isn't giving you any opportunity to grow? Like, you know, think about it, George. If you put kids in grade one, and you judge them by somebody who had, you gave them a question that would be on, like, a PhD exam, that was the math test, and if they couldn't pass a PhD-level math test, I mean, not a PhD in, like, English or something, a PhD in math, if they had to pass that test, that very, very high-level test, that's not even perfect, but very high-level, of course, all the kids in grade one are going to fail.

They're going to fail all the time. They'd never get out of grade one. Like, that seems almost unfair.

And that's why it's very interesting what Jesus, it's almost as if he anticipates that type of a pushback by the very next thing that he says, which is actually quite remarkable.

And for those of you who really know the Bible well, it's very similar to what Paul writes in Romans chapter 2. Look what he says next. Verse 24. Pay attention to what you hear.

And he said to them, pay attention to what you hear. In other words, just back up a little bit.

Basically, in the two verses, 23 and 24, three times he tells you to hear.

[15:56] So it would be as if, I mean, I don't have a hearing aid in right now. I have very little hearing in my right ear. And in fact, it's a little bit distracting right now. For some reason, I have a very, very, very, very, very loud ringing noise in my right ear.

Those of you who have hearing problems are familiar with that, and I don't have my hearing aid in, which would sort of, you know, stop it. But what the Bible is saying, just because a person can put their hearing aid in and their hearing aid's working doesn't mean they listen.

So when it says hear, it's meaning listen. Okay? And so he says that this is the third time. And then what is it said? So pay attention to what you hear. The third time he says, make sure you listen. And here's what he says.

With the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. I'll say it again. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you.

Now, this is a good translation, although interestingly enough, if you translate it very literally, which you're going to see on the screen in a moment, it actually makes it even simpler and clearer to understand.

[16:55] And then I'll read the next verse. Literally it goes, in whatever measure you measure, it will be measured to you and will be added to you. In whatever measure you measure, it will be measured to you and will be added to you.

In other words, whatever measure you use, that's the measure God's going to use. He's going to give that measure to you. He's going to give it to you back. There's a Jewish proverb that developed a little bit after this that's captured in ancient Jewish writings, which helps to maybe make it a little bit easier for us to understand.

And the Jewish proverb is, in the pot in which you cook others, you will be cooked. In the pot in which you cook others, you will be cooked.

So I'll say that again. In the pot in which you cook others, you will be cooked. And then verse 25, for to the one who has, more will be given. And from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away, which almost sounds like it's a little bit unfair.

But here's what the text is saying, which is a very, very remarkable thing. And it points in this direction, this constant direction that only Christianity has, that only the gospel has, that just as God condescends the true light, the true and greater light, for your good, not for his own, but for your good, to deal with the darkness in you that you cannot deal with for yourself, the true and greater light gets swallowed by darkness, condescends to be swallowed by darkness.

[18:34] We see even that this, this principle of condescension rooted in love and justice even goes to how God judges. If you could put up the point, it goes like this. The Lord God Almighty can condescend to put you in the same pot that you put others in.

The Lord God Almighty can condescend to put you in the same pot that you put others in. So what does that mean? That means this, that it's not as if God's going to say, well, listen, all grade ones have to pass, grade one students in their math tests have to pass the same test that a PhD, doing a PhD in math, has to pass as part of the examinations for him or her.

No, what it says here is God says, okay, I understand that maybe the true light on one level, the true light that sees everything truly, that might be a very high standard and very intimidating for you. It might even seem as if that's a bit unfair for me to judge you by this. So what I'm going to do is I'm just going to judge you by the way you judge yourself. No, so not the way you judge yourself, but by the way you judge others.

So in a sense, all I have to do is say, okay, well, how does George, how does George judge drivers? Well, I'll just play back George's judgments on other drivers.

[19:56] Okay? And now we're going to take a video and watch George drive. Okay? I'm going to take the way George judges what people say as to whether, you know, it's smart or dumb or foolish.

And now we're going to replay, we got George's judgments, now we're going to replay what George says. Now, unless you are a raving narcissist, this should worry you.

Because the fact of the matter is we won't pass our own moral judgments. In other words, it's not as if God will say, well, we'll look at the pot that you put people in and boy, after I've looked at George's

life, I don't have to put him in that pot because he never violates his judgments on other people. No, if God used that judgment, I would be in the pot. The pot that I cook others in, I would be cooked in as well. This is part of God's great condescension.

It's part of what Paul talks about in Romans 2. And it shows, in a sense, the profound justice of God that when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that nobody will be able to say they have an excuse.

[21 : 09] In fact, actually, the flip side, the profound knowledge that God sees each of us perfectly is a profound comfort for those of us who are in Christ when we come to him in prayer.

Because, you see, the fact of the matter is is that when we come to confess our sins, we don't have to try to explain to God. We don't have to give excuses to God. Because, you see, God sees you and me perfectly, and because he sees you and me perfectly, he already knows the different things that we might want to say that, you know, might temper the moral judgment.

He knows it better than I do. He knows it better than you do. He already, in a sense, applies it. And yet, at the same time, we would stand before God and we would, well, literally, it would be obvious that we deserve to be cooked in lots of pots, that we can't even survive our own moral judgments. but some of you might push it back and say, but George, doesn't the text say, like, doesn't it almost seem as if God adds things to you? Look what it says, like in verse 25, for to the one who has more will be given and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Like, George, that doesn't seem fair. And, you know, it just seems as if God is like all those people in my life. I get passed over, I do all the hard work and I get passed over for the promotion and somebody who just doesn't deserve it gets the promotion and it just seems as if God or fate or karma or whatever just isn't really fair and it keeps adding things to me that I, you know, it just, like, George, that text just doesn't seem to be fair.

[22 : 57] Well, it actually is fair and what it is is it's deeply human. In fact, it really, maybe one of the things that we should be starting to talk about is that the only true humanism is Christianity.

Christianity is the true and deep and thick humanism because of the way it portrays us. Like, just take a step back before I talk about this a bit more directly, but one of the things that we have a problem of in our culture that's very unrecognized by people, like, if you follow the, the, what goes on in movies and in lots of novels and what goes on especially in academia right now and amongst the academic elites is there's two very contradictory ideas that are talked about at the same time, but because people believe the contradictory beliefs, they don't recognize them as contradictory. They just don't recognize that they're incoherent. Well, what do I mean by it? Well, on one hand, you have all this theory, whether it's critical race theory or queer theory or different other types of theory and in those types of theory, what you have is you have very, very powerful social forces and human beings are portrayed as being essentially passive and formed by these forces that the color of your skin fundamentally determines your destiny and how other people view you and your prejudice or your lack of prejudice, your accountability, your lack of accountability, that human beings are fundamentally passive, especially by these categories of race or sexuality, that you're just propelled into this social thing and you're just almost like a quirk that just moves along in the currents of the culture and that's just the way things are.

And that's what caused lots of huge debates in the United States, not as many here in Canada, but that's actually the way a lot of elites and a lot of people talk. But on the other hand, you can have somebody say that and then 10 minutes later talk from a very, very different perspective and the very different perspective is this, which we're also very familiar with.

Nobody can tell you who you really are, only you know who you really are. And it's incumbent upon you to not only figure out who you really are in terms of your desires, but to pursue that.

[25 : 20] You need to be authentic and to need to be authentic, you need to be autonomous, you need to be not to be under control or the judgment of any person, you need to pursue, you need to go for that, go for that, and you can go for that, and you can actualize that, and people deserve to applaud you as you pursue this thing within yourself.

But if you think about it for a second, those are two completely opposite views of the person. Two completely opposite views of the person. And for people who are completely consumed by this, the only reason that never, the incoherence doesn't strike them is because everybody or many, many people talk in the same categories, but they're very, very inconsistent.

What the Bible says is something very different. If you could put it up on the screen, that would be very helpful. You are not plastic, you are not passive, and you are not shielded from the eyes of

God, but you are created, active, and seen by him.

You are creative, created, active, and seen by him. So human beings are created by the loving triune God. It means that we have a particular type of nature.

And part of that particular nature is that we are within the concept that we're creatures, not God. Obviously, that means we can't just sort of do anything, but as part of the fact that we are created, we are created as active creatures, that human beings have direction and momentum.

[26 : 54] And that's what's being captured in verse 25. You think about it for a second, there's momentum. You believe a lie, and you tell a lie. And when you believe a lie and tell a lie, it is far easier to believe another lie, and to tell another lie.

And in fact, when you tell a lie, you often have to tell other lies. There's a momentum to lying. When you believe a lie, when you sort of turn your mind off and say, well, how can that possibly be true? But you realize that if you voice your doubts about that lie, it's going to cause harm to you, and so you believe the lie. And once you believe the lie, it's far easier to believe a second lie.

And once you believe that second lie, it's far easier to believe a third lie. In fact, part of what makes human beings human beings is that it's almost as if in lots of different areas of our lives, we're like a snowball rolling down a slope that can gather up more snow as it goes.

And it's not only in terms of bad things, but it's in good things. That when you have the courage to speak the truth, and then you survive it, it's easier to speak the truth a second time.

[28 : 12] Or in love, that when you do something which is loving to your family members or to your friends or to your spouse or to your neighbors, there's in a sense a type of momentum to that love.

And so that's what the Bible is just saying. The Bible is saying here something very, very, very human and very, very profound. You are made in the image of God. You have a nature. nature. And part of that nature is to be active, not passive. And because you are a creature created in the image of God, God the creator always sees his creature.

And that's actually part of the reason why the gospel provides you with profound hope. If you put up point number four, it is only the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ that can give you hope for the new life.

It is only the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ that can give you hope for the new life. One of the problems that we have with religion is that in religion you have to try to make it look like you're a good person.

[29 : 26] And that usually means that we have to either tell lies to ourselves about what we're doing or make excuses for ourselves or act very, very aggressively to others or put on fronts to others and it always leads to a great deal of insecurity because once again unless you're a raving narcissist who are by almost definition profoundly insecure you realize that you're not quite as holy or good as it seems that you start to become aware of your pride or your greed or your envy or the jealousy that you have for others or the desire for rivalry that you have for others but you can't let that out and you can't really look at it because if you do you lose it's sort of shameful you lose your standing before others and you worry that you lose your standing before God and there's another problem in the religious life or just the human life is that what happens when you realize something about your past that five years later or ten years later and pardon my language I'm just going to speak the way many Canadians do and all of a sudden you say oh my God

I used to do that to my spouse or oh my good gracious I said that to my parents that's what I used to do to my parents good gracious that's actually what I used to how I used to treat my employees five years or ten years or twenty years or thirty years ago and like where do you go with that and what do you do with that but you see here's the profound difference that the gospel makes remember that in a sense what happens is that the pot that you cook others in as you develop more moral clarity it starts to you start to realize that there's other things that you would have that really you hadn't really realized that that was a judgment you were making upon other people or that what you were doing was all wrong and now you realize it was wrong and it's five or ten or twenty years in the past and of course you can do certain types of things like make reparations or apologize you know many years later but at the end of the day there's still this problem of conscience but the wonderful thing about the gospel is that when Jesus died for you on the cross he knew all of the darkness in your life the darkness that you discover that was in there that you didn't realize it was there a year ago it was there a year ago you just didn't see it but he saw it when he died for you all of the darkness in your life he saw all of it every single bit of darkness he saw when he died for you like every single bit he saw when he died for you and you see that's partially why the gospel is so

different than religion and as the gospel becomes more real and more precious to you it really does provide a place that you can start to look at the things in your life that are just wrong that were just wrong without it unmaking you he always knew you were proud self-centered greedy glutton filled with lust he knew that about you when he died he knew your prejudices when he died for you it's a shock to you but it's not to him and so the gospel both provides you a place where you can begin to look at your life with with honesty and with honesty not where you have to say well that's you know that the fact that I had those prejudiced views ten years ago that's just no no no no no no no they were wrong then they were wrong then you can see the darkness for darkness and you can repent and ask for the light of Christ to be even more real and powerful in you to help to put those parts of darkness in you to death that they not have any part in you anymore and you can be just so grateful that

Jesus knew that about you too when he died for you the darkness that shocks you now is a darkness he saw when he died on the cross for you thinking of you just want to wrap it up very closely by looking at the two parables and they go like this and I'm going to put the point up in a moment but for some of you who are Christians for a long time and you're familiar with Zechariah 4 do not despise the day of small things that's the way to understand these two parables do not despise the day of small things verse 20 26 and Jesus said the kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground now just pause it's going to be the same type of an image of a small seed just think about what we actually wish it said you see from the perspective of the world what we wish we would say is the kingdom of God is like

Mount Everest the kingdom of God is like Niagara Falls the kingdom of God is like this superhero the kingdom of God is like this invincible army or this invincible sports team we want to have something very very very big and overwhelming but what does it say the kingdom of God is as if man should scatter seed on the ground little tiny seeds scattered in the ground verse 27 he sleeps and rises night and day and notice there that little Jewish thing Jewish people begin their day at sunset we begin our days in a sense at sunrise they begin their days at sunset it's sort of this little Jewish thing which is put there sort of a very interesting idea by the way we in a sense view that our day begins when we're active and after we've accomplished all we have to accomplish and we sleep almost as if sleep is sort of an irrelevancy and we wish those of us who are workaholics wish we could get rid of it but for the

Jewish people the day begins with rest and out of rest you act anyway sorry that's a bit of an aside so the kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground he sleeps and rises night and day and the seed sprouts and grows he knows not how the earth produces by itself first the blade then the ear then the full grown grain in the ear but when the grain is ripe it once he puts in the sickle because the harvest has come it's saying that you know just as in a sense it seems like a very small thing when you ask Jesus to come into your life to be your savior and your lord or you recognize that you've asked Jesus to be your savior and lord you don't really know when it began but you know that it happened and it seems like a very very small thing yet that small apparent thing continues to work in your life and grows and grows and grows and grows without you realizing how it works and for us who are in Christ the end will be the new heaven and the new earth seeing Christ as he is and being like him or reading the bible seems like such a small thing and let me guarantee you it is very easy for an apparently clever person with a high

[37 : 21] IQ to make the bible look completely and utterly ridiculous and it seems so completely powerless and weak and helpless yet the means of grace are such that when we read the bible and we hear it that's what he asks us to do read my word hear my word hear my word listen to it yes I know it's small yes I know it doesn't seem like it's as powerful as learning some other massive spiritual technique or exercise program or having all sorts of money I know it seems very weak and inconsequential but just trust me on the means of grace and say that prayer forgive that person read the bible be in part of a small group a tiny part of your whole week where you open the word with other people seeking to follow Jesus yes I know it seems small and doesn't seem very powerful like it'll accomplish much but God's the one who does the work of building it's a small means of grace where God does all the work look at verse 30 and he said with what can we compare the kingdom of God or what parable shall we use for it it is like a grain of mustard seed which when sown on the ground is the smallest of all the seeds on earth yet when it's sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade now just a pause here the mustard seed image is a proverbial saying what's a proverbial saying we're familiar with proverbial sayings garbage in garbage out now

garbage in garbage out isn't literally true but we know what it means right with statistics and stuff like garbage in garbage out there's a whole range of proverbial sayings and in

Jesus' time the idea of the smallness of the mustard seed and the bigness of the result was a proverbial saying he wasn't making a scientific saying but a proverbial saying and it's the same type of thing this in fact if you could put up the point that would be great do not despise the day of small things trust his grace and the means of grace do not despise the day of small things trust his grace and the means of grace that just as in a sense a small thing like hearing the bible taking some time every day to hear the bible and to listen to the bible and you put it away and well it hasn't changed my emotions it hasn't put extra money in my bank it hasn't added five pounds of muscle or taken away three pounds of fat or added two inches to my height or taken two inches away from my height it doesn't seem like it's very powerful but Jesus is saying don't despise the day of small things like taking me into your life seems like a very small thing but it ends in glory and you read my word out of obedience and listen to it and the work that I do in you that's small and unnoticeable almost like planting a seed in a garden and the next day it looks like nothing's happened and the day after and the day after and the day after but eventually if you wait over time and almost imperceptible in the change something quite remarkable happens and this other image here is the same type of an image of not only is it just like the plant that grows but it's something big that comes that's not only good for you but good for the world you want to know a simple thing that I've just come across that when people despise the Bible and they worry and they make claims about how the

Bible has been mistranslated from mistranslated mistranslated here's a thing for you just to say to them do you believe that when you read Plato or Socrates or Aristotle you're really reading what they say when you read the histories of Rome do you believe that fundamentally they're correct and most people will say yes they do well how is it that we have any of those writings I can tell you how we have those writings it's because Christian monks translated them the same trans Christian monks that translated that not translated that copied them the same Christian monks that copied the Bible so why is it that you don't believe in that you're reading Plato correctly but you do you believe that you're reading Plato correctly but the same monks translate the Bible and you don't think they translated it they copied that correctly that like that doesn't make any sense and the point I put it on is this is that is you see the means of grace goes and it brings flowers it's out of the Christian faith that science developed it's out of the Christian faith that human rights developed it's out of the Christian faith that slavery began to be seen as evil and even though in our day and age slavery continues to make comebacks that we understand that slavery is evil it's from Christianity that we understand that human beings are made in the image of God and have a type of integrity that is a fruit of Christianity it's it's out out of out of the the fruit of Christianity that we understand that freedom is important it's out of freedom that you have financial growth and and markets and and and other things like that and and and it's out of Christianity that you have a belief that there's a concern for the poor and for hospitals and for education and and and all of that and it's also in a sense things that just the gospel works in you and the Bible works in you and not only does it develop into something big in you that you will only see when you appear before Jesus at the end of the end of the end of the end but even before we reach the end of the end of the end of the end the birds can nest and there's a fruitfulness and a blessing upon the whole culture as we take the grace of Christ and receive the means of grace so do not despise the day of small things come to communion read the word do not despise the day of small things don't live by lies don't live by lies don't live by hatred when you feel hatred repent of it it's a small thing but it's a big thing don't despise the day of small things don't despise God's grace in small packets it's a small packet that comes into us that we receive but it's God's very power and grace that comes into us that we receive and he does a hidden work of grace in your life and mine that preparing us for an eternal weight of glory let's bow our heads in prayer please stand let's pray father we ask for several things we ask that you build within us a consciousness that you see all things that there is nothing in our lives that is hidden from you and we ask father that as this truth father we know that if we just think about this truth without the gospel without the knowledge that the true light died for us and father it's a very hard thing so make the gospel more dear to our hearts and as the gospel becomes more dear to our hearts help us father to rejoice in the fact that you see all and help us to live lives father of transparency and honesty and integrity help us father to live not by lies or injustice or hatred not by greed or envy not by prejudice but father we ask that as the gospel grips us that we would be

more and more open to the light of your grace in every area of who we are and not only us as individuals but at a societal and cultural and communal level as well that the light of christ will reveal the darkness and that we will love the light and hate the darkness and that we will learn to walk in your light knowing that you walk with us and that you love us and care for us and we ask this in the name of jesus your son and our savior amen yes thank you thank you my thank you thank you