



A Growing Kingdom

Key idea:

In the parables of the seeds, Jesus teaches that the Kingdom of God begins small and seemingly insignificant, but it will certainly grow until it becomes great and fruitful through the power of God and His Word.

Key text:

Mark 4:26–34

He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹ As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.” ³⁰ Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. ³² Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.” ³³ With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ³⁴ He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Key points:

1. The parables of the growing seed and the mustard seed have many similarities and a similar point and are meant to be read together to help us understand the nature of the Kingdom of God better.
2. According to these parables, the Kingdom of God begins small and is seemingly insignificant.
3. According to these parables, the Kingdom of God will grow, become fruitful, and be great.
4. According to these parables, the Kingdom of God grows by the power of God and His Word.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. How did the people of Jesus' day think the Kingdom would come? Is this still a temptation for people today?
3. Why is it important for me to understand that the Kingdom begins small and seemingly insignificant? Since Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom over 2,000 years ago, does this still have application today?
4. Why do I need to be reminded of the certainty of the fulfillment of God's plans for His Kingdom? Do I ever find myself discouraged or doubting that the Kingdom will come in its fullness?
5. In what things other than the Word of God am I tempted to trust to see God's will done and His Kingdom growing?
6. What circumstances make it hard for me to be at peace, waiting patiently, and full of confidence during this time while the Kingdom is still growing?
7. If I do not grasp the fact that God's Word is powerful to cause the Kingdom to grow and be fruitful, how will that lack affect my life and actions?
8. Why did Jesus devote so much of His teaching to parables about the Kingdom of God?
9. Who will I call or see to invite to gather with the church this week?