



# NEW HEIGHTS CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

*"Our Heart is People, Our Message is Jesus"*

## **Small Group Discussion Questions**

**Series: Glimpses of the Kingdom**

**Title: "Good Things Come To Those Who Wait"**

### **Icebreaker / Getting Started (10-15 minutes)**

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon—maybe a phrase, story, or idea (like the "three mile an hour God" frustration, the manure/fertilizer as God's use of messes, the both/and of "suddenlies" and slow/steady, the personal story of church challenges, or the invitation to "soften the soil" of your heart)? Why did it hit you? (Quick shares to connect personally and surface frustrations with waiting or growth.)
2. The sermon describes parables as glimpses of the kingdom that require "imaginative participation" and "squinting" to see, rather than simple morals. Have you ever had a Bible story (or even a non-Bible story) that confused or disrupted you at first but later revealed something deeper about patience, growth, or God's timing? Share briefly. (Encourage short examples to prepare the group for engaging the parable organically and imaginatively.)

### **Digging into the Scripture & Sermon (15-20 minutes)**

3. Read Luke 13:6-9 together as a group (the fig tree parable), then skim vv. 18-21 (mustard seed and yeast). The vineyard owner wants to cut down the fruitless tree after three years, but the gardener pleads for one more year of digging/fertilizing. How does this shift—from quick judgment to patient intervention—change how we view personal or spiritual "progress" (or lack of it)? (Reference the sermon's point: God is a gardener, we're trees; He dreams of fruitfulness in us, but works in slow, small, hidden ways—not mechanical or instant.)
4. Jesus uses everyday images (fig tree, mustard seed, yeast) to show Kingdom growth: small/hidden starts, slow processes, eventual fruit/impact. Why do you think Jesus chose these "unimpressive" twists (a barren tree getting manure, a tiny seed becoming a nesting tree, yeast hidden in dough) instead of dramatic or fast growth? In our world today, what might represent a "barren fig tree" or "mustard seed" situation where we're tempted to give up too soon (e.g., personal habits, relationships, church life)?
5. The sermon highlights three key glimpses of God's Kingdom work in us:
  1. God as gardener, us as trees (organic life, not machines; His dream is fruitfulness—love, character, impact—from creational design).
  2. Slow, small, hidden ways (both "suddenlies" and steady faithfulness; transformation through daily surrender, showing up, not zaps).

3. Using messes for growth (manure/fertilizer as nutrient-rich; God doesn't waste pain, failures, or "dung" in our stories—He redeems it for fruit).

Which of these three feels most convicting or relatable to you right now, and why? Share an example (e.g., frustration with slow change, a "mess" God used, or pressure to "produce" quickly).

### **Personal Application & Reflection (15-20 minutes)**

6. The sermon says the kingdom of God looks like patient gardening toward fruitfulness—God loves us too much to leave us static but works gently in time. Where in your life do you feel "not far enough along" (e.g., character, relationships, habits, faith)? What machine-like expectation (maximize output, recharge/unplug) might be fueling frustration? How might Jesus be inviting you to "squint" and see yourself as a tree in His patient care?
7. The gardener intercedes for mercy ("one more year"), mirroring Jesus' advocacy and God's patience with us (and others). How does remembering God's "both/and" work—sudden breakthroughs and slow faithfulness (like the 18-year-bound woman healed, or recovery through daily surrender)—change how you view your own delays or someone else's lack of change? (Tie to the sermon's point: The miracle is perseverance and ongoing growth, not just speed.)
8. The sermon ends with: God uses the messes of reality to produce the life He wants; stay rooted in one garden for roots to work. Who or what in your life this week (yourself, a loved one, your community/church) might Jesus want to "fertilize" patiently through you—offering grace, presence, or encouragement amid mess? (Think practical: naming disappointment to God, extending patience to someone slow to change, committing to steady faithfulness in a group/church.)

### **Prayer & Action Steps (10 minutes)**

9. In pairs (as the sermon models openness and communal response), ask each other: "How can I bless/pray for you this week in the area of patience, fruitfulness, or softening your heart?" (e.g., accountability for daily surrender, prayer for a "mess" to bear fruit, encouragement in waiting). Then pray a simple blessing over that person/need.
10. As a closing prayer, invite the group to ask the Holy Spirit: "Lord, what is one way I can cooperate with Your slow, patient work this week—staying rooted, surrendering daily, or embracing a mess for growth?" Share any promptings (e.g., consistent Bible reading/group attendance, honest prayer about disappointment, patience with someone, opening your heart in worship). Commit to following through and checking in next time for stories of Kingdom glimpses.