



par·a·ble(s) of Jesus

The Mustard Seed

Daily Devotional Guide/Notes: Jun 16-22, 2024

Parable - "to cast, throw, place beside"; a story that puts or places something near or beside something else; seeking a deeper meaning/truth than what you "initially see on the surface"

Mt 13:10-16, "12 For those who have will receive more..."

A. **Is 55:8-9**, "God's ways are not your ways; and My thoughts are not your thoughts; My ways are higher than your ways; and, God's thoughts are higher than your thoughts" - **God is always "more" than any of us can fully understand**

B. **God's truth will require us to WORK for it.**

C. As a disciple, it is always a "**faith, seeking understanding**" process.

- you know you don't know; and you want to know more

MARK 9:22-24, "I have faith; help my lack of faith!"

Parables = the perfect avenue for "faith, seeking understanding"

Mt 13:10, "Jesus, why do you speak in parables?" Because parables are far, far more theologically rich than any "black and white truth"

To Mt 13:31-32, The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Mt 13:31-32, "He told another parable to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and planted in his field. 32 It's the smallest of all seeds. But when it's grown, it's the largest of all vegetable plants. It becomes a tree so that the birds in the sky come and nest in its branches.'"

*Mustard Seed/Tree = not the American mustard herb (Brassica), rather the seed that turns into a large Mustard Tree (Middle East)

Intro Questions for Reflection:

The mustard seed/tree?

- Jesus Himself, and His Church made up of His disciples, including becoming a disciple to become a part of His church

The soil/field?

- similar to the previous 2 parables: 4 Types of Soil:

Hard Soil - nothing happens;

Rocky/Shallow soil - initial growth, then dies/barrenness;

Soil with Weeds - choked out by anxieties, money, tares

WEEDS = worries about life (Mt 13:22), false appeal of wealth (Mt 13:22) + tares (Mt 13:25)

Good Soil - bears fruit/crop 30, 60, 100-fold

a) must take great care to not nourish weeds/keep soil clean

b) 2 Types of "primary plants" in the Garden now:

1. Wheat

2. The Mustard Tree

The Birds?

- All Humanity, Churches (groups of Christians), and individual disciples of Jesus

Interpretation #1: Mustard Tree and the Rise of Christianity

1. From "small seed" of Christian beginnings with Jesus' death, to disciples all the way up to today, where Christianity is the largest world religion in human history

- **Mt 24:14** "And the Gospel will be preached throughout the world to all the nations. And then the end will come."

2. This parable = a testimony to the prescience of Jesus Christ, which validates the "urgency" of His other prophecies."

Like, **Mt 24:32-33**, "32 Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know that summer is near.

33 In the same way, when you see all these things, you know that the Human One is near, at the door."

3. Point/Application: **Mt 24:44**, Be ready. Everything else has happened as Jesus predicted, so it stands to reason the "remainder" will be as He said as well. From his predictions of His death, to resurrection, to the Gospel going out into all the world, to Christianity becoming "the biggest tree in the garden," to "the hearts of many will grow cold to God," to false Teachings and False prophecies, to "the End will come" (Judgment)

*Part of the point here in context = Be ready/prepared for all that Jesus has already promised will come to pass. He is the Alpha and Omega, and every single word will come to be exactly as He said.

The Larger Context from Last Week (in context)

- the Farmer = - the Enemy = - the Field/Soil = - the Wheat = - the Tares =
- the Harvest =

On Understanding Tares, False Prophets, and their Followers

Mt 7:15-23, "15 'Watch out for false prophets. They come to you dressed like sheep, but inside they are vicious wolves.'"

2 Tim 3:1-5, "Understand that the last days will be dangerous times. 2 People will be selfish and love money, brag and be proud. They will slander others, will be ungrateful, unholy, unloving, contrary, critical, without self-control, reckless, and conceited. They will look religious but not have God's power."

2 Tim 4:3, "There will come a time when people will not tolerate sound teaching. They will collect teachers who *say what they want to hear..."

*κνηθόμενοι ἀκοήν - having an itching ear

... they will gather around themselves teachers that "Scratch" their itch

2 Tim 4:4, "They will turn their back on the truth and turn to *myths" and man-made fictions" (a widely believed, but false idea)

"myth" = widely held and sincere, but FALSE beliefs

= false beliefs lead to harm, not health

= the father of false beliefs? Satan (not God)

= look like sheep, but are vicious wolves

= look like wheat, but are weeds

Mustard Seed= Only 1 Will Grow Into a Tree where "birds will find rest." Only 1 Jesus, 1 Church, 1 "place" for the world's salvation

Interpretation #2: Mustard Tree and the Individual (and me)

Garden/Field = our hearts; Seeds = all the priorities we put on "stuff" of life, everything we "nourish" we our life's time, money, resources

Mustard Seed = the *only* priority/seed/plant that will provide a true place of "rest" for us (the "birds") over time

- all others are IDOLS (false gods we trust for healing, well-being, security, answers, etc)

To the Great Commandment:

- **Ex 20:3**, "You shall have no other gods before Me!"

- To **Deut 6:5-7**, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your being, and all your strength. "

- to **Mt 22:37-38**, " He replied, *"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind."*³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment."

The question: Our society says, "every other god should come before Jesus.

If you have leftovers, you are welcome to give God that part of your heart, life. But only the leftovers IF there is any time, money, energy leftover after all the other important things have been taken care of for your family and kids."

THE GREAT REVERSAL:

Mt 6:33, "Seek FIRST God's kingdom and His righteousness... then all these other things.

... and as part of that, "²⁶ Look at the birds in the sky. They don't sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Aren't you worth much more than they are?..."

***NOTE: Birds of the air take refuge in God/Mustard Tree**

To the Consequences of "Mustard See Faith":

Luke 17:20, "If you had the faith of a mustard seed, you could move mountains. 5-6, "If you had the faith of a mustard seed, you could say to this tree, be uprooted from here to over there... and it would be so

2 Questions:

1) WHAT is mustard seed faith?

- we know it is faith that *in* "the most important tree in the garden"

a) it is authentic and no other gods come before "it"

b) it may not be "perfect faith," but it is the MOST IMPORTANT oin the entire garden that is your life/soul

- it is where you go for rest and peace

- it is where you start and finish every day

- it is what you nurture and nourish

c) the "size" of the seed isn't the point, rather it is the *value you place on it compared to everything else in your garden/soil*

2) Do you have mustard seed faith?

Phil 4:13, "I can do ALL things through Christ who gives me strength."

The real question is: Is it truly Christ who gives you strength, or are you looking away from Him to someone or something else?

All other ground is sinking sand:

Mt 7:24-27, " Everybody who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise builder who built a house on bedrock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against that house. It didn't fall because it was firmly set on bedrock. ²⁶ But everybody who hears these words of mine and doesn't put them into practice will be like a fool who built a house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, the floods came, and the wind blew and beat against that house. It fell and was completely destroyed."

Application? What are you growing/nurturing in your heart today? Nothing but authentic "mustard seed" faith will make a difference over time; while it does not take much, only authentic "mustard seed"/kingdom faith will become the tree upon which your entire life can rest (if you will allow it and nurture it)

Items of Note:

Beach Day @ Eagle Mt. Lake - Following service on Sunday, June 23rd, we're having a beach day out at the lake at Twin Points Park! We'd love you and your family to join us. sign up online

Can we join in prayer with or for you? Please put your prayer requests in the offering box outside the sanctuary doors or email to Info@LifePointFellowship.com. We will be blessed to lift up your prayers and praises on Tuesday. The Tuesday Prayer Group would love to pray with and for you, your family, your walk with Christ, sickness and health. You may also email Mary Anne Collins at corriendo01@gmail.com as needs arise throughout the week.

Counseling scholarships are always available! Just email, pastor@lifepointfellowship.com.

Personal Discipleship Questions? Joining LP questions? Contact Pastor Thomas to set up a coffee appointment.

Want more? Visit our Facebook or Instagram page.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

HABIT 1 of Faithful Discipleship: Have a daily devotional. How? 3 Steps:

I. Work through the 5 Prayer Forms

1 - Begin w/Centering Prayer

- Mt 11:28-30, Name and Release your burdens/distractions to Christ
- Psalm 46:10, Consciously seek to clear your mind and "Be Still"

2 - Intentionally Glorify (worship) the Lord

- involves your participation by glorifying God, adoration, praise, worship
- Name the "Good" within you (the specific "fruit" you are experiencing today, like peace, or love, or joy, or hope, faithfulness, goodness, etc.)
- Name the "Good" around you (Gen 1:31, "And it was good.")
 - a. What do you see that God has made that is good today?
- Participate: Lift Up the "Good in You" with the "Good In Creation"

3 - Confess Your Sins

- a. What have you done that is wrong? (From works to 7 Deadly sins)
- b. What have you left undone that would have been right?

4 - Give Thanks to God for your Blessings (name them)

5 - Make Your Requests to God

- a. for other people who are on your heart
 - include your church leadership and family
 - include people you know who need to accept Christ
- b. Make requests to God for yourself

2. Time of Listening to God through His Words

Read through the daily scripture passages, with the goal to "hear from God" on any point you feel relates to you. Stop and reflect on those truths.

June 17 - Mon - Mt 13 June 18 Tues - Mt 6 June 19 Wed - Mt 7

June 20 Thur - Mt 11 June 21 Fri - Phil 4 June 22 Sat - Luke 17

3. Closing Prayer + The Lord's Prayer