

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven

Matt. 13:31-33

Introduction:

- A. Jesus illustrates growth of Kingdom.
 - 1. It has a small beginning.
 - a. Jesus and small band of followers.
 - b. In small and weak country.
 - 2. It eventually covered whole world. (cf. Col. 1:13-23)
- B. Jesus' kingdom grew and spread because of 3 significant factors.

Discussion:

I. Preaching

- A. Preaching is Lord's way of spreading kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:21).
 - 1. Preaching prepared Israel for kingdom. (Matt. 4:17; 10:7,27).
 - 2. Preaching spread the kingdom to world. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15,16; Lk. 24:47; Acts)
- B. Preaching is primary work of the church.

II. Persecution

- A. Persecution is designed to hinder the church.
- B. Persecution added to the growth of the church.
 - 1. Saints at Jerusalem. (Acts 4:13-31; 5:41-42; 8:1)
 - 2. Paul's persecution (Phil. 1:12-14)
- C. Persecution is not to be desired, not is to be avoided.
 - 1. We do not seek such trials as persecution.
 - 2. We do not accept deliverance. (Heb. 11:35)
 - 3. We see as a plus rather than minus.

III. Providence

- A. Providence was important in rapid spread of kingdom of God.
 - 1. O. T. events leading to N. T. age.
 - 2. Favorable timing (cf. Gal. 4:4).
 - a. Jewish training
 - b. Greek language and influence
 - c. Roman Empire
 - 3. Providence seen in many recorded events.
 - a. Day of Pentecost
 - b. Gospel to Samaria
 - c. Gospel to Gentiles
 - 4. Providence provided background for rapid developement.
 - a. Jews on Pentecost had background of teaching.
 - b. Elders could be appointed quickly with O. T. background.

Conclusion:

- A. Kingdom of God grew in short time from tiny seed to large tree.
- B. Kingdom of God spread from small area to whole lump - world.
- C. Kingdom of God continues to grow and spread until this day.
- D. Kingdom of God spreads and grows by preaching and teaching - but let us not forget that God's providence and overruling of persecution also play a large role in its spread (cf. 1 Cor. 3:5-9).