

Fear Not Little Flock

- I. God's true churches are often small in number.
 1. Jesus had a *little flock* that it was God the Father's good pleasure to give His kingdom to (**Luk 12:32**).
 - A. Jesus preached to thousands of people (**Mat 5:1-2**).
 - B. But only very few stuck with him faithfully.
 - C. When He preached hard doctrine, most turned back (**Joh 6:66-68**).
 - D. His first communion service only had 13 participants including Himself (**Luk 22:14-15**).
 - E. Jesus said that where two or three are gathered in His name, He is there in the midst of them (**Mat 18:20**).
 - F. Jesus did not despise the day of small things (**Zec 4:10**).
 - G. After three and a half years of ministry, preaching the gospel all over the land of Israel, Jesus' church only had 120 members at the time He ascended back to heaven (**Act 1:15**).
 - i. His church quickly grew into thousands of people after the Holy Ghost filled it on the day of Pentecost (**Act 2:41; Act 4:4**).
 - ii. But it was just as much His church when there were only 12 disciples meeting in the upper room as it was when there were thousands added on the day of Pentecost.
 2. The great apostle Paul, the most successful evangelist the world has ever seen, mentioned churches that were small enough to meet in houses in his epistles (**Rom 16:3-5; Col 4:15; Phm 1:2**).
 - A. Do you think if "the face of Christianity" today (whoever that may be) were to write a letter to a church that he would mention tiny churches that meet in houses?
 - B. The apostle Paul exhorted us that we dare not make ourselves of the number and compare ourselves with others (**2Co 10:12**).
 - C. At the end of Paul's life, he had no one left standing with him, but was forsaken by everyone (**2Ti 4:16**).
 - D. Nevertheless, Paul was just as right as he would have been if the whole world would have stood with him because God stood with him (**2Ti 4:17**).
 - E. Paul did not despise the day of small things (**Zec 4:10**).
 3. Noah's church had only eight members (**1Pe 3:20**).
 - A. Their small size was not indicative of the amount of truth they held.
 - i. There were likely scoffers who jeered at Noah saying, "So you think you're right and the whole world is wrong?".
 - ii. Noah's likely answer? "Yes."
 - B. Noah was a preacher of righteousness that had no converts (**2Pe 2:5**).
 - C. His ministry was a ministry of condemnation (**Heb 11:7**), a savor of death unto death which was a sweet savor to God (**2Co 2:15-16**).
 - D. Noah did not despise the day of small things (**Zec 4:10**).
 4. Elijah stood alone against 450 prophets of Baal (**1Ki 18:21-22**).
 - A. Like Elijah, we are easily outnumbered 450:1 by the false churches out there in the world.
 - B. Like Elijah, we should not despise the day of small things (**Zec 4:10**).

5. Isaiah was told to preach to Israel until the cities were wasted and left without inhabitant (**Isa 6:9-12**).
 - A. Yet there would be a tenth that would be salvaged who were the holy seed of the nation (**Isa 6:13**).
 - B. Isaiah did not despise the day of small things (**Zec 4:10**).

II. The world is obsessed with numbers, but we must not be.

1. Bigger is better to them.
2. But bigger is not necessarily better.
3. *Quality* is far more important to God than *quantity*.
4. Unleavened bread has approximately the same mass as leavened bread, though leavened bread is many times the size.
5. The leaven adds space between the bread molecules, but adds no real substance to it.
 - A. The local church is referred to as bread (**1Co 10:17**).
 - B. Adding people to the church who shouldn't be there (leaven - **1Co 5:6-7**) does the same thing to the church.
 - C. They increase its size, but not its substance.
 - D. They only serve to separate the true members from each other.

III. God loves to save the underdog.

1. God miraculously saved Israel from the hand of the Egyptian army (**Exo 14:30-31**).
2. God intentionally whittled down Gideon's army from 32,000 (**Jdg 7:3**) to 300 (**Jdg 7:7**) when they were going up against 135,000 (**Jdg 8:10**) so that He could make His power known in their victory (**Jdg 7:2**).
 - A. Gideon and his men were outnumbered 450:1, just like Elijah was.
 - B. Gideon did not despise the day of small things (**Zec 4:10**).
3. God can save by many or by few (**1Sa 14:6**).
4. God's saints will be surrounded by the armies of the earth at the last day just prior to Jesus coming back and destroying them (**Rev 20:9**).
5. God saves not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit (**Zec 4:6**).

IV. As a church, we sometimes feel like we are all alone floating in a sea of false religion trying to keep our heads above water.

1. Elijah thought that he was the only righteous man left in Israel (**Rom 11:2-3**).
 - A. He found out that there were 7,000 left in Israel who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal (**Rom 11:4**).
 - B. It is still the same today; there is a remnant according to the election of grace (**Rom 11:5**).
2. Things are not ultimately going to get any better, and if they do, it will only be temporary.
 - A. Perilous times are coming (**2Ti 3:1**).
 - B. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse (**2Ti 3:12-13**).
 - C. When Jesus returns, faith on earth will be negligible (**Luk 18:8**).
 - D. It will be like it was in the days of Noah (**Mat 24:37-39**).
3. No matter how bad it gets, God will see us through it (**Isa 43:2**).
4. We must continue steadfast in the faith come what may (**1Co 15:58; 1Co 16:13; Heb 10:23-25**).