

“THE LEADER’S ENCOURAGEMENT”

(Luke 13:18-21)

(V.18) “Then said he, unto what is the kingdom of God like, and whereunto shall I resemble it?”

(v.19) “It is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.”

(V.20) “And again he said, whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?”

(V.21) “It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”

Introduction

Fact: Jesus said that the kingdom of God in your (His) church and city is like two things:

#1. “A grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds.”

#2. “A little leaven (yeast) which a woman took.”

Fact: Jesus said that the seed was cast into the ground and the leaven was placed into the meal.

(Three Words Of Power And Encouragement)

1. God’s Work Always Starts Small.

A. “A **grain** of mustard seed which is the least of all seeds.”

B. “A **little** leaven which a woman took.”

Question: What’s the big deal about being small in this beginning stage? (Why so encouraging?)

Answer: Because (thanks to Adam) we are prone to measure our work and our worth by the **A.G.E.S.** (American **G**ospel **E**nterprise **S**ystem) which is:

1. Size
(What’s the biggest?)
2. Speed
(What’s the fastest?)
3. Sound
(What’s the loudest?)

(And The Enemy Whispers To You)

- “You’re not important in the whole scheme of things.”
- “You’re not valuable to God or your local church.”
- “Look how big your neighbor’s church is.”
- “Things will never change around here.”

(And You’ll Be Tempted – I Was)

- To feel unsuccessful in respect to accomplishment.
- To feel insignificant in the total plan of God.
- To feel inferior to those who boast of success.

(Why Does God’s Work Start Small?)

- Because the **process** of growth in the leader and church is as important as the **end product** itself. (It’s not **what** we build but **how** we build that matters to God. I Corinthians 3:10).

(Some Soul Savers From God To Me While In Cooperstown Pioneering With Six People)

- A. "Build a house of **devotion** with God, and He will build a place of **ministry** for you."
- B. "Your present **field** may be limited but **you** are not limited by your field."
- C. "God is not impressed with the **dimension** of your work, but the **spirit** in which it is done.

The Following Truth Curses Our Present Day Evaluations **(From "Man The Dwelling Place Of God" by A.W. Tozer, Pg 96-90)**

- "Christians have fallen into the habit of accepting the noisiest and most notorious among them as the best and the greatest." They too have learned to equate popularity with excellence, and in open defiance of the Sermon on the Mount they have given their approval not to the meek but to the self-assured; not to the pure in heart who see God but to the publicity hunter who seeks headlines.
- The noisy, the self-assertive, the entertaining are sought after and rewarded in every way, with gifts, crowds, offerings and publicity. The Christ-like, the self-forgetting, the other worldly are jostled aside to make room for the latest converted playboy who is usually not too well converted and still very much of a playboy.
- The wise Christian will be content; he will serve his generation in the will of God. If he should be overlooked in the religious popularity contests he will give it but small attention. He knows whom he is trying to please and he is willing to let the world think what it will of him. He will not be around much longer anyway, and where he is going men will be known not by their Hooper rating, but by the Holiness of their character."

Did You Hear That?

"If he should be overlooked in the religious popularity contests, he will give it but small attention. He knows whom he is trying to please..."

2. At Times God's Work Is Invisible But God Is Working Even When I Cannot See Him.

Fact: The mustard seed was cast into the ground (**out of sight**).

Fact: The woman hid the fermented dough in the meal (**out of sight**).

Danger:

Here is the time of greatest frustration; between the time when you **plant** and the time when you **pick**.

Are You Tempted To Leave (Or Be Discouraged?)

1. Because you cannot see what's going on?
2. Because you do not know all that God is doing?
3. Because it seems like little progress is being made?

Question: Do you have an unsaved son or daughter?

Question: Are finances low and needs pressing in on you?

Question: Is attendance not what you expected?

Question: Have you encountered opposition and criticism that has "dented" your spirit?

Question: Have you been considering “other options” in recent days?

- If God says “go” then plan to “go”.
- If God hasn’t said “go” then plan to die in the ground where you are and see God build a great church!!!

(Remember Leader)

The place where the seed **dies** is the same place where it **resurrects**!

(And Remember This)

- **Discouragement** is a lie of the devil to blind you in the **present** of what God is going to do in the **future**!!
- **Worry** is accepting responsibility God **never intended** for you to carry!!

Illustration: Ever see a shooting star? It is not falling when you see it, but thousands of light years before. It just takes time for it to manifest itself.

Illustration: Daniel prays for 21 days before the answer is manifested. God sends an angel to tell Daniel, “I heard your prayer on the 1st day.” (Daniel 10)

Memorize: “That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through **faith** and **patience** inherit the promises.” (Hebrews 6:12)

“But let **patience** have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” (James 1:4)

3. God’s **Word** With Your **Faithfulness** Always Brings God’s Results.

Fact: In v. 19, the little seed grew into a great tree.

Fact: in v. 21, the little leaven multiplied to feed an estimated 162 people

- But a man had to sow the seed and a woman had to sow the yeast.

Let’s Believe God

1. Though the vision tarry, wait for it, because **it will surely come** and not be overdue one single day.” (Habakkuk 2:3)
2. “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, **bringing his sheaves with him.**” (Psalm 126:6)
3. “God **gives the increase.**” (I Corinthians 3:6)
4. “I sent you **to reap.**” (John 4:38)

Conclusion

(Why You Can Sleep Well At Night)

Mark 4:26-29

“So is the kingdom of God (in your church) as if a man should cast seed into the ground.” (v. 26)

“And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how.” (v. 27)

“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” (v. 28)

“But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” (v. 29)

Some Leadership “Blade And Ear” Secrets

1. We must have faith for **planting** (v. 26)
(As pure seed must be sown into the hearts of people)
2. We must have faith for **perception** (v. 27)
(Believing that the seeds sown will spring up and grow)
3. We must have faith for **patience** (v. 28)
(The gradual process must not be short-cuttet here):
 - 1st the blade – or tender green shoot.
 - 2nd the ear – or stalk (or spiral).
 - 3rd the full corn – or grain swollen to its proper size.

(Do You Live In v. 27?)

- You “**Knoweth not how**” God is going to intervene where you live?
- Yet, you are willing to “tarry until.”

Then Rest Well:

1. You can live **anxious free**.
“And should sleep night and day” (v. 27 means):
 - We are to fret not how God will do it.
 - We are to just be faithful day after day. (Remember, faithfulness is **progress**)
2. You can live with **joyful expectation**.
“And the seed will spring up and grow.” (v. 27 means):
 - Something is going on as we faithfully sow good seed.
 - There is no cessation of God’s activity even though we can’t see all He is doing.
3. You can live **without** all the answers.
“He knoweth not how.” (vs. 27 means):
 - If we don’t give up, God will give us our burden.
 - If we get planted and die, God will resurrect a harvest for His honor and glory.

Amen!
Bill Kirk