

2nd & 3rd Quarter 2021 Bible Study Outline



THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST - STUDY 18

The Growing Seed - Mk.4:26-29

INTRODUCTION:

1. Up to this point our study has focused on parables found in Matthew's gospel...
 - a. Many were found only in Matthew, though some are also found in the other gospels
 - b. We skipped a couple of parables found in Matthew that we will examine later in one of the other gospels
2. In this lesson, however, we shall examine a parable that is found only in the gospel of Mark
 - a. It is called "**The Growing Seed**"
 - b. And it is recorded in **Mk.4:26-29**
3. The setting of this parable appears to be the same occasion in which Jesus told...
 - a. The parable of "**The Sower**" - **Mk.4:1-20**
 - b. The parable of "**The Mustard Seed**" - **Mk.4:30-32**...therefore it was at the point in Jesus' ministry when He began to teach publicly in parables

Let's begin by taking a closer look the parable itself...

I. THE PARABLE ANALYZED:

A. What This Parable Reveals About The Kingdom Of God...

1. It describes how the Word of God produces fruit (i.e., how the kingdom grows)
 - a. While the "seed" is not identified in this parable as the Word of God...
 - b. ...it was defined as such in the parable of "**The Sower**" - **Mk.4:14; Lk.8:11**
2. The growth produced by the Word...
 - a. Is a mystery - **Mk.4:26-28a**
 - i) The sower can sow the seed and see it sprout and grow
 - ii) But the growth is beyond his comprehension, and even grows by itself
 - b. Is gradual - **Mk.4:28b**
 - i) It doesn't all occur at once
 - ii) But step by step: first the blade, then the head, then the full grain

3. But through such growth the harvest eventually comes - **Mk.4:29**
 - So the kingdom of God, growing by virtue of the Word of God being planted, is similar to the amazing growth observed in the sowing of grain

B. Comparing This Parable With The One Of "The Sower"...

1. The parable of "**The Sower**" emphasizes human responsibility
 - a. The seed did not produce the desired fruit unless it fell on good soil
 - b. It takes "a good and noble heart" for the seed to produce fruit! - **Lk.8:15**
2. But the parable of "**The Growing Seed**" stresses the divine power within the Word
 - a. A "good and noble heart" cannot bear fruit by itself!
 - b. It takes a seed that has within itself the power to germinate and grow in good soil
3. And this parable emphasizes the need for those who sow to trust and hope in the power of the seed, i.e., the Word of God

Yes, the Word is the "seed" which contains the power for spiritual life and growth when planted in the soil of a good and noble heart!

We may not be able to understand the true working of that power, but this parable illustrates how we can still use it!

That we might utilize this powerful seed more often and more successfully, consider a few more thoughts as we talk about...

II. THE PARABLE APPLIED:

A. The Word Of God Is A Powerful "Seed"...

1. It can cause us to be "**born again**" - **1Pet.1:22-25; Jam.1:18**
2. It can help us to "**grow**" - **1Pet.2:1-2**
3. It can indeed "**save your souls**" - **Jam.1:21**
 - All of this is possible because the Word of God is living and powerful, filled with Spirit-giving life - **Heb.4:12; Jn.6:63**

B. There Are Two Ways To Utilize This Powerful "Seed"...

1. **By receiving it into our own hearts**
 - a. Here we are talking about the growth of the kingdom of God in our lives
 - b. Of course, we must receive it properly
 - i) With a good and noble heart - **Lk.8:15; Acts 17:11**
 - ii) With meekness - **Jam.1:21**
 - iii) As babies longing for their mothers' milk - **1Pet.2:2**
 - All the while "laying aside" those things that would "choke" out the Word in our lives - **Jam.1:21; 1Pet.2:1**
 - c. When so received, growth will occur
 - i) But remember the parable, for the growth is gradual
 - ii) "**first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head...**" - **Mk.4:28**

- Therefore the need to continue to feed upon the Word of God, "**that you may grow thereby**" - **1Pet.2:2**

2. By sowing it as far and wide as we possibly can

- a. Here we are talking about the growth of the kingdom of God in the world
- b. Like the sower in the parable of "**The Sower**", we must sow the seed everywhere
- c. But like the sower in the parable of "**The Growing Seed**", we must remember...
 - i) Growth comes only through the divine power of the seed
 - a) It is God who gives the increase
 - b) We are simply "seed-throwers" and "seed-waterers" - **1Cor.3:5-7**
 - ii) Growth comes in stages, not all at once
 - a) There will be days when all we seem to be doing is "sowing"
 - b) There will be days when all we seem to be doing is "watering" and "waiting"
 - Like the farmer, then, we must be patient - **Jam.5:7**

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The general lesson in the parable of "**The Growing Seed**" is this:
 - a. In the kingdom of God, as in nature, we are labourers together with God
 - b. The results of our work depend on Him, and to perfect these results He takes His own time
- 2. This being the case...
 - a. It is our duty to sow the seed (the Word of God), it is up to God to give the increase - **1Cor.3:6-9**
 - b. Having sown the seed, we must wait for time and God to perfect the growth - **Phil.1:6**
 - c. The growth that comes will do so in gradual stages
 - d. Not until there has been time for development are we to expect to reap
- 3. Therefore this parable teaches us to trust and hope in power of the Word of God
 - a. Do we trust in its power to save the lost?
 - i) Or do we look to gimmicks designed by men?
 - ii) The gospel is God's power to save! - **Rom.1:16-17**
 - b. Do we trust in its power to save your own soul?
 - i) Or do we look to self-help methods that promise but really can't deliver?
 - ii) The Word of God is what is capable of saving our souls! - **Jam.1:21**

Are you sowing the seed of the kingdom? Both in the world, and in your own life as well...?