

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

“He also said, ‘With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.’”

—The Gospel of Mark

By Ken Woodley

We are all mustard seeds.

A mustard seed in the womb.

And then a mustard seed in this world.

One small piece of God’s dream for love and peace on Earth.

A punctuation mark in the great unending novel of humanity and its journey through darkness into light.

But, we are not *just* mustard seeds. This isn’t a case of having to settle for *only* being a mustard seed.

There is nothing “only” or “just” about being a mustard seed and a mark of punctuation.

Because punctuation makes all the difference.

And so can we.

Which is what Jesus wants us to understand.

What could be smaller than a period, comma or semicolon?

But, what has more potential?

A period, and something ends.

A comma, and something continues.

A semicolon, and two things are joined together.

We are all sown into this world as completely helpless babies. Totally vulnerable mustard seeds. Not even aware of our own two hands and unable to hold up our head.

But, oh, how that changes. How that mustard seed grows through the years until we truly do have the power to make things end or continue, and the ability to join things together.

For better or for worse.

How fortunate—given our ability to build up with love or break down with hate—that each of us human mustard seeds has the ultimate mustard seed inside us:

Our soul.

And, man, how *that* mustard seed can grow.

Our souls can become gigantic Redwood Trees of compassion and towering Sequoias of peace and reconciliation.

And when that happens we are able to provide “shade” for so much more than nesting birds.

Human beings can find shelter in our acts of determined kindness toward one another. Especially when we put our mustard seeds together.

When two or more of us gather together to address the world’s great need for love, that is how we become an entire forest of “shade” for those abandoned in the tree-less wilderness of indifference.

Wonderfully, however long we live we never grow up and out of our “mustard seed-ness.”

When we keep our hearts tuned to the Holy Spirit, we can remain mustard seeds until the day we die, able to put our comma, our period or our semicolon in just the right place to completely change the story.

Because the mustard seed inside us is the kingdom of God.