

The Mighty Power of Little Things in God's Hands

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Date: 08 September 2025

[0:00] The mighty power of little things in God's hands. I hold in my hand a tiny seed.

It's so small you can scarcely notice it! You might overlook it and disregard it. Think it insignificant, a little seed.

The small can easily be overlooked. Yet within that humble shell lies the potential of a mighty oak, a tree that will stand for centuries, its branches stretching across towards heaven and its roots anchored deep into the earth.

So it is with little things, little things. Notice firstly the power of a small seed. A small seed.

God can use the smallest of seeds planted. It matters where it is planted. The world chases the spectacular, the noisy, the grand, the headline grabbing.

[1:15] The world emphasises size and strength. They would regard that as success. But who does God use? The weak, the small and the often overlooked.

God delights in taking our little and working in us. God can use those small acts of faith of yours. And they are going to bring a great blessing.

It's also true that small compromises can bring great destruction. Think of the mighty power of small things today. And we are going to look at a few of them.

Think of that small seed. Maybe a small gift. If you are feeling weak, then you are just the one God is looking for.

Amen? But God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. Don't think God cannot use you if you're feeling frail and inadequate.

[2:21] God is looking for the weak in whom he can manifest his glory and his power. You have latent potential, everyone. Don't discount what God can do with your gift, with your yielded life, with your seed.

Don't discount what God can do. It all depends on where you plant it. Think of the power of the small. God calls us to place our small gifts into his mighty hands.

It's like the little lad with his lunch. Think of that. I'd imagine he went out to the hillside. His mum had packed his lunch for him.

Maybe it was his favourite food. But you might. And earlier that day, his mum had packed it. And then he went and sat on the mountainside while he heard the Master teach the multitudes, thousands.

And maybe he started, well, it's getting nearly lunchtime. And his tummy started to growl. And maybe he felt like, hmm, just thinking about that fish and bread that my mum's made for my lunch.

[3:35] And he started to maybe feel a bit hungry. Like the thousands in the crowd. He was alright though. He had his own lunch.

I'm okay. I'm alright. I've got my lunch. Why should he care for others? Why should he share his little lunch? Yet he did.

He offered his lunch. What a great act of unselfishness. There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes. But what are they among so many?

In the disciples' eyes, this meagre meal was not going to feed the thousands. But in Jesus' hands, those five loaves and two fish became a feast for a multitude.

With 12 baskets left over. I wonder whether that little boy got one of those baskets and took it home. I took it home to mum and said, hey mum, look what's happened to me. Think of how unselfish that little boy was with his little lunch.

[4:42] The miracle was not in the size of his gift but in its surrender. We can think of Elijah. He encountered the widow of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17, 13.

And here was this widow woman in a time of famine. There had been this drought, this desolation all around. And here she was about to eat her last morsel.

Everything had run out. The pantry was bare. It was empty. Then Elijah comes to her and he asks her to make him a little cake first.

From her last handful of meal, of grain. She had enough for only one last meal. One final meal. For her and her son. Of her scarcity. Yet Elijah challenges her to trust God's provision over her own limited resources. Putting God's will before her personal needs.

[5:45] Make me thereof. Make me thereof a little cake first. And bring it unto me. And after make for thee and for thy son. Wow. This is her last handful.

Of grain. What a test of faith. To think of it. In faith she gave the little that she had. And her small act of faith.

And her small act of faith sustained her household through the drought. What a demonstration of God's faithfulness. When she simply yielded and trusted God in that time of great need.

We see another poor widow woman at the temple. And our Lord observed her at the offering time. And there came a certain poor widow. And she threw in two mites.

Which make a farthing. You can see there the size of them. In a man's hand. You can see those tiny little coins. The smallest copper coins in circulation. Yet this was all that she had to live on.

[6:48] And her gift was small in value. But it was great. In sacrifice. Think of it. Of what she gave. And the Lord declared it great. And all the offerings of the rich.

Who made a show of it. Who had much more to splash around. But she gave just those tiny little coins. But for her it was all she had.

And she gave it with a heart of faith. She gave not from her surplus. But from her soul. Think of the power. The power of the small. We could discount such a thing.

It's nothing. Two cents. But no gift is too small when placed in his hands. Think of a pebble thrown into a pool.

And the ripples that come out. Those ripples are far beyond the size of that little stone. And it's the same for you and me. The impact of our giving unto God.

[7:49] Of our yielding unto him. Of our trusting him. With our small gifts. Of even ourselves. Inadequate. And weak. And unworthy.

As the Lord Jesus says. If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed. Nothing shall be impossible to you. You could think of that grain of a mustard seed. Just that tiniest of seeds.

Tiny yet alive. That it will grow into a tree. Where the birds will find their rest. The mustard seed. It's only one to two millimetres in diameter.

Yet it can grow into a large plant. Up to nine feet tall. It's telling us of a small amount of faith. Can see amazing response from our God.

It can lead to a great outcome. Just that simple little faith. And can we yield to God the little that we have. Give that small gift.

[8:49] Give of that prayer. Give of that modest offering. Give of that little service. Just give and yield yourself.

Offer your small gift to God. Lay yourself on the altar. As that living sacrifice. And trust him to use the little that you are. So we see the power of the small.

Of a small seed. A small gift. We could think secondly of a small sin. Now I was thinking lately. I was driving down the road. And I thought a pothole would make a really good sermon illustration.

And of course this isn't the city of Playford. Because our roads are too good. But I think a few weeks back. I was reflecting on how a pothole. It speaks volumes doesn't it?

It starts out. Oh so small. But drive over it. And over it. And over it. And it gets worse and worse doesn't it?

[9:55] It gets bigger and bigger. Bit by bit. Until it gets dangerous. And could create such destruction.

Small compromises can be. Oh so destructive. And we see. It tells of a little leaven. Just a little smidgy.

Tiny. Incy weensy bit. Of leaven. Know ye not. That a little leaven. Leaveneth the whole lump. Lately I've been trying to mix some.

Two stroke oil. With petrol. To use some particular garden tools. And some use a ratio of 25 to 1. So 25 parts petrol.

One part of the two stroke oil. Some other tools it says 50 to 1. And it's a ratio. So you put 50 parts of petrol. One part of the oil.

[10:53] Depends on the tool. And some of you gardeners will know. Exactly what I'm talking about. You have to carefully measure the amount of oil. Get the right ratio. Get the ratio right.

How much yeast can impact a loaf. It works out that even 0.1% of yeast. 0.1% of yeast.

Affect a batch of dough. Now any mathematicians amongst us can tell us. What ratio is that? We've got to test these ex-accountants out. What ratio is 0.1%.

What's the ratio? I had to ask Google this one. It works out that it's 1 to 1,000. One part of yeast to 1,000 parts of flour.

That's a really tiny proportion, isn't it? A really tiny amount. Small things have a big impact. Just that little pinch of yeast impacts the whole batch of dough.

[12:00] Makes that loaf. Small things have a big impact. We've seen how small acts of faith can yield great blessings.

An impact for good. Likewise, small sins can lead to great ruin. They can make a big impact. A single sin can spread like yeast.

It spreads and spoils, corrupting the whole. And our Lord talks about leaven. He talks about the leaven of the Pharisees. We could picture the Pharisees.

In three Gospels, it talks about the yeast, the leaven of the Pharisees. And it's talking about their teaching, their doctrine.

You could even say their attitude, their hypocrisy, their false teachings. So leaven is a symbol often used in a bad connotation, but not always.

[13:01] But leaven is a symbol of influence or corruption. And the Lord used leaven to relate to the ways of the Pharisees, of hypocrisy, of their ways, their doctrine.

That it could spread and corrupt, do harm. So it talks specifically of hypocrisy. Luke 12.1, it tells how they would prioritize the outward and yet miss the inward of true faith.

They would emphasize legalism, Matthew 23. Of the letter of the law and the finer points and really added doctrines of man.

While neglecting the spirit of the law, legalism. Then we have false teachings, Mark 7, 8 through 9.

It talks about how they burden people down with all of their added burdens.

Contrary to God's commands, really, adding to. And these traditions. And the Lord says, beware, take heed. Think of the leaven.

[14:05] It's a sad truth. Now just this last week, I was invited to visit a church. I was away interstate.

And I got the opportunity to meet with a pastor, a veteran pastor, 83 years old. Yeah, he's still doing, he's still running two Sunday services.

Doing really all the work, you could say. And this pastor, 83 years old. He showed me a beautiful church building. Paid off. Paid off.

No rent. No mortgage. It could seat some 200 people. A far better building than this one that we're seating in. A church building that had everything you could wish for in a building.

Located in a very attractive, thriving community. This pastor, he's 83. He's laboured there for 20 something years. And he wants someone to hand it over to.

[15:06] To hand over the work to. I thought, well, I'd like to put my hand up for that. I've got 20 years left in me. I'm not quite 63 yet. So I could put another 20 years into something like that.

But he says he wants to hand over the work to someone. Obviously around 43. I know I look 43, but I'm not going to be able to take it. So I had to give that a miss.

But while I spent some time with him, the sad truth of what happened really struck me. That sadly, we only had a couple of hours, if that, together.

But someone knocked on the door and came in. And I happened to be present. While someone came and visited this pastor and handed back his keys.

I'm leaving. I'm leaving the church. This man, he was in his late 20s, I would say. And the pastor told me later how he'd mentored this man.

[16:07] He got saved through the church. He'd been disciplined. A three-year-old Christian, really. And he'd helped this man to grow in his faith.

Still a relatively new believer. And he basically told the pastor off at the time. It was kind of sad to see the pastor treated so.

He was quite accusatory and ungracious. He basically dressed him down and said he needed to repent of this or that.

And it was a very sad moment for me to see that man. A veteran of 20 years, treated as if he didn't know anything. And basically told off.

And then the man walked out the door. And that's ministry sometimes. When you face relentless criticism and attacks.

[17:11] You're managing discord. And the critics of the pastor. Now sometimes it's valid criticism.

I can take constructive criticism. And really it comes with the territory. But it's kind of sad when a pastor is treated so.

And now that church could seat 200 people. Beautiful location. Just on the brink of a mission field. A huge dimension. In a city. With so much potential. That church is down to now about 20 people. And it's struggling after split after split.

Various splits have happened. What caused all of this? For this faithful pastor. I think probably it was something small.

[18:08] Some small difference. Some slight. Some offence. Some small discord. Some division over this or that. Some carnal attitude. Some flesh. Let's face it. Some leaven.

And before you know it. A church is on life support. Under threat of closing its doors. How long can this man go for? 83. I know some people are aiming for 100.

And in particular my dear father. I hope I've got his genes. As well as my mum's. And before you know it. A church is on its last legs.

What a sad reflection it can be. Brother, sister. This should not be so. But small things have power. Don't they? And discouragement can be very heavy.

Even though it's only a small word of discouragement. Can hit hard. Small things have power people. Small things. Think of the power of neglect too. The power of neglect.

[19:08] That's a small thing. Neglect. Neglect. You don't even notice it. Because it doesn't happen. Things are not happening. That should be happening. And it tells. How a writer of Proverbs tells us.

Likely Solomon says. I went by the field of the slothful. And by the vineyard of the man. Void of understanding. And lo. It was all grown over with thorns. And nettles. Had covered the face thereof. And the stone wall thereof was broken down. Think of the power of neglect. And I've got to say lately. The church garden is looking a bit like that.

I don't know if you noticed it. Because some people have been doing it for a long time. Who are not doing it presently. And have you seen the state of the church garden?

It's looking quite bad. There's a lot of weeds around the church lately. It needs some work. It needs some work. Because the pastor will have to do it. Or maybe someone else could volunteer.

[20:05] To actually do something about the weeds. Just get some weed spray. But we think about the little things. A little neglect. It can lead to ruin.

And the place is falling down. It's overgrown. It's not looking good. It's not a good look. Neglect. That's a small thing. But neglect can cause ruin, can't it?

And we think of spiritually so. Neglect. It can cause ruin. And it happens bit by bit. Just a little bit at a time. And we put things off. Apathy creeps in.

It sneaks in. Like a little fox. Apathy. Somebody else will do it. That's not my job. Neglect. Has a way of gradually destroying. Small things.

Neglect is small, isn't it? Think of Song of Solomon. Song of Solomon warns us about the little foxes. That spoil the vines.

[21:03] It's not the roaring lion. It's not the big foxes. It's the little ones. So cute. So cute. Those sly, nibbling foxes.

They can consider a fox. Don't they look so cute? Notice it's not the big foxes. It's the little foxes who sneak in. And we might be inclined to cuddle them. And make them a pet.

It's fine. We can imagine the foxes that we'd like to take them as a little pet, wouldn't we? I know Julie loves foxes and looks a bit like our old chihuahua that we have.

And yet these little foxes, even though you want to cuddle them and make them your pet, they are like the cute kangaroos too. They cause so much trouble for the farmers.

And the foxes can cause a lot of harm. I've seen them up close and personal because I had to capture one at one time and I had it in a cage and I saw its teeth and I heard its venomous, its vicious growls and its angry stares and the salivation as it wanted to bite me.

[22:13] And I've seen the fox up close and personal. And the threatening nature of a fox, you know, when you've got chickens in the backyard and little lambs, you don't want those little foxes because they can do such harm.

And in the Song of Solomon here it's telling us that the foxes were nibbling away and damaging the vines. We could picture them perhaps chewing on the vines and biting at the roots, maybe scrabbling away, digging holes at the roots and munching on the fresh shoots of the vine, stripping off the bark, ruining the grapes.

It's a picture, little foxes is a picture of small creeping moments, creeping problems that undermine something fruitful.

But aren't those little foxes so cute? Aren't they just so cute? But you know the best thing that you can do with a fox is to bang, shoot it. That's the best thing you can do with a fox.

And we think sometimes compromises nibble away at our spiritual fruit if we don't guard the vine. So we could think of the little foxes.

[23:26] We could picture it, for example, as relating to maybe little habits of gossip, habits of fault-finding, of laziness, of impurity, of those little offences, those little remarks, the quips, the reactions, eroding the spiritual fruit.

It's not always the big scents. We could think of the big scents. They're obvious. But the ones that do the most harm are the little foxes because they nibble away at the roots of faithfulness, of fruitfulness.

The little words of the flesh, of pride, of offence. The little grudges, the unforgiveness, the hurtful ways. Name that fox.

Could it be a bad habit that we kind of nurtured and we think nothing of it, but it's really leading us away from our Lord? It could be that neglect, the things we know we ought to do that we're not doing.

The tiny compromise confronts it and turn from it. The power of small things. James warns about the power of a little member, the tongue.

[24:41] The little member, that little piece of flesh inside your mouth called the tongue. It says, The tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter.

A little fire kindleth. I saw a picture of Brother Wayne starting the fire, the bush, the bonfire for the youth. And I don't know what it is.

It looked like everyone was standing right away from him. He must have had some petrol in that fire. But it only took a little spark and then boom! A great big fire from us. Just a little spark.

A little match. And a small word can spark a revival. Or it can burn down a life. A small word. May we choose our words carefully. Small words.

Are they words of bitterness? Or a word of encouragement? Of testimony? Of praise unto our God? How are we using our mouth? Those little words.

[25:36] Those little things that we do and say. Proverbs warns also about a little sleep. Now this is a picture of last Sunday morning. Somebody else must have been preaching.

I heard tell that somebody was asleep. So be warned. You'll be jolted awake if you're caught sleeping in church today. But it says here.

Yet a little sleep. A little slumber. A little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come. Think of sleep. Of sleepiness. Here's this.

Picture here is these small things. Just a little sleep. Oh, just kind of have a little. I'll just kick back. And yeah, everybody starts snoring. Just a little sleep. Just a little slumber.

Notice that's progressive here too. In this text. It's progressive. All right. It starts off. Oh, just a little. Oh, just nodding off. Just a little sleep. Just a little sleep. Just a nodding off.

[26:30] And then a little slumber. Oh, you get sluggish and sleepy. And you know, it's just like you're indulging in that inactivity, that sluggishness. And then a little folding of the hands to sleep.

I like to go to sleep like that. Like the pharaohs in the tomb. Just cross the arms. You just fold the arms and you kick back. And before you know it, you're snoring. And it's a little folding of the hands to sleep.

What's it picturing here? It's picturing that idleness, isn't it? Just creeps off on you. Oh, just nod off a bit. The pastor's a bit boring. And then just a little slumber. Oh, just relax a bit.

And then before you know it, you're off in dream world. And it's a picture of that sluggishness and then inactivity and then laziness, really. And then you're just given over to idleness.

You're neglecting duty. Of course, the picture is of the one who should be in the farmyard working. And they're just in this place of neglect.

[27:30] Neglect brings ruin. It's a warning here of the small compromises. Just a little sleep. I'll just shut my eyes for a minute and look like I'm praying. And then there's this compromise and this neglect of responsibility.

And really, it's a picture of laziness, isn't it, at work? And it leads to lack and poverty. In the spiritual sense, we could think of a neglect of prayer, of Bible reading, of service, of watchfulness.

And it can lead ultimately to like a spiritual barrenness. It talks about a poverty. It speaks about a loss of something. We've lost something when we have that spiritual sleepiness where we fall into temptation or backsliding.

It speaks of negligence, of apathy, of slackness. But there is hope. Just like a little leaven can corrupt, a little faith can transform.

And as a warning here, as we can heed these things to be vigilant, to guard against those small compromises, is there a little fox that we've allowed to sneak its way in to spoil our vine?

[28:34] Maybe a critical spirit, a neglected prayer life, a secret sin. Those little foxes, you've got to identify them, confess them, replace them with a small act of obedience.

Think of it, your choices today steer your destiny tomorrow. And you can redirect your course.

We've seen the power of a small seed or a small gift.

Now we've seen the power of a small sin. Just a little compromise, just a little sleep. A small sin, a little leaven.

It's only an easy, oh come on pastor, don't be picky. It's just a little leaven. The little leaven is what we warned against. Just a little fox. It's a small sin.

And consider the action that you can take, even though it seems small to you, it can have a big impact. So thirdly, we see a small shift. Now this happens whenever I don't listen to my wife when I'm driving.

[29:34] And especially, she's the ultimate, she calls herself the nag man. Not the nav man. Not to say she's a nagging wife or anything. But she's my navigation system.

And it's like the Google Maps. You put your directions in, you put your destination in. And then it says, oh you silly idiot, you went the wrong way. No, no, it says recalibrating, recalibrating.

It's almost like that's what we need, isn't it, brother and sister? A recalibrating. A small shift. A small shift. When we change course, we change direction.

We say, actually I've been an idiot, I've been going the wrong way. And I'm going to turn things around and go God's way. We can think spiritually it talks about a small rudder.

James 3, talking about the tongue again, he says, Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, are turned about with a very small helm. You look at the back of a ship and it's just that little rudder.

[30:34] Just that little piece of metal that tilts here and there. And that little rudder is like the steering of the ship. And it's like the recalibrating when we get off course and we've got to follow the direction again.

Actually God says, oh you've got to turn left now and get back where I wanted you to go to. A bit like Jonah. He got recalibrated. Alright. Think of our daily choices, our words, our thoughts, our actions. They're like a rudder, aren't they? Steering our direction. And small choices shape our destiny. It's a fact. If you get that calibration wrong, if your compass is faulty by one degree, it's disaster.

You're not going to get where you're meant to be. And we can all make some small choices, some small changes. Now we've been talking about a small gift, a small seed in our life really.

Talking about a small sin, the ways we get it wrong. Now I'm urging you, brothers and sisters, of a small shift, actually think, actually, I'm going to go God's way.

[31:40] I'm going to get things back on track where I'm meant to be, where he wants me to be. And they're life-altering small changes. The fact is, are we on track? Who's steering our vessel?

If I walk with Christ as even a small sin, it can be like a ship's compass off by just one degree. Seems insignificant. It's just a little compromise, a little slackness, but you're going to get right off track.

And over time, that ship is going to drift miles off course. It's only a tiny little fault, a tiny error, a small sin, but it's going to get us off God's intended path.

We've seen the power of small things, the power of a widow's mite, two mites, the power of small acts of faith, the power of the leaven, the leaven of the Pharisees, God forbid, left unchecked.

It can damage our walk. It can be destructive. And let's guard our steps, and so we don't make those missteps. The destination is clear, God's will.

[32:46] We want to be in the centre of it, even if it hurts us, even if it's hard, even if it's carrying a cross, even if it's being mocked and scorned and derided for our faith.

If it's God's will, I want to be there in the centre of his will. And so let's guard our steps for those small missteps. It can lead to a destination far from his grace, from his will.

Think of it, your small actions can make a world of difference. Don't miss the small steps that you can take. I know this morning I saw a dear sister give the pastor a cup of water, in Jesus' name.

Thank you, sister. You know, I'll make you all jealous now, I'll have a drink of it. Our Lord says, Who shall we give to drink unto one of these little ones?

This is the children he's talking about. A cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple. Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. We need to look for the little ones who we should maybe put a bit extra care into others.

[33:49] Maybe the one who might have a disability, who can't get to the kitchen and get a cuppa. We can do things like that. It's thinking outside of our selfish worlds, isn't it? To think of actually, does someone else need me to help them, to encourage them, to support them?

And Jesus says that if you give a cup of cold water, he says, you're going to get a reward. Look for those small acts of service that you can render. The little things that you can do.

A lot of people say to me, Pastor, I can't do much, but there are some things you can do. Lots of things you can do. Little things that you can do. God doesn't need some big showing of grandstanding, of showing off, but he needs the humble to do the little things that matter to him.

The small actions. You might wonder, what difference can I make? Little old me. Maybe you can join the door knocking team. There were four of us yesterday, and someone asked me, Pastor, why are there not more of us that come and do this?

And I thought, I could offer some excuses, but I guess you have to ask them. You know, we're a church of 100 something.

[35:04] There's 96 people, maybe they can't make it for good reasons. We've all got to make our own mind up about things.

I could have said to him, where's people on the Thursday night? There's only how many people Thursday night? Four people Thursday night. What are the excuses people can make for not being there on a Thursday night, a Wednesday night, Sunday night?

Now, I'm not putting anyone on a guilt trip here. You've all got different reasons. You've all got to give your own account to God about what you're at or not at, and some of you can't make those things, and I don't mean to burden you.

Some of you can't even get to church on a Sunday because you're infirm, you're not well enough to be here, you live too far away. I get all that, many reasons. But we can all think of the little things we could do.

Think of your testimony, your small voice. It can make a difference. Consider the little maid in 2 Kings 5. She was a captive servant girl, and she had no status or power.

[36:07] We don't even know her name, and yet here she was, this servant girl, like a slave of the soldier, of the general Naaman, and here she was.

She had no power of her own, yet she simply opened her mouth, and she spoke a simple word, and she said, would God my Lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy.

She had a heart for Naaman, her boss, her master, and she saw that Naaman was covered in leprosy. We know he was a sickly man, and she knew that Elijah could minister God's healing to him, and it was her small voice of testimony that led to Naaman, this mighty general, to receive physical healing and spiritual salvation.

She simply spoke some little words. Oh, if only he would be with the prophet, he would recover. He would be healed. And so this young girl's simple words led to a mighty man to come to find God's healing power.

Never underestimate the power of your testimony. The power of your testimony. And you might wonder, who am I?

[37:37] I'm not significant. I'm just a little servant girl. Younger people may think like that. Any of us can. Think of how we can give testimony with our small voice.

And we can give a small voice of praise too. In Psalm 8 verse 2, it reads, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, thou hast ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

And our Lord quoted it at the time where he entered Jerusalem and they were crying out, the children were crying out, Hosanna, Hosanna to the son of David. And the Pharisees were indignant at the cries of the children.

But the Lord Jesus said, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, there has perfected praise. They didn't have to come to some music practice or choir practice.

They were perfected with their praise because it was unto him. Amen. The pure praise of the children. I was in a place of late and there was some really noisy children nearby.

[38:41] And I thought how lovely it was to hear them. Even though I thought, Oh, I'd love to have little children in my house again, running around and screaming and shouting and laughing and giggling and enjoying life and just being children.

Something about that, isn't there? We love children in this church and we want everyone to feel they can make as much noise as they want. Amen. You adults have to keep quiet though. Now the pure praise of children is a beautiful thing, isn't it?

And it can silence the enemy it talks about there as in the sense of silence, the adversary. We think there's a power to the praises of the youthful, of the joyful.

And when you're not here at the time of praise, our praises are less. Think of that. You that are not here Sunday night, put you on a guilt trip again.

The devil wants you to stay home and not come out and praise. But when we're together, our praise is louder. Our praise is greater. Our praise is more unto him and it's a joyful thing.

[39:44] So don't miss out on praise if you can make it because when we get together, our praises will be louder for it. You can open up your mouth and praise your Lord. Now you may think, I am small.

I'm not able. But again, as we saw before, God has chosen the weak things of the world. Don't put yourself down. Don't discount yourself as inadequate and weak. God chooses the small.

Notice that God has chosen the weak things to confound the things which are mighty. It's interesting. God sometimes bypasses the wise and the mighty and he picks out those ones who are weak enough to know they need him.

and God chooses to display his power with the weakest, doesn't he? Think of it, of just some passing references of some of the characters of the Bible and we could give many more than these. Of the weakest, Moses, he had a speech impediment full of doubt. David, a young shepherd boy. [40:51] Yet, God overlooked his youth and his lack of military experience. God called Gideon, though he was the least in his family and from a weak clan.

Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, used of God to deliver his people. Esther, in her obscurity, a nobody.

God used her to save his people. God called Samuel, despite his youth and inexperience. God took Saul, he became Paul, despite his violent past.

It wasn't a discredit to him, he wasn't discouraged for that. God chose Mary, a young unmarried peasant girl, to be the mother of Jesus. Matthew, a despised tax collector, to be his disciple. He had a reputation as a sinner. The Lord chose Peter, an impulsive fisherman, to lead his church, despite his lack of formal education and credentials.

[41:57] The 12 disciples, the lot of them, ordinary men, unqualified, uneducated, nobodies. God chose them and used them.

Hannah, God answered her prayer for a child, though she was barren and kind of discounted. Jeremiah, I'm just a youth.

I'm not able. God chose him. You can object, but God's got his hand on you. God's going to overlook all your objections and excuses. God blessed Leah, the unloved wife, with children, despite her being overshadowed by her sister Rachel.

The Lord reached out to Zacchaeus, the short, wealthy, tax collector, despised man that he was to show salvation. Our Lord chose the Samaritan woman, a woman with a scandalous past, a reputation, a stigma.

God overlooked that, overcame that, forgave that. Noah, he built the ark, a lone righteous man. He was on his own some. In this corrupt generation, God used him.

[43:10] Abraham, an elderly, childless man to father a nation, despite his age and his barren wife. You who know yourselves to be weak and inadequate and unworthy, you are just the one God is looking for.

You are the one. Maybe you feel weak or little, of little strength. We see the Church of Philadelphia, we could relate that to the Church of the end of days of this time that we live, for the Church of Brotherly Love, the Church of Philadelphia.

And the Lord says unto this church, this faithful church as represented by this church, I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it, for thou hast a little strength and has kept my word.

They will weak, but they were faithful. A little strength. Hey, just a little is enough. A little strength. If your strength is in the Lord, then that little strength is enough and has kept my word.

They were faithful. God's got a way of choosing the unlikely for his glory, doesn't he? God chose a small nation to bear his great name, even a very small remnant.

[44:20] And it's almost the pattern, isn't it? This word remnant, it's a repeating phrase. God still uses the remnant, the few, the humble, the overlooked.

We could think of ourselves as somewhat of a remnant, as the, hopefully the faithful. God can use you even though you feel weak. We might think, who am I?

That God would use me. I've not got much faith. I've got a little strength. You've got a little faith, that's enough. As a grain of mustard seed. We might think, I don't have enough faith.

Don't discount what God can do with you. No matter how weak, no matter how inadequate. And we could think of all kinds of excuses, like Moses made, like Jeremiah made.

I'm too young, I'm not qualified. I've got this fault and this problem. Don't discount what God can do with you. And God says that a little faith can move mountains.

[45:17] Again, we think of that seed analogy. If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, nothing shall be impossible unto you. The question

is not whether your gift or action or choice is small, but whether you place it in God's hands.

That's what matters. Think of it. A single candle lights a dark room. Those little things that you can do can make a world of difference. That text message of encouragement, you almost didn't send. Send it. That cup of cold water that you can offer. Give it. That simple word of testimony. You're hesitant to share. You may not be there Saturday mornings but you can use that word of testimony through the rest of the week.

Speak it. You're not a nobody. You are God's chosen vessel. And your small voice of praise he hears. So don't miss the opportunity to join your praises with God's assembled people. Your small acts of faithfulness, he sees them. Little things can teach big lessons about faith. What small steps can you take to trust God with your little, your little, your little gift, your brief prayer, your simple act of kindness like the stone and the ripples that it makes in the water.

[46:34] There's a big impact from even the little that you do. Don't discount it. Send the text. Make the call. Give the dollar. Forgive the wound. Pray the prayer. Start the habit.

Little things. Small obediences lead to great victories. And we may know God's gracious response to even our little, little faith.

May we confront those small sins and decide to trust the Lord with our little because God takes our little as we yield it unto him. Like the seed.

Depends where you plant it. Let God make much of your little and act in faith and trust him. To wrap it up, think again, brother, sister, of a little seed, of a small sin, of a small redirection, a small recalibration of actually, yeah, now that I think about it, there's some of those small things I've not been doing like I should.

Some of those small sins I've been doing that I shouldn't. And now there's some small redirection I need to take some action here to get back on track. So your small seed, give it.

[47:52] He can help you get victory over that small sin. Don't discount it. Let God deal with it. Don't succumb to it or try to excuse it. And you can make a small shift.

Actually, I'm going to listen to my wife and do what she says. Wouldn't that be a good idea, husbands, here today? I'd have been saved from so much trouble if I'd just listen more to my wife. You know, she's such a dear, such a dear, dear. Think, you know, recalibrate. You're going the wrong way, idiot. Not that my wife talks to me like that. But, you know, recalibrate, recalibrate. Okay, okay, I'll get back on track. Thanks, dear. Thanks, Lord. You can make those small shifts by simply letting God's nav man recalibrate your path.

Amen? I don't need to be so flippant here, but just to get the point across to you, you can think of the potholes, you can think of the recalibration, maybe you'll think about this message, and you can get back on track for God.

[48:56] Amen? You can get back on track for God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that work within us, yes, even in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

Amen. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you again. Lord, help us, we pray, to be conscious of, Lord, those small things that make a big difference of our ways of life, of our interactions, of our flesh, those small things, those small sins that sometimes get in the way, that recalibration, Lord, that small shift that we need to get.

Lord, even if it's only a one degree shift, it gets us back on track. Lord, it helps us to be that people, to be faithful, to be like the church of Philadelphia. They had a little strength, but they'd not denied your word.

They were faithful. Lord, we think of that faithful pastor in that church where he's struggling. Lord, we won't end up like that church where we've got splits going on or this or that and some divide. Lord, we'll be one family of God. Lord, keep us together. Keep us loving one another. Keep us, Lord, on track. Redirect us where we need it and, Lord, help us to be conscious of the small things that will avoid the neglect, the small excuses that we make for our slackness or idleness.

[50:26] Lord, help us, Lord, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.