

Norman C. Schwab  
Yacolt EV Free  
September 3, 1995

### **...But Someday!**

Two engineers and a Salesman went on a backpacking trip up in the high country. (Almost sounds like a beginning of a joke...and it sort of was.) One engineer asked the other, "Did you bring the matches?...(silence) The salesman "I didn't bring any matches but I bet I could bum a match off someone" First engineer, "Good news I found this lighter, It's a bit marginal but it's all we have" With the 'marginal" lighter the little group was able to get a fire going and food in their bellies, but the next night when it got dark, their lantern failed them. A common theme began to develop in this outing. They were having difficulty with light. How many engineers does it take to fix a lantern? Well, it's at least two if you have a salesman to tell them what to do. We spent over an hour and a half trying to get that..lantern to light. What good is it to pack a lantern to the top of the Cascades if you cant use it? What good is it going to do you if your whole time is spent trying to fix the lantern in the dark. A lantern is built to turn on and light. It's purpose is to drive out the darkness so you can see better. It doesn't do any good to have a broken lantern. Someone suggested target practice with the 44 Magnum "Hawg Leg". Toting around a broken lantern in the high country is about as helpful as packing rocks. But... if that lantern were to be fixed...if you could get some light out of that lantern. If you could find a place to hang it up high, Oh you could see and so so much more.

Do you ever feel frustrated when looking around at the world we live in and spiritually it looks as if were losing the battle? All our efforts and prayers seem to just bounce off a brick wall of evil that continues to crush in around us. We talk about witness and Christ's power in our lives, but sometimes, some weeks all I experience is frustration and defeat. This week I came home from the fun but exhausting experience in the mountains, I was ready to hit the sack at about 7:00pm and then I was beat up by a box of peaches. Ever been beat up by some peaches? I love peaches but those peaches needed to be canned that night. So, after

getting to bed early the next morning I awoke with a raging headache and one bad attitude. I grumbled at my wife, whom I am to honor, I yelled at my kids whom I am to mentor and teach. I just played grisly bear. I didn't want to stop and pray, I didn't feel like doing anything but growling. I thought "I have absolutely so little of God's truth shining out of me right now." I feel like my lantern has gone completely out. I'm just fumbling in the dark trying to get my Christian walk with God to light, but what I really feel like doing is taking a 44 and putting a plug through it. Have you ever had a couple of days like that? It sure feels good to come out on the other side.

In our Christian life we may look and see no growth, our faith may seem insignificant, our impact on the world as believers may seem so small...but God says. We may be small now, we may be groaning inside our bodies now, but, but Someday is coming. Someday is coming.

Turn with me in your Bibles to Mark chapter 5. Jesus has been teaching the people by the Sea of Galilee. He has been telling stories, parables about the Kingdom of God. In the Stories he has been answering questions about the kingdom that the people may have asked or been thinking in their heads. In the first 20 verses of this chapter Jesus told a story about the fate of some seeds landing in soils. he answers the question. Why hasn't there been a better response to the gospel? Jesus says that the seed goes out, but the response is a condition of the heart. Hard hearts don't listen well. Shallow hearts flake off early and crowded hearts don't have the time. Jesus then continues to speak about the kingdom in verses 21-34. As we read this part, ask yourself, "What question about the kingdom was Jesus trying to answer?" Lets read(READ)

Question #1 I believe Jesus was trying to answer about the Kingdom of God. Why isn't the Kingdom of God being introduced with a Big splashy announcement. We were expecting the unveiling of the Messiah to be a big deal, this is the event we've all been waiting hundreds of years for. Where's the show?

Now if your Michael Jackson introducing his latest album like he did just a few weeks ago. In every major city you would have five story sculptures of yourself constructed and paraded for all the people to gaze

in wonder at your magnificence. In England Jackson floated a five story sculpture of himself in a military pose, on a barge down the Thames. In Los Angeles and Hong Kong cities all over the world announced the return of Michael Jackson to the pop music scene.

If your Bill Gates, the owner of Microsoft Corporation, who could probably afford to have Ross Perot be his chauffeur. When you want to unveil a new product for the world, you send submarines to the bottom of the North Pole and ships across the oceans to celebrate the coming of Windows 95. Gates is so thrilled to present this product because now, even IBM folks can experience what it's like to own a Macintosh computer. Send out 50 million copies all over the world so that a feeding frenzy begins and people will stand in line at midnight to plunk down 89 bucks to be the first on their block to have a Mackintosh clone. Lots of media, hype and advertisement.

If you are Jesus Christ wanting to unveil God's plan for restoring His broken relationship with mankind. What kind of a celebration would you expect? Verse 21. A lantern isn't brought on a campout to put under a bucket, or stuck under your sleeping bag, unless it doesn't work. Answer, of course not. It is brought on a campout to drive out the darkness, to illuminate to reveal. It's brought so people can see. That is it's normal expected use. We would expect to have a lighted lamp be hung up on a branch for every one to see.

But verse 22 implies that the lamp may have been intentionally hidden. It was covered in a way no one would expect and concealed in a way that is not usually hidden. Verse 22) Contrary to expectations for a lamp...it was hidden. The covering of the lamp was "unnatural" but "intentional". The purpose v. 22 so that it could be revealed. It still has the same properties and power if it's under a bucket, but if the lamp is hidden, it's not helping anyone. The lamp is like the kingdom of God. Hidden in the Old Testament revealed in the new. A good secret will eventually be revealed. You can't keep it to yourself. In fact a good secret is just waiting for the moment to be revealed.

The disciples may have asked why were we so blinded? we expected the Messiah to come in a public manner for all to see? Why didn't we see it coming? Why do we still feel in the dark? The kingdom of God is unnaturally hidden now...but Some day. Some day...the lamp will

be used for its intended purpose. Someday the lamp will be placed on the lamp stand for everyone to see. Someday the Kingdom of God will shine with brilliance and have a unveiling coronation of King Jesus that will put all the billion dollar unveilings of this world to shame. The kingdom of God may not have been unveiled with a big flash and splash. It may seem hidden and obscure. The kingdom may seem broken, weak and ineffective, but...Some day will come one day.

Verse 23 Therefore, people listen closely and you shall understand and perceive. How big is your cup? How large is your desire to know and understand the things of God? How bad do you really want to know God? The larger your thirst...the bigger the cup you place under the faucet of God's truth...the more you will get. The larger the cup the more it will hold. The greater your desire the more insights God will give you. But. v.25 whoever rejects His Word. Risks losing the little they do know. Those who deny Jesus divine identity will suffer ultimate loss of never having salvation. Yet, the highlight here is not warning of loss, but of promise of blessing for those who earnestly seek after God. The kingdom of God may seem hidden and unnaturally covered like a lamp under a basket...but someday will come one day.

Verse 26 Jesus then continues to teach truth about the kingdom of God with a parable about a growing seed. The question Jesus may have been answering? With so much opposition from Satan, internal distraction and external opposition. With the lamp of the kingdom being hidden, How will the kingdom grow? How is this unveiling of God's kingdom going to take place?

We read in verses 26-29 an idealized farming situation. Unlike last week's soil problem, nothing is said about the condition of the soil, plowing or fertilizing, weeding tilling. Nothing about the weather conditions, good or bad. The sowing, soil conditions or efforts by the farmer are not the point of this parable. Verse 27 Whether the farmer is awake or asleep has little bearing on the growth of the seed. The farmer is presented as somewhat uninvolved and uninvolved. Verse 28 The soil produces crops by itself. Greek Automate. This is placed in the Greek emphatic position referring possibly to work done by God. Without visible cause. God will fulfill His mission and purpose here on earth, but it may not grow in the way we expect. It will grow without visible cause.

It's not going to grow by forced military action, not by a political takeover, not by moral majority or social action. God will grow His kingdom the way God wants His kingdom to grow. Ask the question; How will the kingdom grow and be unveiled? Here's the point, the seed comes to harvest without any visible cause. Growth occurs even though it may be difficult to understand or see. Growth occurs even when we fail to fully comprehend how it happens. The disciples were a lot like that farmer. They didn't fully understand how growth occurs in the Christian life and in building God's kingdom, but it did. The seed may be small and insignificant, we may not know how the seed of God's word will grow in us. It may seem like we go to bed get up, go to bed , get up and God never works and changes us. Yet, growth does occur even though sometimes it's so slow it's difficult to notice. Ask your wife or husband, ask your close friend, ask your kids. Have you noticed any change in the last couple of years? They will be the ones who see the growth in your life. The kingdom may seem to be growing and developing slowly. But look at verse 29. This parable says nothing the time when the harvest will be taken in, but be assured, one day the divine reaper will come and harvest His crop. This passage alludes to Joel 3 where one day the Lord will return in judgment and glory. It may seem like we are losing the spiritual war to the raging forces of darkness. It may seem like all were doing is fumbling in the dark to get the lantern lit. But be assured right now, the evil one is putting out all the guns he can blaze because he knows that soon, that some day the lamp will be placed on the lamp stand for all the world to see, someday the reaper will harvest His crop, someday..will come one day.

The kingdom of God did not come to us in a full page spread advertisement with a huge kickoff, it came quietly and in an insignificant town in an insignificant family. It came hidden but not to stay that way. It's tough to understand how it will grow, but be assured it will grow. It's not the labor of the farmer but God that causes the growth. Be assured God will harvest His crop, He will accomplish his sovereign purpose for this earth...but it may not be the way that we expect. In verses 30-32 we see the parable of the mustard seed. What question was Jesus answering with this parable? I believe He may have been addressing the question, "This kingdom seems so small, hidden and

insignificant, overwhelmed by evil, will it ever amount to anything?" Here the kingdom of God is compared to the mustard seed. This is one of the smallest herb seeds. There are over 20,000 seeds in one ounce, yet, in Palestine this Mustard plant can grow up to 10 feet in just a few weeks. This parable illustrates the insignificant beginnings of Jesus ministry with the future hope of glory that is coming. The greatness of celebration that climaxes at the second coming of Christ. This will far surpass any thing we've ever witnessed here on earth. Will this kingdom ever amount to anything? You bet. It may have a humble beginning, yet, one day it will grow big and consistent with its nature, it will be placed high on a lamp stand for all to see. One day the kingdom of God will light up the world. It may have started out as a small seed, but one day it will grow to a great tree. With allusions to Nebuchadnezzar's vision in Daniel 4 and Ezekiel's prophecy in Ezekiel 17, The Kingdom of God will have birds resting in its branches. It will far out shadow the nations of the world, encompassing other countries and gentile peoples. The seed may seem small now but ...that's not the whole picture. One day will come..some day.

So where does this Word intersect our lives this week? First, there are benefits of us actively pursuing God's Word. The more we thirst for God, the bigger the cup we place before Him, the more He will fill it with insights and truth.

Second, it may not look like we are winning the spiritual war over Satan and His followers, but one day will come someday. We need to be a part of God's plan because one day will come someday. One day justice will be served the wrong will be made right, the lamp will be placed in its proper place, the harvest will be taken and God will return to reign supreme. Be encouraged believer. One day will come someday.