



## Small Beginnings

**S**pring is springing in many parts of the world, and I guess it's springtime in Southern California, too. But I have a much harder time distinguishing the seasons now than I did when I was a kid growing up in north Georgia. There spring meant tulips peeking through the dark soil, baby birds chirping in the trees, and "free puppy" signs popping up on neighborhood lawns. March heralded the promise of new life and bare feet.

The promise of spring is such a beautiful guarantee on so many levels. Spring seems like God's way of showing up to remind us of his faithful presence. But all too often, even though I know his promise is guaranteed, I live in perpetual winter. Like Narnia before Aslan's return. I get frozen in the status quo, and while I long for the abundance of spring, I feel stuck in the small and insignificant. There's a piece of me that knows God has big things for me, but more often than not I sit in doubt and wonder how those things are ever going to happen. My footprints seem so small in comparison to the giants of faith, science and art who have gone before me.

This spring, however, God graciously reminded me that big and wonderful is often a byproduct of small and insignificant. He did it through the story of one of the largest youth ministries in the world—Young Life. Young Life reaches teens all over the United States and Canada and in more than 45 countries overseas. More than 100,000 kids are involved in Young Life weekly, with more than one million participating throughout the year. And while that sounds big and wonderful, it's the story of how Young Life started that makes my heart feel like a brave tulip daring to believe.

Young Life began when Jim Rayburn, a young Dallas seminary student, started his ministry at a high school in Gainesville, Texas. Now, there were plenty of high schools in Dallas in the late 1930s, so why would God send him sixty miles away to Gainesville? Because of something small and

insignificant. Because six years before Rayburn ever showed up on the map a group of elderly women started praying. Because once a week, every week, these little ladies of Gainesville met to pray for their high school students. Not for students around the world, but for the students in their own backyard.

They prayed faithfully, every Monday morning, long before Jim Rayburn ever entered Gainesville, Texas. And Rayburn believes it was their prayers that started it all. That their clasped hands were the hands that midwived Young Life. That their small act of faithfulness was used by God to reach countless teenagers across the globe. Six years of prayer for a hundred teens across the street led to 60 years and millions of teenagers coming to know their Lord and Savior.

It doesn't matter what you start with. All that matters is who's blessing it. Remember the five loaves and two fishes? Who would have imagined that measly meal could feed thousands with baskets left over? Only *he* could imagine it and accomplish it. *He* controls the universe—*he* sees to it that seasons come and go. So, whatever you're starting with really doesn't matter. Faith matters. And it's faith that cuts the chill of a long winter and offers the big and beautiful promises of spring.

Of course, I don't believe that if I just "name it and claim it" the great Sugar Daddy in the sky will drop down a 50-foot yacht. That's not the abundance of spring I'm searching for. I want his Kingdom and his righteousness. Sounds big, but when you stop to think about it, even the Kingdom of God began in an unfathomably small and ridiculous way. A baby in a manger? The Son of God on a cross? Yet the story of our Savior is as big and wonderful as it gets.

So, I think I'll get out the watering can of the Word and pour a little more faith into this heart of mine. Because the little things I'm doing today have the potential to echo loudly into eternity. I do believe. Spring will come.

—Susan Reedy

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