

Jesus is King | A Series through the Gospel of Mark

A Gracious Kingdom

Mark 4:26-34

And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. **27** He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. **28** The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. **29** But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come." **30** And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? **31** It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, **32** yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." **33** With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. **34** He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

Synopsis: The Kingdom of God is gracious and abundant

We have an important job

And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should **scatter seed on the ground**. (Mark 4:26)

Our part may feel small: showing up, being consistent, the boring repetitiveness of life. We have one job! Point to God's kingdom. God's kingdom will do the rest.

Ask: What ordinary mundane thing/relationship/responsibility in my life might I be overlooking? "How can I be more present to God in the ordinary?"

God is gracious

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- Unexpected beginnings
 - It starts small: **The mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds**
 - Sometimes the way God works in our life feels anticlimactic...
 - It's a process...**first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear**
 - **But when the grain is ripe** (which we do not know when it will occur)

One day you wake up and realize you've grown, but only by looking back at your past self.

- Extravagant abundance

God wants this more than we sometimes do...he is willing to use what little energy you have to make much! He is gracious.

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(v.32)

Takeaway: Don't be so hard on yourself. God loves you and wants to give you his abundance. Be gracious with yourself because God is gracious to you!

It starts with relationship

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. **34** He did not speak to them without a parable, **but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.** (Mark 4:33-34)

As the disciples communed with Jesus, he opened them to the beauty of the kingdom which is gracious and abundant.

That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:2-3)

Ministry flows from intimacy with Jesus

1. Stop, pause, listen
2. Be gracious with yourself
3. Keep coming back to Jesus