

Parable of the Mustard Seed

Mark 4:30-32

The three parables of The Sower, The Growing Seed, and The Mustard Seed are pictures of God's activity in the world throughout history. They are also vibrant pictures of future Christ-followers until Jesus comes back for His bride, the Church.

Recapping the three previous sermons, Jesus used parables to communicate with His followers using word pictures. The Bible records that Jesus' faithful followers would understand His parables because their hearts were in tune with His. The parables of Jesus, correctly understood, illustrate the following:

- Focuses on the nature of God and His kingdom
- Highlights the behavior of those who are indeed God's people
- Describes the activity and/or destiny of the unrighteous

The Parable of the Mustard Seed is a straightforward illustration of how the kingdom of God grows. This parable illustrates the truth that God's plan, which started small, would in the course of history grow to become a missional movement that is beyond anyone's imagination.

Only a move of God could create a community of faithful followers under the banner of Jesus Christ. Jesus gives this parable to reassure the disciples that followers of Christ would spread throughout the world.

The three focus elements of the Parable of the Mustard Seed are:

- **Prophecy promised** – The kingdom of God starts small and insignificantly. Jesus points to the mustard seed (proverbially regarded as the smallest of all seeds).
- **Prophecy unfolding** – From Christ's humble beginnings in Bethlehem to fishermen along the Sea of Galilee to undereducated Galileans to periods of significant church expansion to now, you and me, the growth of the gospel extends. Growth is a mystery to us, but it is the plan of God.
- **Prophecy fulfilled** – Kingdom growth will not be stopped until Christ returns for His bride, the Church.

Thought to ponder

"Christianity can meet no obstacles greater than it has already overcome... This power which has been so gloriously triumphant will not cease to go forth "conquering and to conquer" until the victory is complete...."

Nevin, *The Parables of Jesus*, p.82