

The Mustard Seed and the Yeast

STORIES OF THE KINGDOM: THE PARABLES OF JESUS [MATTHEW, PART 5] · MATTHEW 13:31-33 · AUGUST 29, 2021 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

SERMON OUTLINE:

"He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field.'" (Matthew 13:31)

The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)

The small size of the mustard seed – the smallest seed that Jews at the time would regularly plant in their gardens

The external growth of the seed into a tree (10-12 feet tall)

The word from Ezekiel 17:22-24 – the nations gathered in

The Parable of the Yeast (Matthew 13:33)

The small size of the yeast – hidden on the inside

The internal transformation of the dough

Kingdom Perspective

Don't despise small beginnings

Don't rule out unseen possibilities

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you seen a small something or someone make a big difference?
2. This week we continue our series, "Stories of the Kingdom," by looking at the twin parables of the mustard seed and the yeast in Matthew 13:31-33. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word. Then, whether you're on your own or with others, read the text aloud.
3. Background: Biblical scholars tell us the mustard seed was one of the smallest seeds Jews in Jesus' day would have regularly planted in their gardens. It could grow as tall as 10-12 feet. The mustard seed was used often used in proverbs to represent the smallest of the small.
4. Given that background, what would you say is the general point or thrust of this first parable of the mustard seed?
5. How might this parable have encouraged or instructed the early believers in Jesus, given their small beginnings? How does it encourage or instruct you?
6. Turning to the second parable about the yeast, what would you say is the point of this parable?
7. How might this parable be both similar to and different from the parable about the mustard seed?
8. Given the pairing of these parables, what do they tell us about the kingdom of God?
9. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper into Jesus' parable of the mustard seed and the yeast in one or more of the following ways:

- Journal about one or both of these parables, expressing your thoughts about them, what God is teaching you through them, as well as your prayers to God about them.
- Draw, paint, or ink the parables as a way of reflecting on what Jesus is saying and praying about your own response to the Lord.
- Set aside some time this week to make bread with a friend or family member. As you do that, consider the role of the yeast in the dough and what that speaks about the kingdom of God. Give the bread to someone else as a gift.
- Look up or purchase some mustard seed. Share the parable of the mustard seed with someone and give them a mustard seed or two when you do that.