

SERMON NOTES

Preacher: Kevin Hardy

Date: August 18, 2024

Text: Mark 4:21-34

Title: Understanding Jesus' Ministry

Big Idea: God is the one who defines His kingdom and reveals it to us.



I. THE PARABLE OF THE LAMP (v. 21-25)

Remember – the gospel is good news! Jesus is saying – the kingdom of God is here to be revealed to you. It's like a lamp coming into a dark room and giving light. IT IS TO BE MADE KNOWN!

Ears to hear ← “Pay attention!” Hearing AND Responding

There is new life for those who belong to the kingdom of God.

“This new life stands in direct contrast to the powerful and established principles of a God-opposing life.”¹

II. THE PARABLE OF THE GROWING SEED (v. 26-29)

The progress of the kingdom is ultimately God's doing!

We need a supernatural work of God to bring us to life and God will continue to do work in us.

This parable gives us HOPE. The farmer plants the seed – but God brings the growth.

Jesus is telling us that God's kingdom is slow and steady – BUT it certainly is growing and producing a great harvest!

III. THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (v. 30-34)

“God's kingdom is like a mustard seed, so small when it is planted, yet eventually it becomes one of the largest plants!”²

“Its beginning is likened to a mustard seed, which was the smallest of all the seeds but could produce a bush as large as 3 by 12 feet (0.9 by 3.7 m). The metaphor emphasizes small beginnings and gradual but remarkable growth.” (ESV Study Bible)

APPLY

- Pay attention to what you hear (v. 24)
- Hope in God, trust Him (don't be fooled by the smallness/slowness of the Kingdom)
- Allow your light to shine

¹ *ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible*

² Wilmington, H. L.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

To be used for personal reflection and/or sermon-based small group discussion.

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READ Mark 4:21-25

Is there anything that is difficult to understand in the text, or a question you would like to ask the writer of the passage or the Lord?

Where is Christ in this passage? How does this passage relate to the person, nature, character or work of Christ? Luke 24:44 says all of Scripture is about Christ. So, how does this passage help you see more of who Christ is, what He has done, or allows you to love Him more?

What is Jesus saying about His kingdom? (v. 22)

How do we respond to the revealing of the kingdom? (v. 23) What does it mean to have “ears to hear”?

READ Mark 4:26-34

How does Jesus describe the process of waiting? How does Jesus describe the final result?

How does this parable help you to commit to following Jesus when the waiting feels unbearable? How does this parable encourage you when you haven't seen much fruit in a particular ministry?³

What does Jesus say about the small beginnings and the massive outcome of His kingdom? (v. 31-32)

PRAY

³ Griffith-Jone, *Explore Mark*