

# The Connection

Weekly Bible Verse: "your kingdom come." Matthew 6:10 (NIV)

August 2, 2020

Together

## A Little Bit Goes a Long Way

Scripture: Matthew 13:31-35

<sup>34</sup> Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. <sup>35</sup> So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables,

I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

Jesus was the greatest teacher ever. He had amazing truth that He wanted to tell people. He wanted people to know who God was, what God was like, and what life was like in His kingdom.

Jesus used parables to teach spiritual truth in a way that people could understand and remember.

Most of the time, the truth that Jesus wanted to teach was very different than what the people already believed. Jesus wanted to change the way people thought. So Jesus taught these truths in a way that people could understand; He taught in parables. Parables are real life stories with a deeper meaning of truth. Parables used common, everyday people and situations to teach things that are difficult to understand.

Jesus used parables to teach spiritual truth in a way that people could understand and remember. Sometimes, the people - especially the Jewish leaders - were stubborn (Matthew 13:15). They did not want to hear the truth. When Jesus told truth by using a story, they



couldn't really argue with Him. For example, instead of saying, "Your behavior is wrong," Jesus could tell a story about their actions, and each person listening could figure out how it applied to their own life.

### Parable of the Mustard Seed

<sup>31</sup> He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field.

<sup>32</sup> Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

Jesus said that the message about God started small, like this seed, because Jesus could only tell the people in His own country about God.

But then, after Jesus died, His disciples went and told more and more people about God. They even went to other countries to tell people about God.

And people are still doing that today. Christians go to other countries to tell people about God, just like you can tell your friends and family about God. More and more people did believe and



will still believe in God, and that makes the message about God more popular. It's like the seed growing up to be a big tree.

### Parable of the Yeast

<sup>33</sup> He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

The message about God started small, just like the small amount of yeast you need to bake bread, because Jesus could only tell the people in His own country about God. But then, as His disciples told more and more people about God, and as we tell more and more people about God, then the message about God will get more popular, just like the little bit of yeast makes the whole loaf of bread rise up.

What is one thing you can do to help tell other people the message about God? (Tell your friends what you know about God, invite them to church or special church activities, etc.) Jesus wants us to help spread the Good News too.

### Additional Pages:

Coloring Page - Parable of the Leaven

Word Puzzle - Jesus' Parables

### Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCZggO5qbjA>—Parable of the Mustard Seed—Holy Tales

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifKH0-y7O\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifKH0-y7O_I) - Animated Bible Stories



### Questions for Today's Lesson

I wonder what we are to learn from a little seed becoming a big tree?

I wonder how yeast affects the way that we live?

What can I do to tell others about God's Kingdom? Who can I invite to come and learn about Jesus?

## Digging Deeper



Each of the Kingdom parables have some required action or "something to do".

**SOW** seeds to provide homes.

**KNEAD** in the leaven to make daily bread tasty.

**SEEK** the pearl and be prepared to buy it and when you **DISCOVER** GOD TREASURES under your feet, dig! Here are some ideas to add to the discussion of this week's Bible story.

◆ **Blow** up a balloon. Talk about how the balloon starts out small, but gets bigger and bigger as it is filled with air. That is

### Kingdom Parables



much the same way it is with us. Our influence becomes bigger as we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

- ◆ Bake bread together and talk about what the yeast does to the bread.
- ◆ Sample some unleavened bread.
- ◆ Make a collage gluing different seeds to construction paper.
- ◆ Enjoy pretzels dipped in mustard.
- ◆ Look up information on the making of mustard.

### Parables

- Parables are rich visual stories that often contain surprises and challenges to our expectations. Every time we think about them, there is the potential for a new insight.
- Parables are meant to challenge our thinking, make us ask questions.
- A parable is a seemingly simple story with a twist or surprise that reveals a deeper meaning in a memorable way. They are designed to share a truth but as Jesus notes in Matthew 13, they also confound those who don't want to listen, or think they already know the answer.
- Often, parables use exaggeration to accentuate the point and make it memorable. The Kingdom's seed was "the smallest," the pearl was the "greatest," for example.
- Parables also often use phrases, such as, "like," as in —the Kingdom of God is "like" a treasure that's found. In that sense, parables are sometimes metaphors.
- By their nature, parables invite the hearer to question what they mean. Jesus used parables to challenge conventional thinking, and help people grasp new insights. Like a crystal in the sun, as we turn them around in our minds and discussions, they reveal new rays of light.

