

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

1 Kings 3:5-12

Psalm 119:129-136

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. (v130)

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved & sovereign God, through the death & resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice & mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took & sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs & becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come & make nests in its branches." ³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took & mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened. ⁴⁴The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found & hid; then in his joy he goes & sells all that he has & buys that field. ⁴⁵Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went & sold all that he had & bought it. ⁴⁷Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea & caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, & put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out & separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping & gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵²And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new & what is old."

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son & Holy Spirit*

1. The mustard seed & yeast parables rely on an incongruity of size over time (1/16" seed | 9' shrub; 1 pinch of sourdough | 60 lbs. of flour); how does Christian history bear this out? *See Luke 1:46-55, 2:28:32; Acts 2:38-47, 5:12-16, 8:1, 4-8, 26-39, 9:26-31, 10:24, 44-48, 11:19-21, 13:42-52, 16:11-15, 19-34, 17:10-12*
2. Black mustard was notoriously hard to eradicate once established & dough cannot be "unleavened;" what does this tell us about the Kingdom of Heaven? *See Psalm 125:1-2; Isaiah 54:10-17; Matthew 16:18; John 10:27-30; Romans 8:33-39; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 21:1-4*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Each of these parables speaks to a certain hiddenness of the Kingdom; share at least three times when you were surprised by God's kingdom hidden in your everyday life.
4. In the parables of the sower & the wheat & weeds the main actor is God (Father or Son); what would this mean for v44-46? *See Genesis 17:7; Leviticus 20:26, Deuteronomy 7:6, 14:2; Psalm 8; Isaiah 62:11-12; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 34:24, 37:27; John 3:14-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Hebrews 8:10 | Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:5-6, 21:7*

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. What things prevent people from seeing the real life church as Jesus' treasured possession (v44-46)?
6. Though the parables of *ch13* speak frequently about final judgment they don't use political or military imagery/language; how does that inform your sense of politics- local, national, international? *See Matthew 5:1--7:29*

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field,
which someone found & hid; then in his joy he goes & sells all that he has
& buys that field. (vv44)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Many will come from east & west & will eat
in the kingdom of heaven. (*Matthew 8:11*)

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