

Inspired lesson from **Mark 4:26–32** (the growing seed and mustard seed) and **Ephesians 4:4–6, 11–18** (unity, maturity, and building each other up).



The Seed and the Streetlight of Raymond

Raymond and Bobby had been friends since middle school, though life had taken them in different directions. One chilly evening, they found themselves walking through their old neighborhood, hands in their pockets, streetlights flickering above them.

Bobby: “Man, this place hasn’t changed much. Same cracked sidewalks. Same corner store.”

Raymond: “Yeah, but look at that.”

He pointed to a tiny sapling growing through a break in the concrete.

“Life finds a way to grow even where it shouldn’t.”

Bobby chuckled. “You and your metaphors.”



Raymond: “I’m serious. It reminds me of something I read earlier about how the kingdom of God grows like a seed. You plant it, you don’t know how it works, but it grows anyway.”

Bobby slowed his pace. “You’re talking about faith again.”

Raymond: “I’m talking about us. About people and how small things can become something huge.”

They reached the community center where they used to hang out as kids. The lights were on, and through the windows they could see a group of teenagers gathered around a volunteer.

Bobby: “Looks like they’re running some kind of program.”

Raymond: “Yeah. Mentorship night. I’ve been helping out too.”

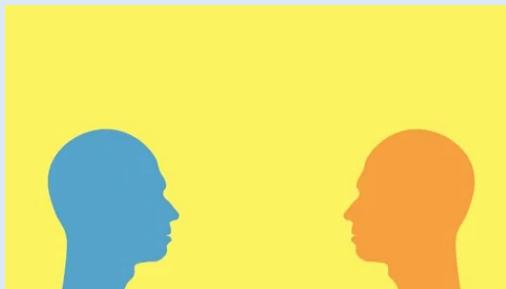
Bobby raised an eyebrow. “You? Since when?”

Raymond: “Since I realized I didn’t have to be perfect to help someone else grow. We’re all part of something bigger...one body, different gifts, you know? Some people teach, some encourage, some guide. I just show up and listen.”

Bobby leaned against the brick wall. “I don’t know, Ray. I feel like I’ve messed up too much to be useful to anybody.”

Raymond shook his head. “That’s the thing! Growth doesn’t depend on us being perfect. Seeds grow in dirt, man, and what matters is that we’re connected to the same Spirit, same hope, same purpose. We build each other up.”

Bobby stared at the ground. “Feels like I’ve been disconnected for a long time.”



Raymond nudged him. “Then reconnect... start small...like that little tree back there. Doesn’t look like much now, but if you give it time.”

Bobby sighed. “You really think I could help someone? Be part of something like this?”

Raymond: “I don’t think it, Bobby, I know it. You’ve always had a gift for people. You just forgot.”

They walked inside. The room buzzed with energy with kids laughing, volunteers chatting, someone setting up a whiteboard.

A teenager waved. “Raymond! You bringing a new mentor?”

Bobby froze. “Whoa, slow down...”

Raymond grinned. “Maybe. He’s got a lot to offer.”

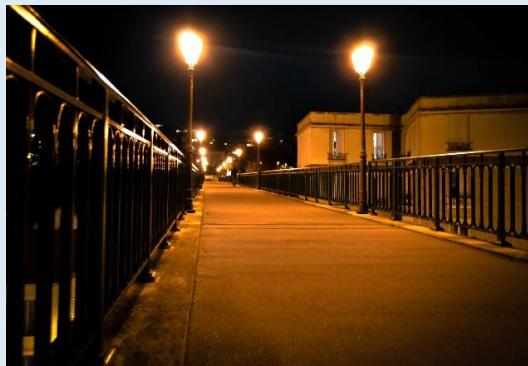
Bobby looked around the room, then back at the sapling outside the window, barely visible under the streetlight.

Bobby: “Alright... maybe I’ll start with one kid. One conversation.”

Raymond: “That’s how every forest starts.”

Bobby smirked. “There you go again with the metaphors.”

Raymond: “Hey, they work.”



Moving A HEADD

As they stepped fully into the room, Bobby felt something he hadn't felt in years: purpose, connection, maybe even hope. A seed, planted quietly, beginning to grow. How often are you able to feel the seed's streetlight of growth?