

Hidden Kingdom Part 13 - "Leaven" (5-9-21)

Introduction: Baking mis-hap (salt in place of sugar)

Matthew 13:33 (ESV)

He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

Note: Leaven permeates - it interacts with the rest of the dough and changes its very structure!

- Jesus' Kingdom has this permeating quality to bring change that affects everything!

3 things to consider about what is "leavening" my life . . .

1) Oblivious (to what is shaping you)

Be aware: Something is shaping you!

- As you interact with it, it influences your thought life, focus, & aims.
- Ultimately it permeates down into your actions & your re-actions!

Almost exclusively in the Bible leaven is bad. Outside of Jesus telling us His Kingdom has this same penetrating quality, there are warnings over and over of unhealthy leaven working it's way into us!

Leaven and False Gospels . . .

a) Broken Ideologies & Philosophies of present day cultural leaders (Pharisees, Sadducees, & Herod)

Matthew 16:5-12 (Jesus warns of the leaven of the Pharisees & Sadducees)

Mark 8:15 (Mark's gospel adds Herod to this list as well) . . .

Mark 8:15 (ESV)

And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

Luke & Paul warn followers of Jesus (same analogy of leaven) about our own broken approaches . . .

b) Broken approaches to our Christian Faith

Hypocrisy - *Pharisees - not just their teaching warned against here, but their fake-ness (Luke 12:1-3)

Legalism - external legalistic requirements apart from simple faith! (Galatians 5:1-9)

Compromise - Sexual immorality, but also greed, drunken partying, swindlers, etc. (1 Cor. 5:6-13) . . .

1 Corinthians 5:6 (ESV)

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

Application: Beware of the leaven all around you - do you know what is permeating your life? Something is!

2) Obvious (but how do we handle it)

Many of us recognize broken or false kingdoms permeating the culture around us - they are easily recognized (at least to us) to be in direct opposition to Jesus' Kingdom. **So what then?**

1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (ESV)

(9) I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—(10) **not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world**, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. (11) But now I am writing to you not to associate with **anyone who bears the name of brother** if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. (12) For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? (13) God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

Note: Need to make a clear distinction between the church and the world. And handle each differently.

- We are called to love our enemies! (remember last week's message)
- We are never called to agree with them.

We need to be able to identify & address broken ideology, but remember something important . . .

Leaven - gets worked into the batch and changes the dough's structure & identity.

What we base our life upon becomes a part of us. It's changes our nature. And when that is called out, we feel called out. Leaven is dangerous because it becomes part of us, and therefore it's difficult to purge!

- Many Christians settle for just the blunt force trauma caused by calling it out.
- Or often well-meaning Christians apologize for the truth, and compromise it. Killing them softly instead.

Application: When dealing with false kingdoms, we must remember that it is deeply personal.

So, how do we love the sinner, but hate the sin? Start here . . .

3) Obscured (will we let Jesus purge it?)

Matthew 7:1-5 (ESV)

(1) “Judge not, that you be not judged. (2) For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. (3) Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? (4) Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? (5) You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Note: The real danger to us isn't the “obvious” kingdoms of the world that “they” are falling prey to. That will always exist. The real danger is the unholy alignment (mixing of kingdoms) that happens within us!

All the kingdoms of this world disagree except when they align together for 1 purpose . . .

Mark 3:6 (ESV)

The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy (Jesus).

Conclusion: What permeates your life?

Matthew 13:33 & 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened . . . Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.