

## Parables of the Kingdom

### Mark 4:21-35

Crossroads, April 18, 2010

#### Intro

- **2 parts tonight**
  - o 20 min. now to finish parables in Mark 4
  - o 20 min. at end of night intro "Fear and Faith" and do something different to prepare for weeks to come
- **OIA Review – Observe, Interpret, Apply**

#### READ Mark 4:21-35

#### 1) Context – Chiastic structure / Parable of the Soils

- Remember where we are, what Jesus teaching
  - o Parable of Soils
  - o Purpose of Parables (conceal and reveal)
  - o Interpretation of Parable of Soils
- **Structure of 4:1-35: Chiasm**
  - o Narrative Intro
    - Seed Parables
      - Thoughts on secrets/ use of Parables
        - o Interpretation of Parable
      - Parables on secrets/ use of Word
    - Seed Parables
  - o Narrative Conclusion

#### 2) Lamp and Measure Parables – to Make Clear / To Use

- **NOTE:** some of these parables are **similar to parables in other gospels** – but they are used differently here – do not simply read the others into these!
- **Lamp Observe:** not meant to be hidden
- **Interpret:** Hidden things of God also meant to be revealed
- **Apply:** God not reveal all at once ... but goal is not to keep us in the dark ... also kingdom not about finding secrets, but revealing them
- **Measure Observe:** The rich get richer, poor get poorer
- **Interpret:** Use it or lose it – what is 'it' – the Word
- **Apply:** Pay attention, have ears to hear, ask for understanding ... then do something with it ... otherwise like seed on hard ground

#### 3) Seed Parables – Growing Seed and Mustard Seed

- **Growing Seed Observe:** scatter seed, go on with life, seed grown not result of farmer, grow in stages, inevitable, at end harvest
- **Interpret:** Lots of different interpret out there:
  - o Plant, then patience
  - o God grow seed, not farmer
  - o Stages of growth, even inevitability of growth
  - o Urgency of harvest at end times
  - o **How decide? NEED CONTEXT** – what are other seed parables about? **Kingdom ... Growth of Word of God**
- **Apply:** All above have some application, but the Kingdom analogy is to Word of God growing, hidden popping up and producing fruit
- **Mustard Seed Observe:** smallest seed become largest bush, birds take shade ... Kingdom of God like this
- **Interpret:** again, inevitable growth ... but of what?
  - o My church / ministry small but grow?
  - o Kingdom small but grow through history?
  - o Kingdom start humble but become great tree – become Cedar of Lebanon all must see and bow down ... NO, still a bush ... still humble, overlooked ... but does give shade
- **Apply:** take courage, kingdom growing, even when not seen, even if not look like much ... don't expect world to see great kingdom, but know at the end, at the harvest God will have great fruit ...

#### 4) Overall Application – How do you view the Kingdom? Where are You?

- **Describe the Kingdom of God** – Word taking root in good soil, growing by God grace, often unseen, into something unexpected
- **Call to Hear** – Do you have ears to hear – to ask Jesus to show himself to you – to give up worldly distractions – to apply what Jesus says in practical ways – and to take heart ... those things you do not understand will be revealed in God's time ... even where kingdom looks small in you, in church, in world – God is growing it!

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#### Part 2: Fear and Faith intro – Next 5 weeks on facing our greatest fears

- **Weekly** – Skit, Observe Passage, Interpret fear & faith, Apply today
- **Skits** – tonight 4 groups, each read a passage and develop skit for one of the next 4 weeks ... each week 5 min. to set-up / 10 to do
- **Questions** - What is the story, what is the point of passage, how show Fear and Faith including "which comes first – Faith or God acting" (believe if God show self or need faith for Jesus to act)