

"SECRETS OF THE KINGDOM" (The Parables of Jesus)

WEST OLIVE CHURCH OF CHRIST – Wednesday PM Bible Class – Rich Howell

D-"KINGDOM GROWTH PARABLES" SUPPLEMENT

INTRODUCTION: What follows is a summary of the first set of "Kingdom Growth Parables." The Sower; the Mustard Seed; the Leaven, and the Growing Grain.

1. THE SOWER (Mat 13:3-8,18-23; Mk 4:3-8,14-20; Lk 8:5-8,11-15)

Big Picture: SAME SEED → IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS & UNDER DIFFERENT CONDITIONS → HAS DIFFERENT EFFECTS → WITH DIFFERENT OUTCOMES!

Core Message: Whether or not the seed has its desired effect (to save you) and desired outcome (Kingdom fruit) depends on how receptive and responsive we are to His Word! (In other words, PRODUCTIVITY DEPENDS ON RECEPTIVITY!)

Apps: 1) TUNE IN & PAY ATTENTION! (Heb 2:1); 2) HUMBLY & MEEKLY RECEIVE GOD'S WORD! (James 1:21; Acts 17:11); 3) STAY WITH IT AND BEAR FRUIT (Luke 8:15; James 1:21-25; Col 3:16); 4) CLEAR OUT THE CLUTTER! (1 John 2:15-17) 5) DEEPEN YOUR FAITH! (Col 2:6-7; Jude 20-21)

2. THE MUSTARD SEED (Mat 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 8:18-19)

Big Picture: A man plants a tiny, common mustard seed that outgrows all the plants in his garden - big enough for birds to come and nest in it! What a contrast!

Core Message: A little grows a long way! The Kingdom of heaven has small and obscure beginnings, but has amazing and divine growth potential! (Acts 2:36-47; Mat 16:18-19; Dan 2:35,44; Isaiah 2:2-3; 9:6-7)

Apps: 1) The Lord's church may be small but don't underestimate what God can do with the small and the few! 2) Those who live small in Christ today will be great on That Day! (Mat 5:3-12; Mark 9:33-37; Mat 19:27-30; 20:25-28; 2 Cor 6:8b-10); 3) Like the birds of the air, we all need a good place to land! (Isaiah 2:2-3)

3. THE YEAST (LEAVEN) (Mat 13:33; Luke 8:20-21)

Big Picture: A woman puts a small amount of leaven in a large amount of flour and the whole lump is affected, altered! (1 Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9)

Core Message: A little goes a long way! The Kingdom of heaven has a far-reaching influence and impact!

Apps: 1) We are here to influence the world - not to be influenced by the world! (Rom 12:2; Mat 5:13-16; Phil 2:14-15) 2) To impact the world we have to mix with the world! (Col 4:5-6; 1 Pet 2:9; 3:15; Mark 16:15-16). To make a difference we have to be different (as in Mat 5:13)

4. THE GROWING GRAIN (Mark 4:26-29) Observation & Application

A. Getting the picture: The farmer ...

- 1) _____ in hope (4:26)
- 2) _____ with patience (4:27)
- 3) _____ the growth (4:28)
- 4) _____ in haste (4:29)

B. Getting the point: As farmers for Jesus, we should ...

- 1) _____ good seeds at every opportunity (Isaiah 55:10-11; Gal 6:7-10; 1 Cor 15:58)
 - ❖ *God's Word & good _____!*
- 2) Give them _____ & _____ to grow (1 Cor 3:6; James 5:7-8)
- 3) Watch for signs of _____ (Acts 2:7-8,12,37)
 - ❖ *STAGES OF GROWTH: From the _____ to the _____ to the _____!*
- 4) Be _____ to harvest
 - 📖 Like P _____ in Acts 2
 - 📖 Like P _____ in Acts 8
 - 📖 Like P _____ in Acts 16

BOTTOM LINE: While God gives the growth, it takes _____ to harvest _____! (Rom 10:14-17; Mat 9:36-38)