

March 23, 2025

Third Sunday in Lent: Jesus Collides With Our False Assumptions of Limited Resources

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

300 E. Oak Street, Ft. Collins, CO 80524

Worship: 10:00 AM

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LENT: CHRIST COLLIDES

This Lent we will explore some of Jesus' parables. It has been said that the origin of the word parable is two things that collide. In many parables, Jesus intentionally means to shock by using stark contrasts, reversals of fortune, humor, and surprise endings. Often we encounter his teachings colliding with our own assumptions and what is considered the "conventional wisdom" of our world.

1. GATHERING

Prelude

Call to Worship (Steve)

One: Christ collides with our smallness. Are you small minded, believing that small efforts can never produce big results?

Many: But we are so small in number and always short on enough resources and time.

One: Yet once the yeast is in the mix it is impossible to stop its gaseous influence!

Many: And if a thousand mustard seeds were tossed into our garden it would be impossible to find them all.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

All: For the sake of building your Holy community, O God, transform our small mindedness, realizing that what we have is enough to do great things.

Congregational Singing

Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also, with you.

All: Let us offer one another signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

Confession and Words of Assurance (Steve)

All: Loving and merciful God, we confess that we have once again “missed the target” and failed to do what you have called us to do.

One: We have not loved you with all our thoughts, words, and actions.

Many: We have not fully accepted your love for us. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

One: We miss the target when we think that what small efforts that we have to offer cannot result in substantive change.

Many: We too often are quick to focus on what we lack rather than focus on the abundance you are prepared to give.

(Did you talk yourself out of doing something this past week because you thought it “insignificant?”)

All: We repent before each other and before you, our loving God. Please help us open our hearts to your love. Help us to shake free from our attachments to things and frugality with our time. Help us to be more generous with those less fortunate so as to build your beloved community here on earth just as it looks like in Heaven. Amen.

Leader: Now hear these words of assurance: God tells us that we are created in God’s image and God created us for relationship with God and each other. In this, we know that God will never break our relationship and that God’s steadfast love endures forever..

2. HEARING GOD’S WORD

Scriptures: Luke 12:15-23, 33-34

Luke 13: 6-9 and 18-20

6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his garden and he came looking for fruit on it but didn't find any. 7 So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years in a row, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it suck the nutrients out of the soil?"

8 In response, the gardener replied, "Let it stand, sir, for one more year, until I get a chance to dig around it and work in some manure. 9 Maybe it will produce fruit next

year; but if it doesn't, we can go ahead and cut it down.' " 18 Then he said, "What is God's imperial rule like? What does it remind us of? 19 It is like a mustard seed which someone took and tossed into his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the sky made nests in its branches."

20 And again he said, "What does the imperial rule of God remind me of? 21 It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with 50 pounds of flour until it was all leavened."



Sermon: “The Mighty Tiny!”

Jesus Collides With Our False Assumptions of Limited Resources.

The parables of the unproductive fig tree, mustard seed, and leaven, challenge the conventional wisdom of every age that we cannot accomplish much with limited resources. We must rid ourselves of the unfounded notion that there is no power in small things.

3. RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Congregational Singing Response

Joys and Concerns

Offering & Music

Sending (Steve)

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn’t serve the world.” — Marianne Williamson

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”
— Robert Kennedy