

Mrk14 – I Can't See The Growth – Mark 4:26-32

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3 msg's ago - we started **looking**
at the **ONLY CH** of **Parables** - in the **Gospel** of **Mark**

For the **1st Two Msgs** - we **focused** on

how the **Parables** of Jesus
require us to "**Check Our Heart**"

Because the **Beginning** of the **Ch** - made it **clear**

that the **condition** of our **Heart**
is **what determines** if we can

Hear & Receive

the **life-changing truth** of the **Word** of **God** – or **NOT**

& **then** – **last week** – we **asked** the **HARD QUESTION**
What if the Condition of my heart - is NOT RIGHT?

& **we** said – **God's ANSWER** Is – **Be Born Again**

Today - to **finish** Mark's **Ch** on **Parables** -
We look at **TWO Similar teachings**

that **BOTH Illustrate** the **MYSTERY**
of the **GROWTH** of the **Kingdom of God**

**Ultimately - the Growth of The Kingdom of God
Is a MIRACULOUS – MYSTERY**

& so - **We are FORCED to TRUST GOD**

That **HE is Bringing the FRUIT
& HE is Growing His KINGDOM**

Even when – We Can't See The Growth

Let's Pray

**These Parables in Mark Ch 4 are all about
the GROWTH of the Kingdom of God**

& - **maybe more specifically
THE WAY in which - the Kingdom of God grows**

& the **MORE we LOOK at these parables
the MORE we understand**

That **SOME GROWTH of the Kingdom of God
we CAN'T Really SEE
& we CAN'T Fully UNDERSTAND**

**There's a MYSTERY to it –
We can't see it all – we can't understand it all**

& So - The MYSTERY - of the Growth of the Kingdom of God
Is the FOCUS in these last 2 parables

Here's the 1st one - Mark 4:26–34 (NLT)

26 Jesus also said, "The Kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed on the ground.

27 Night and day, while he's asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens.

28 The earth produces the crops on its own. First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens.

29 And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come."

Jesus is back to the soil & the seed

But this time - he's NOT talking
about the condition of the soil

He's talking about - the Mystery - of the GROWTH of the SEED

But - Jesus is NOT describing
the full agricultural process

He's not writing The Farmers Almanac
For 1st Century Farmers

Jesus is Trying to draw our attention to One Thing

WHAT IS IT?

Look for **WHAT** Jesus is **TEACHING**
BY SEEING What Jesus is **REPEATING**

Look again - Mark 4:27 (NLT)

27 Night and day, while he (the farmer) is asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens.

Jesus isn't referring to an in-experienced farmer

He's **Pointing Out** the fact

That **there's** a **MYSTERY** - to the **Growing of the Seed**

That the **Farmer**

is **NOT Involved In** & **Does NOT Fully Understand**

Then - Mark 4:28 (NLT)

28 The earth produces the crops on its own (without the farmer). First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens.

Again – **Jesus** is **NOT Focused** on **teaching** the **Farmer**
how to **Manage his Farm**

Jesus is **focused** on the **MYSTERY** of the **Seed Growing**

Because it **explains** – a **Deep Spiritual Truth**

- So - **Let's** Try **NOT** to **MISS IT**

So – V.27 says the Farmer
doesn't understand how the seed grows

& - V.28 says the growth of the seed – is a MYSTERY

& then - Mark 4:29 (NLT)

29 And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come.”

Now – the ULTIMATE HARVESTER is GOD – Not Us

& so this CAN REFER
to US - Being Involved in God's Harvest

OR – it CAN REFER – To God Bringing The Harvest
ON His Own - & IN His time

BUT – Here's the Big picture - we don't want to miss

The GROWTH of the Kingdom of God – IS A MYSTERY

AND - it's Growing - In another "Dimension" - (if you will)
that we CAN'T SEE with our Natural Eyes

BUT – IF the SEED of the Word of God
is GOING OUT

When the Seed FALLS on the Soil of a Receptive Heart

It WILL begin a MYSTERIOUS & MIRACULOUS Process

We MAY NOT be able to SEE IT

But – it IS Happening – We have God's WORD on it

Isaiah 55:10–11 (NLT)

10 “The rain . . . cause[s] the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry.

11 It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

Guys - GOD is in Charge – of Producing the FRUIT

We are Responsible – for SOWING the Seed
that God Sends us out to Sow

BUT – AS this parable in Mark 4 describes

There is a TIME – when there is little to SHOW
for the Sowing of the Seed

On the surface

it may LOOK like nothing much - is happening

BUT – GOD Promises us – That:

HIS WORD - Will PRODUCE Fruit

& HIS WORD - Will ACCOMPLISH - all God Wants it to

& HIS WORD - Will PROSPER - Wherever he Sends it

There **WILL BE GROWTH** of the **Kingdom**
thru the **Sowing of God's Word**

Whether the NATURAL EYE can see it – or NOT

Let me Give you just TWO EXAMPLES

Just **THREE** days ago – at our **Annual Harvest Festival**

We **presented** the **Gospel** Message **635 times** – in **FOUR Hours**

NOT to **a group** of **635 people** – But **individually** – **one-on-one** –
we **shared** the **Love of God** in **Jesus** Christ - **635 times**

Mostly to Children

Approx. 200 of those **children** (**& some adults**)

asked Jesus to **come into** their **lives** & **be their Savior**

We are **a church** of **150 people**,

& **we presented** the Gospel to **600 individual people** in one night

And – **this** was our **TENTH year** doing that

We've had as **high** as **350 commitments** in **one night**

But – **just using** the **200 average** per year

That means – in just this **ONE EVENT** – in the **past 10 yrs**

(**IN** this **town** of **7,000**) - **we've had 2,000 people** ask **Jesus**
to **come into their Life** & **be their Savior**

But – here's the thing – that challenges our FAITH

Our church is still the SAME Physical SIZE

As it was - 10 years ago

WHY?

Maybe it's because

we don't know HOW to grow a BIG CHURCH (*which is true*)

But – Maybe it's because - MOST of those 2,000 Salvations

have been - CHILDREN

So, let me ask – Does God here the prayer of a child

when they ask Jesus to come into their lives?

& so - what will happen to the New Life that was planted

in those 200 children (& *some adults*) last Thursday night?

In **SOME** for sure – (& **we** would **Pray ALL**)

The **Seed** of the **Word of God**

Will **GERMINATE** . . . It will **GROW**

& **soon** – one **Little Blade** of **LIFE**

will **start Sticking Out** - **as a SIGN**

& **Then** – **THE WORD** that was **PLANTED**

will **Continue to GROW**

& ultimately – that NEW Life will Produce FRUIT
& the Kingdom of God will GROW!

THAT is how it really WORKS

It's NOT - Cooler Atmosphere and Better Coffee
that Grows the Kingdom of God

It's Salvation being planted in people's hearts

& God being TRUSTED
to GROW - His KINGDOM – His WAY

& - It's the SAME thing with our Word By Mail Ministry

In the first 13 years of that Ministry
we Mailed out, or Handed out, all FREE of charge

over 400,000 CD's
with the clear teaching of the Word of God on them

& the Family of God that's been built FROM THAT – IS HUGE

I recently talked to a woman from South Africa

Who says she's been listening to Word-By-Mail for YEARS
& God has used that Ministry – Dramatically in her life

& the Word By Mail Phone App
Which has over 800 Msgs We've taught here

has been downloaded by over 5,000 people

& I communicate, thru the phone app – Each Week
with over 2000 of those people (when I send them the msg)

& we are STILL a church of 150

So - WHERE is the Growth? - WHERE is the Fruit?

The Growth - & the Fruit – is In The Spiritual Realm
Where GOD produces the Harvest

Guys - The Kingdom of God is GROWING
Thru the Existence of THIS church today

AS it IS thru the Existence
of EVERY Bible Teaching Church on Earth

The fact that we CAN'T SEE IT
with our Physical EYES

Does NOT CHANGE the FACT
that God is GROWING His KINGDOM

AS His Word continues to be SOWN - & Sent Out

SO – THE 1ST PARABLE

is about **TRUSTING GOD**

When we DON'T SEE any growth

Trusting that **Growth** is **Occurring**

In a **Dimension you CAN'T SEE**

Trusting that the **Harvest** will **Come**

in **GOD'S TIME** and in **GOD'S WAY**

& **NOT** by your **OWN EFFORT** – **or Inline** with your **OWN LOGIC**

& So - WE FINISH TODAY

with the **Last Parable Mark** uses in **his Gospel**

Jesus taught a **LOT MORE Parables** than **this**

But – **Mark** moves **Fast**

As soon as he's **made** his **point**

he's **on** to the **next big truth** (*that's what we **love** about **Mark***)

So – **Jesus** is going to **Start Again**

With a **DIFFERENT Parable** – But with the **SAME Subject**

Mark 4:30-32 (NLT)

30 Jesus said, "How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it?

31 It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds,

32 but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade.”

**Here - Jesus is REINFORCING
the Miracle of Small Beginnings**

by comparing the Kingdom of God - to the Mustard Seed

**The Mustard Seed was widely used
as a Proverb or a Figure of Speech - in the Jewish Culture**

They used it - to describe the smallest of things

& - it seems kinda WRONG, doesn't it

to compare the Kingdom of God
in its Eternal Grandness

to something the Jews used
to refer to the Smallest of things

**But – Jesus is NOT talking about
the Eternal, Heavenly Kingdom of God**

He's talking about The GROWTH
of the Kingdom of God on Earth

**& here, Jesus says, the GROWTH of the Kingdom of God on Earth
starts with the smallest of things**

We've been trained – by our SUCCEED BIG Culture

To NOT Embrace - SMALL THINGS –
SMALL WORKS OF GOD – or SMALL CHURCHES

But – Jesus says – the Kingdom of God is LIKE
the Smallest of all Seeds – The Mustard Seed

BUT (v.32 says) *it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade.*”

The Mustard Plant – is a Garden Plant
That easily grows to 9 feet tall, or more

& grows Large enough
for birds to make nests in its shade

Now – some people don't like
this reference to BIRDS

Because at times, birds are used to represent evil

HOWEVER – Birds are also used
in a POSITIVE sense in scripture

In any case - The FOCUS of this Parable
is NOT on the Birds

The Focus - & The Context
are clearly on the Growth of the Kingdom of God

So – our 2nd Parable today – is simply a reiteration

that God USES –SMALL SEEDS & he works
Mysteriously & Miraculously - WITH those Small Seeds

& He does WHAT he wants to do
& He does it WHEN He wants to do it

& Ultimately – God will bring a GREAT HARVEST
from even the SMALLEST SEED - of His Word

When it is SOWN - where he SENDS IT

Our responsibility is to SOW the SEED of the Word
that God's GIVEN US

SOME of that SEED will fall on HARD Hearts

SOME on SHALLOW Hearts

SOME on THORNY Hearts

& SOME will fall on FERTILE HEARTS
of those who DESIRE - to RECEIVE the Word

& - when that seed is planted
in the heart of a person who DESIRES to Receive it

GOD is the one - who Germinates that Seed

GOD is the one - who Grows that Seed

& GOD is the one - who brings that seed to HARVEST

So – AS you JOIN GOD – in His Kingdom Work

Sow His Word - in PATIENT FAITH

Knowing that it is GOD who causes the seed to grow

AND KNOW – that AS we continue to SOW His WORD
Where He SENDS US

GOD will Cause

a Mysterious, Miraculous, Growth - in the Spiritual Realm

& - we MAY - or MAY NOT - See much of it

BUT - If we will keep SOWING

God's LIVING, POWERFUL,

SHARPER than any Two-Edged Sword – WORD

God will PRODUCE the True SPIRITUAL FRUIT

God will BRING the HARVEST

God will GROW His KINGDOM!

So - Do we Need – Human, Tangible, EVIDENCE?

OR

Do we Need – MORE FAITH in God?

Let's Pray