

THE CHURCH IS LEAVING THE BUILDING... TO PLANT GOD'S KINGDOM SEED!

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-46,

ATTENTION:

Returning home from Kindergarten one day a boy ran into the house and excitedly told his mother, "I found a dollar bill on the sidewalk as I was walking home from school!"

"Where is it," the boy's mother asked. "Let me see."
"I don't have it," the boy responded, "I'll pick it up tomorrow."
What do you think his chances are of getting that dollar bill?

This kind of nonchalant attitude toward the Kingdom of God will be equally as productive!

ATTUNE:

In the Kingdom parables in Matthew 13 we hear the words, *The kingdom of heaven is like...* several times.

- And in each of these parables Jesus points to a different aspect of the Kingdom of heaven.
 - The first 2 we will read illustrate that the Kingdom grows from a small beginning. Like a mustard seed and leaven.

³¹ He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³² It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³ He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

Matthew 13:31-33

- Two parables in this same chapter, the parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl tell us that the Kingdom is the Ultimate Treasure of Life.
 - So much so that when you find it you sell everything to possess it!
 - It's that important!!!

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:44-46

- When we come upon the Kingdom, we can't just walk away telling ourselves we will "pick it up tomorrow."

BODY:

God's Kingdom is the reign of God and His people, His subjects.

- It's is concerned with the here and now!
 - It answers the question: "Is this life meaningless or does it have purpose?"
 - It enables those who are dealing with great adversity to live triumphantly!
 - It ushers in the peace which surpasses all understanding and the joy that doesn't make any sense—no matter what is going on in the outside world.
 - It is the Treasure people are looking for.
 - It is the Power for Living a fulfilling and meaningful life!!!
 - And it is available to all of us through the life, death, resurrection and eternal triumphant reign of Jesus Christ!!!

The Parable of the Mustard Seed points to the Kingdom's small beginnings.

- The Kingdom it is like the smallest of seeds...
 - ...but when we plant it into our lives...
 - ...into how we live...
 - ...into how we interact with our friends, neighbors, enemies
 - ...it grows!
 - The longer we cultivate it--the more our lives become clothed with Jesus Christ's – it grows!

- The Kingdom of Heaven is like that...
 - The Kingdom of Heaven is not just about you and me!
 - It is not just about a little relationship with God and me!
 - It is about everyone in the entire world!!!
 - It's about living selflessly in a very selfish world.
 - It's about loving others—even more than ourselves.
 - It's about giving our lives so others can love Jesus.
 - When we cultivate that Mustard Seed within we are doing this as much for others as we are for ourselves.
 - So others will find rest, comfort, forgiveness
 - Finding Jesus through our lives seeds we plant with our lives!

What gives life purpose?

- Is purpose the result of causes and joys you choose to pursue?
 - Your projects, hobbies, assets, career, causes, etc.
 - Or does life have a more profound purpose?
- You answer that question of purpose by what you do with the treasure of God's Kingdom!

Jesus says, *“The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.”*
 Matthew 13:33

- Our world/community is filled with people who are walking around void of any purpose beyond themselves!
 - Finding little or no real joy in life.
 - Others walk around with a chip on their shoulder—angry at the world.
 - They are miserable.
 - They have not found the Treasure of the Kingdom hidden in the field.
 - They are not aware of any Kingdom mustard trees where they can perch in the branches.
- As those who live in the Kingdom of God we are to allow God to mix us into our community so the seed of His Kingdom can be sown in the hearts of others!.

- This is our purpose.
- To make followers of Jesus Christ!
- To take our faith outside the doors of this building?
- Allowing others to see Jesus' Kingdom in each one of us?
- Do they see the Kingdom in you?
 - How you treat your spouse and children
 - ...those who work for you or those you work with
 - By your actions and your words
- Are you inviting your friends to worship God with you?
 - ...to come to Bible study and Sunday school?
- Are you living among others prejudice free, open to all?
 - Not self-righteous but humbly caring forgiving, loving other
- These are characteristics of Jesus as He lived and this is the way the Kingdom of God operates.

PROJECT: *the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed*

- Easily overlooked, often dismissed; that's the nature of the kingdom.

²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

1 Corinthians 1:28-29

- God takes His Son and hangs Him on the cross and everyone despises Him and this is the seed that plants the kingdom in the world.
- God takes your stammering lips and your faltering prayers and your fragile service and by it the kingdom grows, improbably perhaps, as it may seem to you, and yet really according to Jesus' promise.
- Do not judge the value of your labors in the name of Jesus by your perspective or your understanding, by appearances.
- Learn to judge by His promises.
- He has said this is the nature of the kingdom and the kingdom will grow, albeit, improbably in your eyes.

ACTION:

There are Christians who think the church's worst days lie ahead, that it's all downhill from here.

- Facing a hostile world of unbelief, equipped with nothing but preaching, teaching and praying, they say is like facing nuclear war armed with BB guns - the chances of success are not strong.
 - But we've forgotten, that the kingdom of heaven is like leaven that leavens the whole lump.
 - It is potent.
 - Quietly, mysteriously it will work, unnoticed, unanticipated; it will advance till it permeates the world having leavened those who believe.
 - We're called upon to fight the forces of discouragement with this promise. *A little leaven will leaven the whole batch of dough.*
 - One day "all the ransomed church of God will be saved to sin no more."
 - Countless multitude singing the praises of the Lamb from every tribe and language and nation under heaven
 - Nothing can thwart the purpose and design of Jesus Christ for His kingdom
 - How we need to cling to the promise of Jesus that we ourselves might persevere in His service.
- People look for and find the treasure hidden in the field when they learn Jesus died for all ...not just a hand-picked few!!!
 - The Kingdom of God is the Ultimate Treasure!!!

As the church leaves the building this morning, let us...

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2