

God's Work Can't Be Stopped

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[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you'll be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Take your Bible now, let's go to Matthew chapter 13 and verse 24.

And I'm going to tell you the stories here that Jesus tells. He's telling parables. There's a lot of interesting things here we could take a long time to think about. But it is interesting that Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables.

And then later he went alone with the guys and explained the parables. So in other words, he would sell it out to everybody. People wouldn't understand exactly what was going on. Jesus would then meet with them in private.

And some of you may not understand the importance of being involved in discipleship. But a lot of times you don't catch everything when you're in a public setting and the message is given.

And even the apostles went along with Jesus. And Jesus was a perfect preacher and teacher. But they went along with him and said, could you explain what you were saying to us so we'd know?

[0 : 5 9] So I want to challenge you to get involved in discipleship, in foundations. He's out of town for a while, but John Pearson's in charge of that. He'll be back in another week or so. And you could talk to him or one of the staff members and you could find out how you could get involved.

So you can ask questions and so you can have a personal time of talking with somebody about the Bible. So you can grow and learn because we want to know. The Bible's not for information. It's for transformation.

And so I hope as you read and study, God does a work in your life. So in the story, Jesus is telling some stories. And the first story that he tells is the story of the good seed and the weed.

The good seed and the weed. The tares and the wheat. So he tells that story. Verse 24. It says another parable. You'll find that phrase throughout the chapter. Another parable.

Put him forth. He said the kingdom of God is like when a man sows good seed and his enemy comes in the night and sows tares or weeds and then goes away. There was a seed.

[1 : 5 7] There was a weed in their day called a bearded darno. And it looked very much like wheat. And once you could tell them apart, you couldn't really pull one up because the roots got intertwined.

And so if you were to pull up the weed, you'd have pulled up the wheat. And so everybody listening understands that story. They're all farmers. They all understand that story. And so the only way not to harm the wheat was to wait until the time of the harvest.

They actually had a law in Rome that you cannot sow these bad seeds, these tares, these weeds. You can't sneak into your enemy's field at night. And so it was actually against the law.

It was a law on the books. And so when Jesus told that story, they understood. An enemy wanted to harm one of his enemies. He goes in the night, sows some bad seed, ruins the man's harvest.

So they understood that idea. The second story he tells that we're looking at today is found in verse 31. You've got your Bible open. Look at verse 31. It's the mustard seed. Another parable.

[3 : 00] Put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed. And a man sows it in his field. And it was a very small seed. It was the smallest seed they used in their gardens.

It was the smallest seed, not the smallest seed in the world necessarily. It was the smallest seed that they used in their gardens. But when you planted this little bitty, inconspicuous seed, it would grow up into a great big herb.

And it turned actually into a tree big enough that birds could come and roost in it. So it's the smallest in the proverbial sense, the smallest garden seed of their day. And he was showing them something really small can turn into something really big.

So the first one is a good seed and an enemy tries to mess up the harvest. The second one, you know, it's very likely that the apostles are beginning to wonder. They've been following Jesus all the time now, several months and breaking into years now.

And it doesn't seem like there's a lot of success. People come and hear Jesus speak. Then they leave. It gets to the point in the story that before long, Jesus even looks at his own apostles and says, Everybody else is going back.

[4 : 04] Are you going back also? And very likely saying to them, look, it looks small, but God is really going to do something big with it before it's over. The next one is found in verse 33.

And it's leaven. Look at verse 33. Another parable spake unto them, the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.

And so this leaven is actually a little bit different than what we would do today. When a lady got married, her family actually gave her this little ball of dough that had the leaven in it. And it was passed from one family to the other.

And they put that in the wheat, in the meal. And that helped to make the bread. And so this was a piece of dough. And it had been kept over from a previous bacon.

And it had fermented. And so they used that to keep it. But when Jews think about leaven, it's almost always evil influence. It's the idea of rotting or putrefaction.

[5 : 02] It was a symbol of evil to them. In the Feast of the Passover, they were told, get rid of all leaven. Get it out of your house. And so in this story, it's hard to tell which one he's using this as.

Because a lot of times it's evil. But in this story, it seems to talk about it being transforming. That it changed the bread and made something different out of it. And like the kingdom and the message of the gospel changes lives.

So now I want to go with you to verse 36. So the first thing we looked at are the stories. You can go back and read those stories and think about those stories. In verse 2, he explains the wheat and the tares.

We get the lesson of the wheat and tares. Look at verse 36. Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And his disciples came unto him, saying, declaring to us the parable of the tares of the field.

I wish you'd take just a second and underline something here. If you really want to grow, you pay real good attention when somebody's teaching and preaching a Bible. But if you really, really want to grow, you get in a smaller group.

- [6 : 04] If you really, really want to grow, you get around other people where you can have discussions. And so when it was all over, Jesus sat down and they came to the house. And all the crowd went away. And Jesus is alone now with the disciples.
- And the disciples said, man, we listen to you, buddy. And Jesus, we appreciate the story, but we didn't get it. So tell us, explain to us, declare unto us, please, the story of the tares in the field.
- And then Jesus explains it. Look, if you would, in verse 37. The man that's sowing the seed is the son of man. That's Jesus. That's God sowing the seed. The field is the world, the whole world.
- The good seed are the children of the kingdom. Those are the children of God. The bad seed is the children of the wicked one. The enemy is the devil, verse 39. And the reaping take place in verse 40 at the end of the world when they'll be separated.
- And we'll find out what's going on. So we'll find out if it was a tare, a weed, or if it was wheat, good seed, wheat, bad seed, tare. And we're going to find out which one it was.
- [7 : 07] So let me give you some lessons that you might write down from this passage of Scripture. Number one lesson that we get out of this passage of Scripture is Satan is alive and well in the world.
- In the story, Jesus said, the enemy came and he sowed bad seed in the field. And that enemy is the devil. It is very easy in 2014 for you to begin to doubt that Satan is alive and well on planet Earth.
- That Satan is doing a thing in the world. But you need to know that he is. The Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 5 in verse 8. 1 Peter 5 verse 8 says, Be sober. That means be awake.
- Be alert. Be vigilant. That means keep your eyes open. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Do you understand that if you believe the Bible, you know this, that God is at work in the world.
- Amen? But not only is God at work in the world, the devil is at work in the world. And he would do whatever he could to destroy your faith. He would do whatever he could to destroy the church. He would do whatever he could to destroy your family.
- [8 : 15] He is trying to destroy the good seed. He wants to ruin the harvest. He wants to ruin the harvest. He does what he can to hinder the good seed from producing fruit.
- Jesus taught Christians to stay alert and watch out for Satan and his temptation. Matthew chapter 26 and verse 41. Matthew chapter 26 and verse 41.
- The Bible says, Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Guess what's going on? As I loved God and as I served God, I could even be praying and going to church and doing all the things I ought to do and not be aware that the devil was attacking.
- I always find that verse, one of those funny verses in the Bible, basically you're supposed to pray with one eye open. You're supposed to be praying, God, I'm asking you to work in my life and I'm asking you, but I know the devil's out there and he's like a roaring lion and he's out to get me and he's out to destroy me.
- And so, Lord, I'm praying, but I am watching. I am being careful. Because sometimes when you let your guard down and sometimes when you're not being, you're not being as alert as you ought to be spiritually alert.
- [9 : 27] We're talking about spiritually alert. There's a guy in our church here that's a policeman. And he tells me sometimes we're, I've been placed and he says, my spotty sense is going off.
- He said, I feel like something ain't right here. And so, you ought to be alert, you ought to be feeling, you ought to be knowing what is going on around you. That's the first lesson.

Could I just stop and say, men, you are leaders of a home. God has given you a beautiful wife. He has given you children. He has given you the opportunity to lead a home.

You need to know that the devil is going to do everything in his power to destroy your children's faith. He is going to do everything he can to get them out of serving God.

He is going to do everything he can to bring sin into your family. And I know this. I say this from a heart of really loving you. I know how many of us lose our children.

[10 : 24] And I don't blame you. And I don't judge you. And I'm not doing that at all. But can I just say to you, boy, you've got a big responsibility. So many people have been brought up in Christian homes and church and taught the Bible.

And as soon as they're 18, they're gone. They have found out that oftentimes by seventh grade, kids are already checked out in their head, checked out in their heart. They're only sitting here because they have to. And as soon as they're able, they're not coming back.

If I were you, I would know Satan is alive and well. And he wants my kids. And he wants to destroy what's going on. And I'm going to work as hard as I can. I'm going to pray. I'm going to watch for evil influences.

I'm going to make sure they get the right influences. I'm going to do everything in my power to take care of my family. If that's true, would you say amen? Take it seriously. Take it seriously. Take it seriously with your children.

Take it seriously with your grandchildren. There's a second truth taught in that story. That is that we should be careful judging. We should be careful judging. Those that appear to be good may, in fact, be bad.

[11 : 24] Those that appear to be bad may, in fact, be good. You don't know all the facts. Here's a story told. The guys come in and the servants are out working the field.

They come in. They say, Lord, you know, the plants have gotten big enough now. And we're looking and we can tell that there's some tares, some weeds in the field. They used to look like they were wheat.

But now we know they're not wheat. Didn't you plant all good seed? And he says, of course, I planted all good seed. The servants should have known he planted all good seeds. But when those seeds were little and the plants first came springing out of the ground, they looked so much alike.

No one could tell them apart. And now with a little bit of growth, they appear to be different. And they come in and they say, do you want us to uproot the bad ones and get rid of the bad ones?

He said, no, no, no, no, no. So you be real careful because you just might harm the harvest. Can I just stop and say Christians are some of the worst judges in the world? Man, we're so judgmental.

[12 : 25] We've real quickly sized everybody up and we mark them by our set of standards. And we mark them by what we think is right. And we go around judging everybody. And here's a story that Jesus says.

And he said, the enemy is so bad seeded in there, but you just leave it alone. I'll take care of the judging. Did you catch that? I'm going to show it to you in the Bible. He said, you leave it alone. I'll take care of the judging. Look at what Paul said about judging in 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 5.

Don't judge too quickly. This is a really crazy way that Paul explains it. There were people that were judging Paul. Can you imagine that? Even the preacher, the guy who writes so much of the New Testament is being judged.

And look at what he says in 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 5 and some following verses. He says, but with me, it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you. With me, it's a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of any man's judgment.

Paul said, hey, you guys can judge me all you want. Not a big deal to me. I really don't care if you judge me. I don't even judge myself. Look at what he says. Verse 4. 1 Corinthians 4, verse 4.

[13 : 31] I know nothing by myself, yet I am not hereby justified. He that judges me is the Lord. Verse 5. Got your Bible open. I hope you'll notice what it says.

It says, therefore judge nothing before the time. Sounds just like this passage. Until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, then shall every man have praise of God.

Two or three interesting things. If you've got your Bible open there, you need to underline, they'll have praise of God. They're going to realize, God knows what's going on, and he's in charge, and he's going to be rewarding.

And Paul says, you're judging me. I don't judge myself, and I don't care about you judging me. And the truth is, you don't really know what's going on. You don't know where I live. That's what Paul's saying. You don't know where I live.

You don't know what I deal with. You don't know what's going on in my home. You don't know what's happened in my life. And so, why don't you just leave it alone until God brings out all the stuff nobody understands, all the stuff that's happened that you don't know about, and let God do the judging.

[14 : 31] Why don't you let that happen? Don't judge until the Lord does. Please listen here just a second. Here's a big lesson. There's wheat, and there's weeds, and they're growing in the same field.

And you go out there, and you're looking. You're pretty sure that's a tear. You're pretty sure that's a bad weed. You're pretty sure that ought to be taken out of there. But if you mess with it, you're going to hurt the wheat.

What might seem like one horrible mistake and bring judgment might not be the final and determining event. You know, sometimes we look at people, and we see something really bad, and we see a big failure, and we immediately say, ha, he's not saved.

He's not a child of God. That's not a good person. And we judge. But we don't know if it could have just been a really lousy day. It could have been a really lousy season in his life.

I don't know what all is going on. Other times, a guy is just really great, and we're all sure he's the greatest man of God. He may lead big institutes all across America, but sooner or later we find out he wasn't what he said he was.

[15 : 37] He was a big shot, and everybody knew him, and everybody loved him, but he wasn't what he said he was. So here's what he was saying. Don't be judging the seed. Don't be judging.

It's best to leave the judging to the one that knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. The only one with the right to judge is the Lord himself.

The Lord himself. Now, I need to stop here and say something. There are two kinds of judging so you don't get things wrong. First off, it's so easy, as independent Baptists, as Baptists, as Southerners, to walk around and go, I can size you up pretty good.

I know you. I'll look at your hair. I'll look at your clothes. I'll look at the music you listen to. I'll look at the events you do. I'll look at all these things, and I will determine who you are. That is totally wrong on our part.

You can get mad about that if you want, but that is totally wrong on our part. You don't know what's going on. And by the way, if you ever travel the world, you'd find out maybe the music you think is the only right music, they don't even use that in other parts of the world.

[16 : 37] And maybe Bob Jones never got a class over there. Maybe. Amen. And so you're going to have to figure out, you're going to have to figure out somewhere along the way, I'm not really made to be the judge on this planet. I just got judged.

I feel it. Happening big time. At the same time, there's a lot of things I've got to judge. Okay? I don't need to be judging you, but I do need to be judging my decisions, and my activities, and the things that I do.

And I do need to discern. I need to say, this is right, and this is wrong, and that's what I'm going to do in my life. I just need to be real careful. We have given Christianity a pretty bad name because of the way we treat other people with lightning quick judgments.

A lady in our church is looking at moving to another state, and so she's talking to me, and she said, you know, I've got tattoos, and it hasn't been a problem at this church, but that church you're telling me about and that state, will it be okay?

And I said, well, if it ain't, that's their problem. Amen? But see, man, you've got a tattoo, and everybody's like, real quick, judge, we're not in the judging business.

[17 : 48] Amen? I'm not your servant. You're not my servant. We're all his servants, and we stand or fall before him. If you understand that, say amen. If you're mad at me, say amen.

Okay, no, don't say amen. Number three, lessons from the mustard seed. Lessons from the mustard seed. Verse 32, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it's grown, it's the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

I'm just going to be honest with you. There's a ton of ways these parables are explained, and tons of opinions, and so I'm just going to give you my opinion, because the truth is, Jesus didn't explain them.

He explained the good seed and the weeds, and explained all about that, so we know that one. There's no question about what's going on there, but in this mustard seed one, I'm going to give you my opinion, and in my opinion, and the idea given here is that the work of God starts small, but God will grow it into something great.

The work of God starts small. Witnessing, serving, getting the gospel out starts with one person. One person set on fire for God will spread the fire. It might seem that the work of Jesus was so small, just him and a few disciples in such a large world, yet God was going to change history with them.

[19 : 08] Don't let the smallness of your church, the smallness of your work, the smallness of your witness discourage you. And I need to ask you to look this way just a second. You know one of the most discouraging things for me in Peru? When I lived in Idaquipa, Peru, I'm in a country that has a popular religion, the Roman Catholic religion, and I am teaching Bible and explaining how to be saved strictly by the Bible, not by going through any saints and not by any work and not by any merit that you do, but by what Jesus did on the cross at Calvary.

And there's a handful of people attending my church, maybe in the beginning, maybe five, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, and all the people who were attending the church. And sometimes they'd say to me, wow, it seems to me like we must be wrong because nobody but us knows this stuff.

And that's an easy thing to think. Until you realize that the work that Jesus did started really small. Until you realize that there's a wide road and a wide gate and a lot of people find it and a narrow gate and few people find it.

And sometimes in the ministry you have, you might be thinking, I spent all these hours preparing this music. I spent all these hours preparing my Sunday school lesson. I disciple people and I work, but I'm not making a big difference.

But that little mustard seed that would have been inconspicuous, nobody would have thought much about it. It grows into a great big tree. Now when I was a kid, back at the end of the hippie days, they sang a song that said, it only takes a spark to get a fire going.

[20 : 36] And soon all those around can warm up in the glowing. That's how it is with God's love. Once you've experienced it, you'll spread his love to everyone. You'll want to pass it on. The song was called Pass It On.

I don't even know if they sing that anymore, but that was a kind of a song back when I was a kid. There's so much truth. Your little witness, your little praying, and your little giving, and your little doing, make more of an impact than you'd ever understand.

You've got to realize, it may be as small as a mustard seed, but there's a great big God involved in all of that. Go to verse 33. Fourth lesson. A lesson from the leaven.

Verse 33. Another parable spake he unto them. The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

So here's the story. You've got this little bit of part of leaven, and you've got this meal that was enough to feed a whole family, and all you need is a little bit of leaven, a little bit of yeast, and you put that in there, and it's going to completely transform that.

[21 : 40] Have you ever eaten unleavened bread? You know that little piece of bread we serve at the Lord's Supper? Wouldn't you love to have that with butter? Wouldn't you love to eat that? I mean, wouldn't that just be done rise, it's hard, it's dry?

I mean, honestly, we use that because of the symbol of unleavened, but boy, isn't it wonderful? You ever go to one of those restaurants, they bring you out that big chunk of bread, that knife and that big slab of butter, you know?

And you know what made the difference between the unleavened bread and the leavened bread was the leaven. And so there's a lesson, I think, in this, that being born again transforms the life of the individual.

Look, if you would, at 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 9. If the gospel gets in you, and again, this is my opinion, there's all sorts of opinions about these parables, and wherever you fall on that is fine with me.

But in this story, it seems to be a positive story. The whole thing seems to be positive, except that it's small, and the Lord's making a difference, and the enemy's trying to fight. So these stories, I think, go together.

[22 : 42] And so I want you to realize this. I want you to realize that if you're truly born again, if God begins a work in your life, He will change you. If you're born again and nothing's ever changed, you might ought to stop and examine yourself.

You might ought to find out, am I really born again? If the Word of God makes no difference in you. So in 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 9 that you're looking at behind my head or in your Bible, the Bible says, Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Don't let anybody deceive you. Don't let anybody trick you. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves of mankind, verse 10, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall enter the kingdom of heaven.

None of those gods are going to go to heaven. But look what he said in verse 11. He said, Can I just remind you people at Corinth that none of those bad guys are going to go to heaven?

And some of y'all used to be that. But what happened is the gospel got in, and it changes lives. It changes us. Look if you would at verse 11.

[23 : 48] And such were some of you, but you are washed. Write that down. You are washed. You have been cleansed. All your nastiness has been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ.

You are washed. You are sanctified. You are made holy. You are now a saint. You are no longer dirty. You are no longer dedicated to the wrong things. God has pulled you apart for himself, and you belong to him.

You've been washed. You've been sanctified. You've been justified. Do you know what justified means? Justified is a big word, and here's what it means. It doesn't really mean made just like you never sinned, because even before you sinned, you were not good anyway.

It means being made like Jesus. It means having Jesus' record put on your record. It means that when I get to heaven, and they pull up my history, and they want to find out who Austin Gardner is, here's what they're going to find out.

Born of a virgin. Perfect. Always obeying. Because they're going to read my past as what Jesus did. And when they look at Jesus, they're going to find my past, and he's going to say, I took care of that guy's past.

[24 : 54] Amen? You've been justified. I don't care who you are or where you've been, if you've trusted Jesus Christ. You have been cleaned up. You have been cleaned up.

Your past is gone. All things are washed away. Everything's made new. You're a new creature in Christ Jesus. Not only are you a new creature, you're sanctified. You're made holy. You're set aside to Jesus.

You belong to him. Not only that, not only that, he erased your past. When I was a missionary, I had to constantly go get my, I have to sit in this, my police record.

You have to owe everything you want to do. They want to know, did you have a criminal past? And so I would go get my criminal record, and I didn't have a criminal past. I'd go in and I'd prove it, and I'd have to turn that paper in and say, okay, we can allow you to do that.

Well, here's what happens when you get to heaven. I don't have a criminal past. I don't have a sinner past. How many of you realize you don't have a sinner past? Your sinner past has been taken care of by the blood of Jesus.

[25 : 57] When he died on the cross, he took your past, nailed it to the tree, and he mocked the devil and said, watch this. I can clean them up. We are trophies of his grace.

It has transformed us. That heaven, if it's symbolizing transforming, which is how I'm using it, you know what it did? It changed even the way a woman was treated.

Are you ready for this? A Jewish man woke up in the morning and said, God, I thank you. I'm not a woman. And women were treated like a piece of property. And they were never treated with great respect till Jesus came.

And you know what he did? He said, I'm going to make her a co-inheritor, a co-heir. In the past, a woman got no inheritance. In Jesus, she got an inheritance, just like the guy.

The Bible transforms everything. Can you understand that? Isn't that fantastic? The Lord God changes all of that, raises us up, and gives us our dignity back.

[26 : 59] But like the yeast, the transforming effect and work of the gospel and the work of Christ is not seen or noticed at first. You know, you might put that yeast in and it doesn't happen in two minutes.

It doesn't happen in 30 seconds. You're going to wait. But God is at work even when you don't see it. And can I just say this? It's going to turn the world upside down.

If you're born again, your whole life is going to change. In Acts chapter 17 and verse 6, when the preachers showed up, this is what they said, and when they found them, they drew out Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.

That's what Jesus does. He totally turns our world upside down. He changes us. He changes everything around us. He got in, and when you first got saved, you might not have noticed great changes, but you let a little bit of time pass.

I was sitting one day with Pastor Daniel Araujo, a pastor in Arequipa, and I told him, I said, you know, I've always been very impressed with you, brother. He said, why?

[28 : 08] I said, because you've got such a good past. And I said, you know, you've lived a good holy life. I've known you like 20 years, and you've always been a holy guy. You never had a drinking problem. You never had none of that.

And he said, I never had a drinking problem. I was an alcoholic. I was a drunkard, and I can't even know Jesus. He said, and the man you're looking at right now, is not the man you would have seen if you would have seen me when I got saved.

But God has changed my life. Amen? If you would have met my dad, if you would have met my dad, you would have met a man who was a fallen down drunk. You would have met a guy who committed a, he told me, he said, there ain't much sin you can name I hadn't done.

He walked into a little old country church on one morning, and that day, Jesus totally changed his life, and I never knew the guy that daddy told me about. Jesus changes lives.

Now let me give you the last thing today. Some lessons that we could take home. Here's some lessons I think you could take home. I want you to know that Satan is doing all he can to destroy your faith and the spiritual lives of those in your family.

[29 : 10] Please listen to me. I don't know how to say this to you, but I am a granddad and a dad, and I have grown children, and I want to tell you, Ben, Satan attacked my family. He still attacks my family.

Horrible things happen, but I so want my family to serve Jesus. When I'm dead and gone, I want them to still be serving Jesus. I really want that.

It's not just, I want them in church so I look good. I want them to know Jesus like I know Jesus. I want them to love God, and if you're here this morning, you need to take seriously the devil is doing everything in his power to destroy the work of grace and the work of God in your family, and you've got to watch out for little things that would draw you away from your brothers and sisters and get you out of church.

You've got to watch out for doubts he would plant in your heart. You've got to watch out that you don't look at others and judge them and start feeling superior to God and the people of God and the things of God.

A judgmental spirit among brothers is trying to do right, and when you're even trying to do right, can destroy many others. The roots are intertwined. The devil's trying to destroy us, and you're judging.

[30 : 24] That's not the kind of person that ought to go to our church. They don't look like they belong here. They wouldn't fit in. Please. We never, ever want to get there. Say amen.

We want to love people wherever they are. We want to leave the judging to the judge, and we want to be loving people and making a difference. We don't want to be hurting people.

Remember, you do not know what's going on in the life of your brother or sister, so don't judge. Just love. You have no idea where they slept last night. You have no idea what news they might have just heard.

You have no idea what's going on. Be careful. Number one, Satan's trying to destroy. Number two, the second thing I see that the parable talks about that's destroying the work of God is how judgmental we are. Not you.

It's just the passage. I've just preached the passage, but Christians are so judgmental. Lost people don't even want to come around where they could get help because they know if they walk in, we'll be judged. I pray that will never be the story here.

[31 : 23] I pray we'll always want to be loving people. Galatians chapter 6 and verse 1. Remember this verse. If you see a brother even doing wrong, you be real careful to have the sweetest spirit possible.

Galatians chapter 6 and verse 1. You should write it in the margin of your Bible right here. Brethren, brothers, if a man be overtaken in a fault, that means if he be surprised, if he falls into sin, if something goes wrong in his life and he's doing things he shouldn't, if you are spiritual, you restore him in a spirit of meekness and humility, considering yourself, thinking about yourself, lest you also be tempted.

How many times have we judged that other guy and then later on fallen into the same sin? How easy it is for me to point out your faults and I got the same fault.

And so even when, even when somebody messes up in our fellowship and amongst us as brothers in Christ, be very careful that you have a sweet and loving spirit.

The gospel is good news. Amen? It's good news before you get saved and it's good news after you get saved and this ought to be a place of much love and much concern for each other.

[32 : 42] Don't allow the smallness of your ministry to discourage you. I know you teach Sunday school and I know you are working and sometimes you say, man, I don't know but three people in my class.

Not very many children here. Not many people pay attention. Nobody says thank you when I sing a special. No one notices that I clean up. But that mustard seed said something to us. It may look small but God's doing a work.

God's doing a work in you. You may not be doing much but God can make grow what you are doing. Take seriously the ministry God has given you. If you will mean business and stay faithful, maybe God will use it to start a work in others.

I often think of the little town of Wrigley, Tennessee. Little country church where I got saved. I don't know if them people know about the internet yet. I know this, when you get up her cell phones don't even work.

And it was a little country church. Pastors stood outside with the deacons and they all smoked together. I got saved there. Now the Lord's allowed me to preach all over the world and to preach all the time and I wonder what they would think if they knew that little boy in Sunday school that they taught.

[33 : 50] And somebody had a little bitty ministry in a little bitty corner and never thought anything would happen yet God might have done something with that class. You are teaching Sunday school. You're discipling somebody. You're taking up an offering.

You're cleaning a building. But God's doing a much bigger business, much bigger ministry than you think he is. If you can understand that, say amen. If you'll accept that truth. The word of God and the work of God radically changes lives.

The work of God and the word of God radically changes lives. Know that if God is truly in your life you will begin to see differences. It will start with things that no one else can see.

It will be heart changes but it will be changes. You will eventually see that God is making a major difference in your life. Your desires will change. Your love for him will grow. Your other things will become less important you are a new creature and eventually it's going to show.

So just let me say this before we pray. If you're born again, if you're truly born again, God is at work in you. And I may not be the one that can see that and know how much he's doing and I'm not supposed to be the judge of that but you ought to look at your own life and say man, is God working in me?

[35 : 00] Am I finding more of a desire to serve him? Am I hungry? That's why you're here today. You came this morning because God is at work. If he wasn't at work you probably wouldn't even be here. You realize that? He brought you to church and so see that.

But please don't fall into cultural Christianity which the Southeast is so famous for where it's just what you're supposed to do. It's time to go to church. It's Sunday morning. We go to church. We don't care what God's doing.

We don't love God. We just do what we're supposed to do. That will ruin you. Know God. Know God. Don't be a cultural Christian.

Don't live in the Southeast and let Christianity become your habit or your custom but not your reality. Make sure you know Jesus as your personal Savior.

So this morning I don't know if it's been about your ministry and you're a tad discouraged. I hope you'll realize a mustard seed. I don't know if it's that you don't see the changes you want to see but if you keep putting the word of God into people God will make the changes.

[35 : 59] I don't know if you realize Satan is alive and well and out to get your family but you can have victory. Through Jesus Christ we can have victory. I challenge you this morning to seek Him.

Nothing or no one is going to stop His work. He is God and He is victorious. Let's get hooked up with Him. Father in Heaven I love You and I thank You and I praise You for the opportunity to talk to Your people. I pray that Your name would be glorified.

I pray that people would be drawn to You. I pray that somebody this morning would get saved. I pray that some Christian this morning who's been discouraged would get encouraged. I pray God that in every way Your name would be glorified and honored today and I will give You great praise.

Lord, I love You and I praise You and I magnify You. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times location contact information and more audio and video recordings.

Thank you.