

# WHO DO YOU SAY HE IS?



Who Do You Say He Is?  
Mark 4:21–34

<sup>21</sup>He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? <sup>22</sup>For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. <sup>23</sup>If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

<sup>24</sup>“Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. <sup>25</sup>Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

<sup>26</sup>He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup>Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. <sup>29</sup>As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

<sup>30</sup>Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. <sup>32</sup>Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

<sup>33</sup> With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. <sup>34</sup> He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.”

Mark 4:parables about gardens

- What are these garden-growth parables teaching?
  - HOW the kingdom of God grows
  - WHO the kingdom of God grows through.

The kingdom of God grows in/through the POOR. (v. 21–25)

- “<sup>24</sup>Consider carefully what you hear. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you – and even more. <sup>25</sup>Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”
- Kingdom growth principle: “the rich get richer; the poor get poorer.”
  - Jesus acknowledges this principle but repurposes it.
    - “Blessed are the poor...the hungry...those who mourn...the persecuted... Woe to you who are rich...well fed...laughing... celebrated.” - Luke 6:20 – 26
  - Surprising reversal of the rich/poor all based upon a person’s RESPONSE to Jesus.
- Kingdom growth economics:
  - Guarantee of gains
  - Warning of losses
- Consider careful WHAT you hear Jesus say & HOW you respond.

The kingdom of God grows primarily through PASSIVE means. (v. 26–29)

- “<sup>27</sup>Night & day, whether he (the sower) sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>All by itself the soil produces grain -...”
- The kingdom grows ‘*all by itself...*’
  - ‘divine passive’: meaning God is the one MAKING it grow!
- The kingdom grows... through human action or God’s activity?
  - “What, after all is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.” – 1 Cor. 3:5–6
  - We partner with God, BUT the vital growth is left to God alone.
- We try to grow the kingdom of God the wrong ways:
  - Ex. The Pharisees: through religion/moralism
  - Ex. The Zealots: through the ways of the world
- We are called to PATIENTLY & PEACEFULLY wait for Jesus to grow his kingdom.

The kingdom of God grows in/through PUNY people. (v.30–32)

- The kingdom of God is a society of mustard seeds.
  - Scot McKnight, Jesus Creed “Time and time again Jesus chooses odd people to follow him and then he holds them up as examples of what the kingdom is all about.”
- Jesus is the ULTIMATE mustard seed.
  - Consider Jesus’ earthly life & his death.
- A seed must DIE for new LIFE to emerge.
  - “<sup>23</sup>The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. <sup>25</sup>Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” - John 12:23-25
- What is true of Jesus now becomes true of us.
  - We grow in God’s kingdom through Jesus’ death & resurrection.

Jesus’ kingdom grows in the most unexpected ways and in the most unassuming people.