

# The Unimpressive Kingdom of God

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[ 0 : 00 ] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

All right, Mark chapter 4 verse 21 is where we're going to begin from. So if you would look there, Mark chapter 4 verse 21. And he, that's our Lord Jesus Christ, he said to them, is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand?

For nothing hidden except, 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. And he said to them, pay attention to what you hear. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. 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.

[ 1 : 15 ] Verse 26. And he said, 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 grain in the ear.

But when the grain is ripe at once, the farmer presumably puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.

Verse 30. And he said, With what can we compare the kingdom of God? Or what parable shall we use for it?

[ 2 : 16 ] It is like a grain of mustard seed, which when sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth. Yet when it is 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 nest in its shade.

With many such parables, he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately, to his own disciples, he explained everything.

The Lord said, Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. That's why we give so much time and attention to the word of God. Like you, I love hearing testimonies of what God is doing in people's life.

You know, when I hear these testimonies, whether it's at church, or in a book, or on social media, or on YouTube, YouTube, isn't YouTube just a wonderful creation? You can just deliver so many things.

I took apart my whole dryer the other week. In like an hour. Just because of YouTube. And all this stuff, I never knew I could figure out how to do. But, you know, hearing testimonies on there, hearing testimonies of what God has done in someone's life, so often build our faith, and press us on to following Christ.

[ 3 : 46 ] But sometimes, if we're honest, testimonies can be a little bit hard to relate to. Sometimes we can hear testimonies that are so positive, so cheerful, so over the top, that we're left wondering, what happened to me?

You know, have you ever heard somebody's testimony, and you said, geez, where did I go wrong? How did they bounce? How did they bounce from joy to joy when I seem to just crawl out of bed and crawl through life?

How did they turn from sin immediately and completely? Darkness to light, never turning back, when it seems like all I do is turn back. What's wrong with me? If you never thought that, then I don't know.

You might not fit in right here. But, you know, sometimes those testimonies are too positive, but most often, it's because of the grid we listen to them with. But what if we added a few testimonies like this?

I used to be an angry man, like yell at the top of my lungs and punch through walls, sort of angry. I came to Jesus and wonderfully found forgiveness for all my angry words and actions.

[ 4 : 53 ] I found some relief for a while. I wasn't as angry. But to be honest, I still get really angry. And it's been happening more lately.

What about this? I used to care too much about what people think of my looks. I remember being called fat on the playground in fourth grade. It echoed in my mind for the rest of the day.

I can still see the look on his face when he said those words. It's been years since then. And my looks are still something I constantly think about every single day.

I've come to see that Jesus doesn't look at me the way others do. But I still find it hard to accept. It's a dark daily battle. And I wonder if it'll ever let up.

Or this. I used to be carefree. Everything was right. Had a good relationship with God. Had a good job. Had good friends. Life was easy.

[ 5 : 56 ] Don't get me wrong. There were challenges. But life was easy. But then, without warning, mom came down with incurable cancer. It wasn't just that I lost mom.

It was that I lost my life with mom. Will things ever be the same again? Or this.

There was a time when it seemed that my list of friends was a mile long. I was invited to all the parties and always had something to do. But now it seems that all my friends have moved on and left me right here.

No one calls anymore. But worse than that, everyone I get up the nerve to call rarely picks up. I know there's no friend but Jesus.

But is Jesus really enough when there's no one else? Those are a little bit more realistic, aren't they? You know, the Christian life is not one long celebration of successes.

[ 7 : 00 ] The Christian life is one long struggle of fits and starts. Jesus did not come for those who have it all together, nor did he come for those who get it all together after coming to him.

Jesus came for those who are tired of new resolutions, new plans, new diets, and new promises. Jesus came for those who take one step forward and three steps back. Jesus came for those who grow, but so very slowly.

Jesus came for people like you and me. That was his plan all along. This morning when we see something amazing. Jesus is bringing about a kingdom that we would never imagine.

And what we're going to see is not just meant to astonish us and about this kingdom, but to cheer us on to Jesus through fits and starts. And where we're going is don't give up.

Nothing will be able to stop the full salvation of God in Jesus. Don't give up. Nothing will be able to stop the full salvation of God in Jesus Christ.

[ 8 : 10 ] And we're, well, we're going to break this out in three points. First one is the kingdom has come. The kingdom has come. Our text finishes off this section of teaching, which we looked at last week.

You know, we've seen lots of miracles and now he's begun this section of teaching. It ends with primarily focused on two parables here. You know, like the parable of the soils, which we studied last week.

You know, the sower that goes out and four different soils that lands in. These parables are about are about seeds sowing in the ground. Wonderfully relatable stories.

Everyone in an agrarian society would know about these types of things for a story. But unlike the parable of soils, these parables are not actually really stories.

I know I just told you they're stories. Now they're not really stories. You know, because they have no plot. There's not really a plot. They're really similes. You know, like so-and-so is like, I don't know, this or that.

[ 9 : 15 ] You know, they're similes. They're simple comparisons meant to teach us what the kingdom of God is like. So the kingdom of God is the heading there. The kingdom of God is like blank. To which I compare the kingdom of God?

Blank. The kingdom of God is like a seed. That's what they tell us. Look in verse 26. The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed. Verse 30 and 31.

And he said, with what? Should I compare the kingdom of God or what parable should I use for it? It's like a grain of mustard seed. That's sown in the ground. Now, we've got to take this in for just a moment.

Psalms 103, 19. One of my favorite little verses. The kingdom, the Lord has set his throne in the heavens and his kingdom rules over all. Kingdom. Same word in our text. Daniel 4.

His dominion is everlasting dominion. His kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing. He does according to his will among the hosts of heaven.

[10:11] That's his kingdom. He's the king. He rules over all. So if that's true, now how would you expect Jesus to finish the sentence when he says the kingdom of God is like a mountain, you know?

I mean, you know, a monstrous mountain or maybe like an expansive, endlessly interesting valley. Maybe like the rainforest in the Amazon or something like that or an uncontrollable ocean, but definitely not like a seed.

Are we right? Am I alone here? I'm definitely not like a seed and let alone like a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds. The smallest seeds, Jesus knew. One millimeter, well, the smallest seed people knew.

Jesus knows everything. One millimeter in diameter, it would take like over 700 seeds to reach, to equal one gram, which is only one twenty-eighth of an ounce.

Okay? Take this in. That's how small this seed is. So what Jesus is saying is, have you ever plunge your hand into a bag of grass seed? The kingdom of God is like that, only smaller.

[11:20] Now, what? You know, like, what are we supposed to take this in? You know, all throughout the Bible, the kingdom of God is God's rule in heaven and on earth. And in the Old Testament, his kingdom came in the form of a king with a people and a land where the rule of God was followed.

It was a magnificent kingdom under the reign of David and Solomon and others. The people lived with their God in the land in safety. But obviously, you know, the story of the Old Testament, eventually they fell away or thrown off the land.

The kingdom, for all that they knew, was over. But Jesus arrives and says, the kingdom of God is here. I pointed this out last week, but I'm going to say it again. The time is fulfilled. His first words in the Gospel of Mark, time is fulfilled.

The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel. The kingdom has come, but not in a way that we would imagine. I remember years ago when you could travel, Kim and I went to New York City to visit her cousin and lived on the Upper West Side.

And, you know, we went to Madison Avenue where all the stores are, you know, Gucci, Armani, all that type stuff. Kim was shopping and I was nearly bored to tears. So I was outside pacing the sidewalk and I don't know, thinking about stuff and walking around.

[12:34] I began to see people putting up a barricade, like on one particular street. And so I just kind of casually walked over there. There were people kind of gathering around the barricade and, you know, like, what in the world is going on?

They're barricading off a road and I thought it was very interesting. So I finally had this tourist next to me. I said, what's going on? I don't know where they're from.

They said, your president is coming. I was like, well, that's cool. Then I'll just stay right here. So I think I text Kim and come out here. The president, sure enough, like a few minutes later, several police cars and three limos.

The middle one was obviously where the president Obama was in with bulletproof, four inch thick walls. I mean, it's incredible to see. He rode by and then there's this guy sitting in the back of this van with an M16 just like this.

You're like, whoa, that's the way we would expect the kingdom of God to come. To ride into Rome in power. To do something that's so visible, so obvious that displays his power to all the world.

[13:42] Jesus says the kingdom comes as a seed. Klein Snodgrass says this. What a name, right? You know, a name only a mother could love. You know, the kingdom, but he wrote an incredible book on parable.

The kingdom, which has already begun in Jesus, does not come with a glorious bang and the defeat of Rome. Rather, it comes unexpectedly, almost unnoticed. The kingdom of God comes in a

way that we would never imagine.

It's so little, so seemingly insignificant that most people wouldn't even notice it at all. To the disciples, Jesus is saying, I know you thought the kingdom would come and bring about an impressive end to Roman rule and usher in a new day of peace and safety and security.

That's not what I had planned. So don't be thrown off by what appears unimpressive now. Do you get that? That's what he's saying. Don't be thrown off by what appears unimpressive now. But to us, the kingdom has come and it is still this way.

In a lot of ways, what this text is saying, most of what the Lord is doing in your life right now is hidden. Look at verse 22. For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest and nothing, nor is anything secret except to come to light.

[15:11] Now that's a wonderful verse. What the Lord is doing will be made manifest. It will come to light, but right now, it's secret. It's hidden.

If you are following the Lord Jesus Christ, the real meaning of your life and its kingdom impact is hidden and secret. That's why our life so often feels like fits and starts.

That's why we're tempted to throw in the towel. I read a story earlier this week about a man named Clarence Jones. He felt a call to pioneer missionary work in South America.

In the 1920s, he pursued it with all his heart. He expected God to do great things. He prayed for it. He bent his whole life towards this mission, towards this person, towards this opportunity, but almost right away, it seemed every door closed and his opportunity fizzled out.

He was discouraged and broken, and I quote, he said, I was unable to shake the feeling of total inadequacy and failure and chagrin that his obsession, that my obsession with South America had made me look like a fool.

[16:17] Get this, he left missions, went to the Navy, but was rejected, ironically, for poor vision. You ever felt like that? Ever felt useless for God because you kept getting sidelined?

Ever felt like your work has no eternal value? Ever wondered what the diapers, dishes, and discipline have to do with advancing the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ?

It should not, well, according to this proverb, it should not unnerve you that you don't know all of what the Lord is doing in your life. It should not unnerve you. How could you know what the Lord is doing?

Right now, it's in seed form. It's hidden. It's secret. You're following Jesus Christ. The real meaning of your life is hidden in secret. This is right where you'll be tempted to throw in the towel.

Say, I'm done with it. I'm not going to church anymore. I'm done with it. I'm not going to work this job anymore. You know, it's right when you'll begin to throw in the towel. David Garland says it like this, so helpful.

[17:20] One needs a special faith to risk trusting one's whole life to something that lies hidden. Now, if you let that sink in, that's amazing. One needs special faith to risk trusting one's whole life to something that lies hidden.

The world says, man, if it's hidden, you're just a fool. That's what is behind 1 Corinthians 15. If we trusted in Christ for this life alone, then we are most to be pitied.

Why? Because he lived for a hidden treasure. If you're living for a treasure, you can see, then you're missing what this text is trying to say. Don't give up now, even if you look like a fool.

The kingdom of God has come, but it's come. And the seed, the kingdom is growing. Point two. The kingdom is growing. Both of these parables emphasize the growth of the kingdom. Look at verse 27.

He sleeps and rises. The seed sprouts and grows. The earth produces. First the blade, the ear, then the full grain in the ear. So it's just kind of this wonderful growth. 32.

[18:23] When it's sown in the ground, it grows. It becomes larger than all the garden plants. It puts out large branches. So it's growing. The seed just deposits in the ground.

It begins to grow. The mustard seed, it begins to grow as well. The point is, the kingdom of God is like farming. When a seed lands in good soil, it instantaneously, spontaneously, begins to grow.

It lands in that soil and it just grows. As long as there's no deer and rabbits around to eat it up, it grows. The seed grows and you'll be able to pluck the harvest for long. That's what he's saying.

The kingdom of God is like a seed. When it lands in the ground, nothing will stop it from growing. The parable is meant to transfer a wonderful certainty that God will finish what he's doing.

Nothing will stop this seed from bearing fruit. That's what he's kind of trying to say. Nothing will stop it from growing. Nothing will stop it from coming to completion and fruition. The kingdom will grow. [ 19 : 24 ] Yachim, Jeremiah, says it like this. No doubts with regard to his mission, no scorn, no lack of faith, no impatience can make Jesus waver in his certainty that out of nothing, ignoring all failure, God is carrying on his beginnings to completion.

That's what Jesus is saying to his disciples. Yes, it looks so unimpressive, but it will grow. Trust me. I'm 100% sure it's going to grow. Nothing's going to stop it. No doubts, no scorn, no lack of faith, no impatience, no failure.

It's going to stop it. All that is necessary is to take God seriously, take him into account in spite of all outward appearance. So the kingdom of God grows, but the kingdom of God grows without our help.

You notice that? Look in verse 27. He sleeps and rises. Now that's just a way of saying time passed. Not like a special emphasis on what happened while he's sleeping.

Except that, you know, time passed and he wasn't working. He sleeps and rises and the seed sprouts and grows. He knows not how. It's mysterious to him.

[ 20 : 35 ] You know, he doesn't see what's going on below the ground. That's what he's saying. The earth produces by itself. Literally, the earth is automatically. Same, what's the basis of our word automatically?

It produces of itself. The kingdom of God is like that. It grows without our help. Before you throw your lot into the work of the Lord, rest assured the Lord doesn't need your work for his kingdom to grow.

Isn't that amazing? Apostle Paul said like this, God who made the world and everything in it being Lord of heaven and earth does not live in temples made by man nor is he served by human hands as though he needed anything. He gives all humankind life and breath and everything.

He's saying the living God is not like the lowercase gods of this world that needs people to bring him things to be happy. He's happy. He's the one who makes people happy by giving them everything and so he doesn't need help.

But there's a very important point here. If the kingdom of God needed our help then our failures would cause the kingdom of God to fail. Right? If the kingdom of God needed our help then our failures would cause it to fail.

[ 21 : 44 ] But since the kingdom of God doesn't need our help none of our fears or lack of faith or impatience or failures can stop the kingdom from growing. That's so releasing. We're not meant to bear the burden.

Augustine said command what thou wilt and give what I command. What you command Lord? Tell me what to do but give me everything I need. You know we're commanded to go and make disciples of all nations but we're never meant to believe that it all depends upon us.

We're commanded to train up our children the way they should go proclaim the gospel and we're never meant to do it in our own strength. We're commanded to throw our lives into building healthy churches. We're never meant to build a monument to human gifts or human accolades or talents or strength.

That's not the point. Those are the churches the Lord leaves. The kingdom of God grows by His power. I just love that.

I recently read a couple years ago now about a guy who bought a house with a strand of bamboo in the driveway or along the driveway. He decided to get rid of it like every other owner of a house with bamboo.

[ 22 : 50 ] I know it's fun for the kids. Let's eliminate this stuff. You know he cut it down he took an axe to the roots and just chopped them all up.

So he cuts it down takes an axe to the root he dug down and dug up as much of the roots as possible. Like I'm dragging out every single root I can get my hands on.

Then he poured plant poison all over the roots of this bamboo over everything that was left everything that was in that hole. He filled the hole with several feet of gravel and then taking no chances paved over it with cement.

Two years later he noticed a sprig in the middle of his cement. Yeah the kingdom of God is like that. Mow us down. Kick our teeth in. Take our Lord to the cross. Kingdom of God will grow.

[ 23 : 58 ] Keep behind me Satan. Kingdom of God will not stop growing. No obstacle is too large. No failure too great. We see the folly of the gospel if you want to use those terms from 1 Corinthians in that in the cross is where you see it in the most.

You see it obviously in the seed. You see this thing that it grows all on its own but you see it in the cross where they railroaded our Lord thinking surely this would snuff out the kingdom of God but his defeat was his final hour or his finest hour.

Listen you can't stop the work of God in your heart. You can't kill it. you can frustrate it but if the Lord has planted the seed in your heart none of your fears or failures will be able to stop it from growing.

That's the way the kingdom of God advances. Point three the kingdom will come in full. The kingdom will come in full. Wonderfully it does not always remain a seed it comes to bear fruit. Look in verse 28 the kingdom produced by itself for the blade first the blade then the ear then the full ear in the grain or the full grain in the ear when the grain is ripe he at once puts in the sickle.

[ 25 : 19 ] Verse 31 it's like a grain of mustard seed sown in the ground the smallest of all seeds when it's sown it grows up and becomes larger than any of the garden plants and puts out large branches so that all the birds of the air can make shades or make nests in its shade the kingdom of God will grow and bear fruit that's what you know it's very simple these proverbs are just wonderfully simple we need simple proverbs for simple people you know what began as a mustard seed it just works in the ground and it shoots up and it grows it's bigger than any of the shrubs you know we're not supposed to envision like this massive sequoia or something like that we're supposed to envision just a big shrub you know those big shrubs that are hard to kill when they get big in your yard you know and then the birds of the air come and nest in them I like this a lot one of the main prophecies of the coming kingdom is that the light would go out to the Gentiles and the end of the earth would hear about it and one of the pictures again and again in the prophets in Ezekiel 17:36 and Daniel 4 is that the coming kingdom would be like a tree that birds come and nest in every kind of bird so that's a whisper of every nation being reached through the gospel so this little seed is going to have birds from everywhere all over the earth this little man this little craftsman from Nazareth it's going to be a seed that goes to the ground and brings people from every tribe to own people and nation you see how wonderfully simple it is but amazing it is these parables are you know they're able to be understood and we're coming to see why those verses 21 through 25 are placed right there one day all will see what God is doing and Jesus one day the kingdom will no longer be a seed one day the kingdom that God is building and Jesus will no longer be hidden it will be manifested it will no longer be secret it will come to light look at verse 21 again is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under bed and not on a stand for nothing hidden nothing is hidden except to be manifest nothing is secret except to come to light you know another translation of that verse 21 could be does the light because the article is there does the light come to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand it's a reference

Jesus is referring to himself in parable he's comparing himself to an oil lamp have you ever been in an old house like an oil lamp you know if you try to set it down you wouldn't see anything like the oil lamp only had it needs to be raised up in the center of the room and then it makes the whole room glow and so Jesus is comparing in a parable form to himself that he's the light of the world that he came to drive out the darkness with the light of life the idea is that yes it is a parable yes it's hidden yes it's secret but one day the whole world will see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ after the kingdom comes to fruition and completion all things will be made right the people assume that the kingdom of God would bring about a reckoning right that's what they wanted a righting of wrongs an overthrow sometimes we want a revolution you know an overflow of every evil power masquerading as light Jesus promises that day will come you remember

Matthew 24 he said the gospel the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as testimony to all nations and then the end will come we see this end in parable form look in verse 29 when the grain is ripe at once he puts in the sickle which is a sickle is what you'd use to strike down the grain or to harvest the grain because the harvest has come the Lord himself is the farmer he takes out the sickle to reap what is sown this is the day of the Lord this is the day that was promised this is the day that was prophesied about for those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ this day will be our transfer from this world into the world that never ends be finally free from fear failure and despair for those who refuse to follow Jesus Christ this day will be a judgment other places he talks about the wheat growing among the tares and then the judgment will come when he comes with the

sickle to separate out this is a reference to Joel 3 remember Joel the locusts had come and devoured so the pestilence had come devoured the people and Joel's calling the people to turn to the Lord in response to this he's warning them to turn on the day of the Lord this is the day when the sickle come this is the day of the Lord so turn before then for it's too late

Joel 3 look it's put in the sickle for the harvest is ripe go in tread for the wine press is full same image in Revelation 14 the vats overflow for their evil is great the Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem and the heavens and the earth quake this is the day that they thought was coming when Jesus arrived but that day is not coming yet Jesus said there's going to be a growth period there's going to be this seed period there's going to be this time for the gospel to go forth but then the Lord will come and the heavens and the earth will quake because the Lord roars from Zion but the Lord is a refuge to his people a stronghold to the people of Israel and so turn now while there's still time look in 23 and 24 if anyone has ears let him hear pay attention to what you hear with the measure you use it will be measured to you and still more will be added to you those are judgment type language you know you'll be assessed for how you hear you won't be assessed for how you work you won't be assessed for what you do you won't be assessed for how many people you convert to

Jesus Christ or something like that you know you'll be assessed by how you hear whether you heard this message and whether you turn and so that's what I preach to you the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ there's no under name in this name you cannot be saved in that final day but if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you believe that his death was not just the death of some poor man from Nazareth but his death was your death that on the cross God punished him he bore!

[ 32 : 21 ] all the wrath that you deserve all your sins were credited to him so that he might bear the penalty bear the punishment for your sins and the death you deserve so that you might walk in newness of life that he might give you new life so that the same spirit that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead might raise you up and cause you to walk in newness of life today is the day of salvation if you don't harden your heart so don't give up that's the full picture nothing's going to stop nothing's going to stop if crushing our savior didn't stop it nothing else will nothing will be able to stop the full salvation of Jesus Christ I was hit broadside with the content of this message earlier this week reading about

David Brainerd you might you know I don't know if you know anything about David Brainerd David Brainerd was born in the early 1700s when Jonathan Edwards he was born in the year when Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley were 14 years old so the world was about to be turned upside down he was alive for the first great awakening was a dear friend of Jonathan Edwards but his life was very hard he could relate to the testimonies at the beginning not the ones we sometimes hear he lost his father at nine years old he lost his mother just before he turned 14 top it off Brainerd likely inherited a physical tendency to depression what they call melancholy back in the day he was raised in a church but raised in religion with no gospel no grace after early schooling he took up farming but his heart wasn't in it he wanted a proper education he wanted to think deeply so he made plans to attend

Yale and inter-pastoral ministry before he was even a Christian back when pastoral ministry was cool I guess that laughs on that one all right fair enough this summer before or the summer before attending at age 21 he was miraculously born again just like you were greatest miracle you'll ever experience but everything didn't get easier I like testimonies like that his life didn't get easier during his first year at Yale he got measles and had to go home to get better during his second year he got tuberculosis and was sent home because he was so sick he was spitting up blood when he got back for his third year at Yale things had changed the great awakening had swept in Jonathan Edwards had preached at a convocation or something at Yale how cool is that you know so Edwards preached there and he stoked the great awakening so the great awakening had changed everything but it made Yale a little bit complicated would just say that the administration they would say was not spiritual but all these students were alive they were awakened by the work of God in the spirit and so there was lots of conflict between the administration and the students on well you don't see the awakening and all that's going on and so Brainerd was referencing one of his teachers that wasn't so spiritual and said the person has no more grace than a chair and apparently that was a major takedown back then and Brainerd was expelled for life from Yale he was broken he wrote to the university numerous times tried to right his wrong he was cut off from pastoral ministry there's no way from the interpastoral ministry without a degree he was in despair

he thought his life's mission was over and snuffed out several years later he was a missionary to the Indians he continued to battle his tuberculosis depression loneliness and many other darkneses he saw little fruit and in his diaries wrote often of how he lamented that he did not love the Indians more four years into his career as a missionary he died of tuberculosis at 29 years old in the home of Jonathan

Edwards up close Brainerd's life was all toil and no harvest but after he died Jonathan Edwards took his journals published them in 1749 and they have still not gone out of print numerous missionaries point to the greatest influence outside the Bible being the diaries of David Brainerd men like Henry Martin William Carey the father of modern missions Robert McShane David Livingston went to Africa Andrew Murray Jim Elliot who went to Ecuador reflecting on his life John Piper asked why has this life had such a remarkable influence the answer is that David Brainerd's life is a vivid powerful testimony to the truth that

[ 38 : 00 ] God can and does use weak sick discouraged beat down lonely struggling saints who cry to him day and night to accomplish amazing things for his glory!

love to hear the real meaning of your life is hidden how could you know what God is doing don't give up don't give up don't turn don't turn off don't turn away press on there's harvest coming the Lord is coming don't grow weary I want to leave us with a few words from that diary that David Brannan when I really enjoy

God I feel my desires of him the more insatiable and my thirsting after holiness the more unquenchable oh for holiness you ever prayed like that oh for more of God in my soul oh this pleasing pain this this pleasing pain of satisfaction and yet not being satisfied where you are it makes my soul press after God oh that I might feel this continual hunger to reach forward in the narrow way for the full enjoyment and possession of the heavenly!

heavenly inheritance oh that I might never loiter on my heavenly journey so don't give up far more than that never loiter press on the Lord is here father we we offer our hearts to you promptly and sincerely you are the one who made us you formed us in our mother's womb we're fearfully and wonderfully made all our days are before you every word in our mouths every thought in our mind you know it all together well even the darkness is not dark to you for darkness is as light to you we live our lives before your face and we bow before you not just because you made us because you remade us through Jesus Christ you gave us our life back and now we offer our life back to you as an offering that we would be a living sacrifice oh Lord help us

Lord your word says it's the glory of God to conceal things and so often life feels painfully hidden but we bow low we rend our hearts we raise our hands we say Lord would you come and do it again would you take our puny little offerings make a treasure would you take our weak and failing prayers and bring forth a harvest Lord would you take our lives God so that one day we'll see that they weren't thrown away at something that was just a myth they were thrown into the hands of the everlasting God who took and used our hours and our minutes and our days and our years to make much for the glory of Jesus

[ 42 : 06 ] Christ we offer our hearts we offer our lives in Jesus name Amen You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens Tennessee for more information about Trinity Grace please visit us at [TrinityGraceAthens.com](http://TrinityGraceAthens.com)