

THE GOSPEL OF MARK Growth



Mark 4:26-34 (NIV)

⁽²⁶⁾ He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ⁽²⁷⁾ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ⁽²⁸⁾ All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ⁽²⁹⁾ As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come." ⁽³⁰⁾ Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ⁽³¹⁾ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. ⁽³²⁾ Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade." ⁽³³⁾ With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ⁽³⁴⁾ He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

SECRET GROWTH

- *The focus is on the seed, not what the farmer would do, i.e. plowing, tilling, fertilizing, weeding, etc. Nor the sun, rain, weeds or locust.
- *The seed, apart from the farmer, does its thing, it's unseen and unknown to the farmer. "All by itself" is the Greek word 'automate' where we get 'automatic'.
- *Nature's secret process do not fail to operate because we are ignorant.
- *Our job—to scatter and sow. God's job—to Grow
- *The work of God is sometimes imperceptible, but it's constant and inevitable. A seed will stay a seed as long as it stays in the hand, but when planted . . . Who knows what will happen.

CONSPIRACY OF THE INSIGNIFICANT

- *God's Strategy—changing the world through the "seemingly" insignificant, lowly, unassuming. Examples—Moses and Israel, Gideon's Army, David, Baby in a manger, you. 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

"MUSTARD "

- *Mustard has the quality of pungency, biting, irritating, and disturbing.
- *Not allowed in Jewish gardens because it was **uncontrollable**.

"MUSTARD TREE?"

- *Growth that is unnatural—something different than expected
- *There are some Old Testament illusions here of Ezekiel's cedar tree and Neb's Dream. Ezekiel 17:23, 31:6, Daniel 4:9-21, Psalms 104:12

The Kingdom of God is the reign, rule and triumph of God in us, between us and through us.

Isaiah 55:11 (NIV)

⁽¹¹⁾ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

⁽⁶⁾ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

One could never imagine the conclusion from the beginning