

**Series: The Kingdom of Jesus**

**Message: Descriptions of the Kingdom – the parables-part 3**

**Mustard Seeds / Leaven / Unseen Growth**

**Scriptures: Matthew 13:31-33 / Mark 4:26-32 / Luke 13:18-21**

**Introduction:** Matthew 13:1 tells us that Jesus was sitting in a boat by the seashore when He shared some parables. While in this location by the sea Jesus shared at least 8 recorded parables. 5 of the parables Jesus shared with the whole crowd. 3 of the parables Jesus told to only His followers. Jesus also took the time to explain two of the parables to His followers. Below is a chart to help.

**Parables on the seashore shared with the crowds**

The parable of the sower (explained to the followers in private)

The parable of the tares (explained to the followers in private)

The parable of the mustard seed

The parable of the leaven

The parable of the unseen growth

**Parables near the seashore shared only with the followers**

The parable of the dragnet

The parable of the pearl of great value

The parable of the hidden treasure

Today we will give consideration to 3 of the parables shared with the crowds. We find these parables in 3 of the Gospel accounts.

**Matthew 13:31-33** – Mustard seeds and Leaven

**Mark 4: 26-32** – Unseen growth and Mustard seeds

**Luke 13:18-21** – Mustard seeds and Leaven

**Read Matthew 13:31-33-now**

**Read Mark 4:26-29-now**

**Lessons about the Kingdom from these 3 parables**

Jesus said these parables describe or illustrate what the kingdom of God is like. These illustrations give us pictures of what the kingdom of Jesus is like.

**Seeds and leaven are small yet they have great influence**

A small amount of leaven working in the meal influenced the whole loaf. Small seeds produce great trees and harvests.

Daily choices may seem small yet they can have long term influence

**Examples of small things:**

**Our lives are a model for everyone around us.** We model through:

- our living according to God's ways
- our spending time with God in prayer

- our giving God control of our lives so He can produce the fruits of the Spirit in us
- our willingness to serve others
- our sharing our testimony of salvation
- our demonstrating a godly attitude in times of stress of life
- our encouragement of others

God loves to demonstrate His greatness and strength through our weakness and inability. The Bible is full of stories where the people had little to offer and God used what they had to accomplish great things for His Kingdom. (Gideon, David, Widow's oil, Samaritan woman, little boy's lunch, Jesus – a manger, homeless, a cross)

### **Seeds must be planted and Leaven has to be put into the loaf to be able to influence**

We must be invested in the eternal Kingdom. This means giving our lives to the Word of God. This means investing our lives in people. Only people and the Word of God will survive this world and be a part of the kingdom of Jesus. Everything else will be destroyed.

The seed and leaven represent our lives invested in the Kingdom. They represent our obedience to the task of making disciples.

Being invested requires a God inspired Commitment to the task. It requires a Prioritizing of the task into our schedules and a Consistency to stay faithful to the task.

### **The Seed and Leaven work in unseen ways**

Science can now show us what is happening under the ground and even in the loaf but science cannot truly explain how it happens or why. The growth of the plant, tree, and expansion of the loaf are works of God. God takes the small things and in unseen and non-understandable ways God brings the growth. Our task is to invest our lives and the seed of God's Word. God will bring growth and life and we then rejoice in the harvest of souls.

Often we cannot see the fruits of influence until a later time. We must however believe God is working in ways we cannot see. We must continue to be faithful to the task He has called us to do.

Satan will try to convince us we have no influence or our efforts are useless, a waste of time. This is a lie. Toil is not in vain in the Lord!

Be encouraged! God does see our commitments, our words, our prayers, and our actions and He will honor them. (1 Cor. 15:58)

**Read Billy Graham Story** – picture of Edward Kimball on screen

### **The Seed and the Leaven persevere until the task is completed**

The seed allows God to fully use it until the plant or tree is created. The leaven perseveres until the whole loaf is influenced. The work of Jesus Kingdom is not a short term project. It is a life long journey and then eternal assignments. In this stage of the building of Jesus Kingdom perseverance is provided in Christ and required to follow Jesus.

**The Seed and the Leaven gives up their lives to be used by God to bring influence and growth**

We honor this weekend those who have served our country through the years to provide and maintain our freedom. We especially honor those who gave their lives in this noble task.

Jesus modeled for us a life of denying self and a willingness to die so that others could be saved for eternity

To apply the principles of these parables we too must deny self and follow Jesus no matter the cost in this stage of our journey.

Our level of influence for Jesus Kingdom is directly related to how much we are willing to die to self and live for God

### **Application**

Where is God seeking to plant your life? Where does Jesus desire to use your life to influence others for His Kingdom?

Do you see the potential Jesus has given you to influence others for the Kingdom the way Jesus sees it?

Only God can bring new life, change and growth. We must be willing to let Him work in us and then through us.