

The Kingdom of God - growing!

Aim

The Kingdom of God grows!

Bible Passage

Matthew 13:31-34

In this series we will be exploring the kingdom of God through the stories Jesus told and finding out what the Kingdom of heaven is like.

Introduction

As Jesus travelled around the countryside with his disciples, large crowds often gathered around him to hear him teach and he often taught them by using parables. A parable is a story that Jesus made up to help people understand what he wanted to teach them. In these parable, Jesus would talk about the Kingdom of God and what it is like. We will be using the stories in Matthew 13 to explore the kingdom of heaven.

Bible Time

Today we're going to look at two parables that Jesus told. They are both short stories about tiny things!

He told them a parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches." He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough." Matthew 13:31-33

Have you seen a mustard seed? Have you seen how small it is? Why not take a look at a seed you may have at home? All seeds are tiny things that grow. Why not look at some pictures of a mustard tree and see how big it grows. What a difference in size! We are never too small to be important in God's eyes. You and I may be small, but we can help to grow the kingdom of God by talking and spreading the stories of Jesus to others.

What about the yeast? Have you ever seen someone make bread? Have you ever made bread? First you take some flour and add water to it. Then you work it with your hands to make a dough. There is a special ingredient that makes the dough rise and puff up into a nice loaf of bread. It is called *yeast*. Look and see how small the grains of yeast are. It only takes a small amount of *yeast* to make the bread rise, but without it the bread tastes and looks like a flat cracker. *Yeast* makes the dough taste better than before, it is the secret ingredient to making a great bread. One of the reasons you knead the dough with your hands is to make sure the yeast is spread throughout all the bread dough.

When Jesus told this parable, he was telling the people about God's love in our heart. If our heart is soft and pliable like the dough, then God's word and love can be kneaded into our heart, like the *Yeast* is kneaded into the dough. Then God's Love can really take hold of our hearts and grow and grow.

The apostles, by their preaching, went out and preached to people and the Kingdom of God grew. The Word of God continued to grow by Christians sharing the Good News with others. The Kingdom of God, which started small, is still powerfully at work and it will continue to grow.

Game Time

Balloon game - Can you blow up a balloon? If not, ask an adult to help you. As you blow it up, talk about how the balloon starts out small, but gets bigger and bigger as it is filled with air. That is much the same way it is with us. Our influence becomes bigger as we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Use the balloon to play a game. This could be one you know or you could play this. Separate into two teams and pass the balloon over your head and between you legs. See how many times you can pass this in one minute.

Craft Time

Baking - Use yeast to bake something and see how it grows!

Below is a recipe for making bread but you can make many things with yeast.

Ingredients: 500g strong bread flour, 7g dried yeast, 1 tsp salt, 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp clear honey

1. Tip the flour, yeast and salt into a large bowl and mix together with your hands.
2. Stir 300ml hand-hot water with the oil and honey.
3. Add into the dry ingredients to make a soft dough.
4. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 5 mins.
5. Oil a loaf tin and put in the dough. Put in a large plastic food bag and leave for 1 hr.
6. Heat oven to 200C/gas 6 and bake for 30-35 mins. Tip it out onto a cooling rack.

For an alternative craft, go to the TMC Facebook page and view the Sunday craft.



Worship Time

I hope you enjoy these songs about God's Kingdom. More songs can be found on the TMC Facebook page and website.

The Kingdom of God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ap-qLYnTUes>

Faith as small as a mustard seed - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xECxevPcRBs>

Prayer Time

Father, help us to remember that size is not important in your kingdom. You can use even the smallest one of us to grow the kingdom and bring change to the world around us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.