

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE
FEBRUARY 4-5, 2012
JESUS THE STORYTELLER



1. What is your favorite story (either book or movie)? Is there a takeaway or message from that story? What is it?
2. Read Matthew 13:31-32. The mustard seed is small...really small. What aspects of Jesus' life and ministry seem small? When have you felt your faith was small or that you didn't have much to offer God?
3. What happens to the mustard seed when it is planted and grows? What aspects of Jesus' life and ministry have grown and multiplied into something big? What examples from your life (or from the life of others) do you have that show how God can do a lot with someone "small" or insignificant?
4. Read Matthew 14:15-21. What is the "small stuff" that Jesus starts with? What happens when the "small and insignificant" is put in Jesus' hands? What is God saying to you through this story?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 1:25-29. How does the Apostle Paul describe the Christians in Corinth when they were called to follow Jesus? Why did God choose them (why didn't God call the strongest and the wisest)? Why does God not want us to boast in ourselves?
6. Sometimes it can be hard to wait for "seeds of faith" to grow. When have you seen "the seeds of faith" grow very slowly or not at all in a person? Whose job is it to make faith grow? Ours or God's? How does the parable of the mustard seed encourage us to be patient with small beginnings?
7. Jesus told many stories to explain what Him being in charge looks like. Why do you think Jesus used so many stories? How can you use stories to help the people in your life understand more what it looks like to live with Jesus in charge?
8. Pray as a group for opportunities to share stories about God working and for faith to know that God can use the small to do big things.

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The central message of Jesus' ministry is that "the kingdom of heaven has come near." In other words, Jesus is now in charge and he invites everyone to learn to live life in His way and in His power. So how does Jesus explain how to live in His Kingdom? He uses stories. Jesus talks about common, every day kind of things to help people understand what life looks like with Him in charge. These same stories that were first told 2000 years ago are available in the Bible to learn from today, so that we too can learn to live with Jesus as King.

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