

MATTHEW 13:31-32

“THE MUSTARD SEED”

MARCH 23, 2025

SUMMARY

Lent is about disruption. This week, we continued our Lenten Series, “Disrupted,” by examining another parable of Jesus. In this series, we explore how Jesus used parables to interrupt people’s lives, inviting them to think more deeply about God, His Kingdom, and their place within it.

Pastor Joey unpacked a small but powerful set of verses, providing us a glimpse into what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. In this Parable, Jesus is surrounded by depressed, defeated, and disenfranchised Jews longing to be freed by their Messiah from the tyranny of Roman rule. As they look to Him, they want to know if He is the one to come and restore their hearts and their land.

Pastor Joey painted a picture of a warm and empathetic Jesus, looking his crowd in the eye and telling them that the Kingdom of Heaven is so close... It’s just around the corner! However, pain and doubt have calcified in the hearts of his listeners. Knowing this, Jesus seeks to break through the ice on their hearts and awaken hope with the following parable:

“31 He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. 32 It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

Jesus wants them to know that the kingdom is not what they think it is. It is not military conquest; it is a conquest of the heart that will begin small and grow until it brings a place of blessing and belonging to the entire world. If only they could realign their hearts with this vision of the kingdom and how it will grow, they could live alive and free despite their suffering. After all, the kingdom of God is just around the corner.

It was impossible for those listeners to know that this small moment among Jesus’ followers would grow to overthrow not only Rome but eventually the whole world bringing blessing and belonging to the world.

Pastor Joey challenged us to reflect on how we, too, might relate to the 1st-century Jews, feeling hopeless and doubtful that God is at work bringing blessings and a sense of belonging into our lives. In that doubt, we are invited to recognize that God’s kingdom is like a seed planted in the darkness of our lives, which can miraculously grow to redeem all things if we nurture it and allow God to foster that growth.

Let’s unpack this text together and look for the seeds of the kingdom in our lives and in our world that God wants us to wait to grow.



This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.

Group facilitator: Please feel empowered to use only the questions that are helpful for the context of your group.

DISCUSSION

Expand Our Awareness

A common analogy about investment and growth is “The best day to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the next best day is today.”

- What is that anecdote trying to communicate about the nature of growth?
- How might that phrase apply to the kingdom of God?

Extract the Truth

Read the text: Matt 13:31-32

- What jumped out to you from the text that “disrupts” you today?
- What does Jesus' parable reveal about what the kingdom of God will be like when it's fully grown?
- How is that different and better than the temporal expectations of the Jews?
- What does Jesus' parable reveal about how the Kingdom of God will practically come about?
- How is that different and better than the temporal expectations of the Jews?
- What does Jesus' Parable imply about what God's people should do while waiting for the Kingdom of God to bear fruit?

Experience Transformation

Pastor Joey says the kingdom of God is always formed in us and the world in the same way:

- The Seed of Faith is planted in a dark, damp, and difficult place.
- God nurtures and waters the seed as it claws to the surface.
- We wait.
- Miraculously, one day, growth breaks through the soil.
- We nurture/steward the plant as God grows it into a mighty tree.
- That tree gives blessings and belonging to others.

Let's investigate our own lives and where this process may be taking place in our lives:

- Are you in a season of planting, waiting, nurturing, or blessing the seed of the Kingdom?
- What is God calling you to do in that season?

Pray



**PREPARE FOR
NEXT WEEK:**

Matthew 18:23-35