

## The Kingdom of God

Mark 4:26-34

October 12, 2025

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<sup>26</sup> And he said, *“The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup> He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. <sup>28</sup> The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. <sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”*

<sup>30</sup> And he said, *“With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, <sup>32</sup> yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”*

<sup>33</sup> With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. <sup>34</sup> He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

A few weeks ago, a survey was conducted by Ligonier Ministries to assess the theological beliefs of American Evangelicals. And the results showed quite a few troubling trends. One of them was 53% affirm that “Everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature”. You can debunk this false claim and belief with one verse we saw in the Gospel of Mark – *“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”* Mark 2:17. Plenty of “good” people go to hell. Only forgiven sinners go to heaven.

Our subject for this morning is the Kingdom of God.

What is the kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God is the reign and rule of God in the hearts, minds and lives of those Jesus calls to himself.

The kingdom of God is an eternal kingdom and a kingdom of immortality.

The kingdom of God is a kingdom of righteousness, peace and holy joy.

The kingdom of God is opposed to the ideology, the philosophy, the pattern of this fallen world which is dominated by the carnal and depraved thinking pattern of men and women. Paul wrote this about the kingdom of God. *“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God”* Galatians 5:19-21. This pretty sums the world we live in.

So how do you get into the kingdom of God?

- Jesus taught that you must be born again to see the kingdom of God (John 3).
- It is very difficult to enter the kingdom of God.
  - *“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”*. Matthew 5:20
  - *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matthew 7:21*
  - And Jesus said to his disciples, *“Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven”*. Matthew 19:23
- It requires child like faith enter the kingdom of God.
  - *“Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”*. Matthew 18:3
- The disciples of Jesus said that with great difficulty we must enter the kingdom. (Acts 14:22).

So far, in the Gospel of Mark, we have seen kingdom language at least twice.

In Mark, 1:15, when Jesus begins his preaching ministry, he said, *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel”*.

Jesus has absolute reign over all seen and unseen. However, Jesus willingly became a suffering servant and was given a crown of thorns by sinful men who crucified him and killed him. All this was God’s plan because Jesus’ death and resurrection was to make a way for you to be part of God’s kingdom.

The second time we saw kingdom language was in the parable of the soils, we saw Jesus teach his disciples that they had *“been given the secret of the kingdom of God”* Mark 4:11.

And there in this passage, Jesus begins his teaching about the kingdom of God by using the word *“hutos”* to mean “In this manner” or “Thus” is the kingdom of God.

Look at verses 26 and 27..

<sup>26</sup> And he said, *“The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup> He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how.”*

Jesus uses the parable of sower and seed to illustrate the kingdom of God. This parable is recorded by only by Mark. Jesus does not say, “the kingdom of God is”. Rather he says “the kingdom of God is *as if*”.

Now notice, what the sower does. He scatters seed. He sleeps and rises.  
 The sower observes that the seed has sprouted and is growing.  
 Jesus uses five verbs to describe what happens – scatter, sleep, rise, sprout and grow.  
 But the sower has no idea how it sprouted and grew.  
 All the farmer does is plant the seed on proper ground. He does not make the seed grow.  
 He does not even understand how it grows.

You ask any farmer how the seed grows. He may tell the conditions acceptable for the seed to sprout but how it sprouts no one can tell.  
 How did the seed sprout and grow?

Jesus gives the answer in the next verse. Verse 29.

<sup>28</sup> *The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.*  
 The phrase “by itself” should have been translated “automatically”. It’s word *automatos* in Greek language. We get the English *automatic* from this word. Jesus says the growth is automatic. The seed sprouts, and it grows and eventually produces fruit.  
 The seed represents the Gospel or the word of God.

You are in the kingdom of God because someone *sowed* the word of God. The Gospel of Jesus Christ took root in your heart and is bearing fruit and will bear fruit for God. Fruit is inevitable of a good soil unless the soil is hard, shallow or thorny.  
 This is a secret to unbelievers because their hearts are either hardened, superficial or choked by thorns. The lack of fruit is indicative of an unregenerate heart or soil.  
 But to those who have received the word with an honest heart, those who repent and believe will see transformation and fruit in their lives. The early evidence of fruit is usually seen in your love for God, his Word and his people.  
 So never underestimate of the value of the word.

I know someone in Oregon who has a tree in his backyard that is least five hundred years ago. That tree is older than America. How did this tree survive this long? I don’t know.  
 We know sunlight and water surely help but how did one tree survive that long?

Jesus taught his disciples to have lasting fruit. (John 15:16).  
 In verse 29 Jesus tells his disciples that one day harvest will come. The growth may sound insignificant but one day maturity will come.

<sup>29</sup> *But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”*

One day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to establish his kingdom on earth, the kingdom will fully be inaugurated. Some will go to judgment. And some to eternal life.

The point of this parable is not the work of the sower but the work of the seed, which obtains its growth from an unknown source and grows slowly that we cannot see it growing. Only when we go after a day, a week, a month or a year can we see the seed's progress — and be delighted by it — and wonder at it.

God is ultimately in control of the result. Sadly, some preachers can try and manipulate others to show as if they have the power to change others.

The month of October should remind us of Reformation Day. Martin Luther, one of the key figures of the Protestant Reformation echoed the principle of the seed. He said, “*I simply taught, preached, wrote God’s Word; otherwise I did nothing... The Word did it all*” Martin Luther.

The kingdom of God is like a slow but steady growth. We preach and witness, but the results are very ordinary. It may not look like much, but the seed is growing because God is at work. God is at work because the seed is His word.

Jesus has another parable to illustrate the growth of the kingdom of God. Verses 30 through 32.

<sup>30</sup> *And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, <sup>32</sup> yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”*

The mustard seed was known for its small size in the first century context. It is literally not the smallest size among seeds. Jesus was using the mustard seed example to give an illustration about the kingdom of God. For those who heard the parables of Jesus it very likely they knew about the mustard that it was the smallest seed – like the size of a grain of sand. However, when grown, it becomes huge treelike shrub – about ten or more feet – larger than any other garden plant.

The main point is that the kingdom of God grows like a mustard seed. After insignificant, small and weak beginnings someday it will become a big plant.

You could also say that the kingdom of God will outlast any other kingdom or

government or rule of men on this earth. Jesus' kingdom is a kingdom that is forever. The kingdoms of this world will perish. But Jesus' kingdom will never end.

One day, when Jesus returns, the spiritual kingdom will become a physical kingdom.

Implications:

- Sow intentionally. Witness with expectation.
- Leave room for God to work. See yourself as a means.

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In conclusion, all parables of Jesus are about the Gospel. You get the Gospel right, you get the parables.

Do you have faith? Even if that is small, it is enough to God. God will reward that faith. Because having faith of the size of a mustard seed is better than no faith at all.

## ----- Discipleship Questions-----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: The Kingdom of God. Mark 4:26-34

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

1. What is the Kingdom of God? What does it mean to be in the Kingdom of God?

HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.

2. In what way do you believe you play a part in the kingdom of God? Go around and share.
3. What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

4. For personal reflection: What will you do to plant a seed in the hearts of others?