

July 27, 2014

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

Mark 4:26-34

“The Mysterious Growth of the Kingdom of God”

- I. The Title – 1:1
- II. The Prologue – 1:2-13
- III. The Body: The Public Demonstration of Who Jesus Is and What He Came to Do – 1:14-15:41
 - A. The Galilean Ministry: Who Jesus Is (the Christ) - 1:14-8:30
 - 1. The Gospel Call (1:14-20)
 - 2. Power Fishing (1:21-2:17) – opposition begins
 - 3. Relationship vs. Religion (2:18-3:6) – opposition grows
 - 4. Team Jesus (3:7-19)
 - 5. Team Jesus? (3:20-35) – opposition escalates
 - 6. Teaching in Parables (4:1-34)
 - a. The Parable of the Soils (4:1-20)
 - b. The Parable of the Lamp (4:21-23)
 - c. The Parable of the Measure (4:24-25)

d. The Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29)

e. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32)

f. The Parables Summarized – Public & Private (4:33-34)

Discussion Questions:

1. "You are the light of the world." How specifically have you been shining the light of Jesus this past week? What responses did you get from people?
2. Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God being "at hand" in Mark 1:15. What was the expectation of His hearers when He said that? [See Luke 24:13-35, especially v. 21 for further clues] How is the Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29) different than their expectations? What is the point of the parable?
3. The Parable of the Growing Seed is the first one in Mark's Gospel that focuses on the sower of the seed. What is the initial responsibility of the sower? Does he fully understand what happens when he sows the seed or how it happens? After it happens, what is his responsibility? What is the application of this parable in our lives nearly 2,000 years later?
4. What does the Parable of the Mustard Seed picture? What is the comparison that is being made? How small is a mustard seed compared to most other seeds? How large can a full-grown mustard plant (or shrub) be? How does the Kingdom of God compare to this? How does this encourage you in: a) your own personal growth; b) the growth of the church world-wide?
5. Read Ezekiel 31:6 and Daniel 4. What do the "birds" represent in the Parable of the Mustard Seed? What is God saying about His Kingdom and who will be in it? Based on your conclusion, to whom should we take the Gospel of the Kingdom? How specifically do you intend to participate in getting the Gospel to those people / nations?
6. Why was Jesus choosing on that particular day in Mark 4 to only speak in parables to the crowd? Why did He still need to explain them to His disciples? Why didn't they get it yet? What will need to happen before they truly get it?
7. Bonus question: What is the connection between these parables and the next story in Mark 4:35-41?