

The Kingdom of God

Mark 4:26-34

The Bible isn't just an instruction manual or a list of rules to follow. It lives and works its life into us. It has hidden and mysterious power to change our life. This book has wrestled with me; this book has slapped me around. This book has comforted me; this book has overwhelmed my heart with the joy of heaven itself. This book has healed me; this book has wounded me. This book has smiled on me; this book has frowned on me. This book has wept with me, and it has sung joyfully with me; it shouts to me, whispers to me, and preaches to me. The idea that a preacher lends life to God's Word is wrong; the only thing a preacher has to give to the word is a voice. Like a seed, the word of God has a hidden and mysterious power. Guzik

- I. The kingdom of God means that there is a kingdom apart from this world that is the one and only true eternal kingdom. "The basic meaning of the word kingdom in the Bible is God's kingly rule — his reign, his action, his lordship, his sovereign governance" (Piper). All of us who follow Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior are citizens of God's kingdom. We may well be a part of this world, but only as those confined to it by our physical bodies. We are not to follow its ways (Eph. 2:2) or allow ourselves to be allured by its deceptive system of belief (2 Cor. 11:3). John tells us not to love it (1 Jn. 2:15-17). Paul tells us not to conform to it ((Rom. 12:1-2). And James tells us not to be friends with it (James 4:4).

Mark 4:26a

Psalm 103:19

Isa. 2:22

Isa 6:1-4

Rev. 4:2-6

Psalm 9:4

Psalm 11:4

2 Cor. 4:18

Philippians 3:20 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

John 15:19 *As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.*

- II. Jesus parable of the growing seed gives us insight into what God is doing to advance his kingdom. His Word has a power that is hard for us to fully understand, let alone appreciate. It was his Word that drew us through its living, active energy. It penetrated our soul and spirit. It judged our thoughts and attitudes and brought us to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The gates of hell cannot prevail against what the power of the Word has done in enabling us to take by force the kingdom of God through our salvation.

Mark 4:26-29

Matt 16:18

Matt 11:12

Isa. 55:10-11

1 Cor. 6:6-9

2 Cor. 9:10

Matt 11:12 *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.*

"The kingdom has come with holy power and magnificent energy that has been pushing back the frontiers of darkness. This is especially manifest in Jesus' miracles and ties in with Jesus' response to the Baptist. . . . The kingdom is making great strides; now is the time for courageous souls, forceful people, to take hold of it." (Carson)

- III. In the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus compares the kingdom of God's advancement in a world controlled by Satan, to a very small seed that grows exponentially to the point of overcoming the world. It's growth can not be stopped and our citizenship in it can never be taken away. In fact, it is a place where we can find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. Where we can say, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust."

Mark 4:30-33

Matt 17:20

Psalm 91:1-2

1 John 5:4-5 *For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*