

# The Parable of the Mustard Seed



**Matthew 13:31-32**

○ **Review Lessons Taught:**

- **In Matthew 13:10, Jesus began using parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven. His disciples noticed the change in His method of teaching, and asked Him the question, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”**
- **According to Mark 4:34, “Jesus did not say anything to them without using a parable and when He was alone with His disciples He would explain what He meant.”**
- **Purpose: to assist us in growing in our understanding by exploring these divine truths found in Christ’s teaching. To teach us what they mean and how they relate to our present and future life in Christ Jesus.**
- **Goal: to allow the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts and draw us closer to Jesus Christ.**

**1. What is a parable?**

- **It is a simple yet powerful story that Jesus used to illustrate a great truth. Jesus used parables to help His followers understand spiritual truth.**
- **The word “parable” is taken from the Greek word that literally means to cast or throw alongside.**
- **A parable is thrown in to illustrate something abstract.**
- **Parables were stories that were “cast or thrown” alongside a truth in order to illustrate a divine truth.**

**2. Jesus began by using the Parable of the Sower to teach about the kingdom of God. (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)**

- **Jesus uses this parable to describe a farmer or sower who went out and scattered seed that fell on various kinds of soils (hard, stony, thorns, good ground).**
- **Jesus uses three symbols in this parable: The Sower (farmer), the Seed, and the Soil. (vs. 3-9)**
  - a. The Sower (farmer) represents Jesus Christ.**
  - b. The Seed represents the Word of God or the Word of the kingdom. (vs. 3-8)**

- c. The Soil (the ground) represents the hearts of the individual hearer or the spiritual state of those in the world. (vs. 19-23)
3. The Parable of the Wheat and The Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30)
    - A man sows good seed. The Man is Jesus Christ. (vs. 37)
    - The good seed. The children of the kingdom of God. These are the righteous men and women of God. These are true believers of Jesus Christ. (vs. 24, 38)
  - a. They are sown by the Son of Man – Jesus Christ.
  - b. They are sown in His field. The “field” represent the world. The owner of the “field” (the world) – is Jesus Christ. (John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15-20, Hebrews 1:2, Psalm 24:1-2)
  - c. Jesus Christ sows or scatters His righteous seed (the believer) into His field (the world). The believer is Christ representative and ambassadors in the world.

## The Parable of the Mustard Seed

### Matthew 13:31-32

- In the Book of Matthew, Mark and Luke we find Jesus using the mustard seed in a parable as an illustration to help them understand a divine truth about faith and unbelief.
1. Jesus used the mustard seed to illustrate a divine truth about faith and unbelief (Matthew 17:14-21). The disciples couldn't cast out a demon in a man's son.
  2. Jesus used the mustard seed to illustrate a divine truth about repentance and total forgiveness (Luke 17:1-6).
  3. Jesus uses the mustard seed to illustrate a divine truth about the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32)
- A. There are Three Things that Jesus wanted His disciples to be aware of in this parable of the mustard seed.

1. Jesus is talking to His disciples about the Kingdom of Heaven.
  - He quickly realized that they had an earthly view of what He was saying and not a Kingdom view.
2. Jesus wanted to teach His disciples that the process had already begun and the Kingdom of God was already upon them.
  - He knew that God sent Him to complete a task that only He was equipped and prepared to accomplish. (John 4:34)
  - He knew that God had a time and purpose for His life, death and more importantly His resurrection. (No man could alter the timing of God). (John 10:18)
  - He needed His disciples to simply trust, believe and follow Him. (Matthew 16:24-25)
3. Jesus wanted His disciples to be aware of the difference between the kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of Heaven. (John 18:33-37)
  - Jesus is teaching His disciples the difference between an earthly king and the King of kings.
  - Jesus is teaching His disciples the difference between an earthly throne and The Heavenly Throne of God.
  - Jesus is teaching His disciples the difference between an earthly mindset and a Kingdom mindset.
  - Jesus spends three years teaching His disciples the difference between those in the world (unsaved, unrighteous, unbelievers) and those in His glorious Kingdom (saved, righteous, true believers). (John 17:11, 14-15)

**B. There are Four Characteristics that we need to know about the Mustard Seed. (Matthew 13:31-32)**

1. The “mustard seed” is the smallest seed, but it has the ability to produce great results.
2. The “mustard seed” is the least of all the seeds. This doesn’t mean that it has no value, no purpose, insignificant, useless, or to mean that very little can be expected from it.
3. The “mustard seed” when planted was expected to grow and out produce every other plant or bush.

4. The “mustard seed” when it reaches its full growth and potential by becoming a large tree. It will become useful and beneficial.

C. The Parable of the Mustard Seed is a great reminder that great things start off small but can make the greatness impact. (John 1:45-46, Mark 6:3, John 1:11-13)

1. It is a reminder of God’s love and how He takes what appears to be a great tragedy and turns it into great triumph and glory. (Isaiah 53:1-6)

- (Matthew 27:38-43) – It appeared that all the hopes of His disciples and those who love Christ deeply had been dashed. There was Jesus Christ hanging from the Cross between two robbers.

2. What they thought was the end, was just the beginning of the great things God was about to accomplish through the death, burial and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.

- Satan and all his demonic cohorts were celebrating and rejoicing in hell over Jesus’ demise and defeat. They thought Christ was finished and the plans of God were all but destroyed.

- (John 19:30) – Then Jesus shouted out, “It is finished!” He bowed His head, He gave up His Spirit (John 19:30).

- (Matthew 27:51-54) – “Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...” So, when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God.”

3. God will take someone who is small in the eyes of men, those who are counted out, overlooked, and save them and use them for His glory.

4. Jesus chose the unlikeliest twelve characters in His day that left many scratching their heads in wonder. (Matthew 10:1-8)

- Why would He choose fishermen to be His disciples?

- Why would He choose a tax collector to be His disciple?

- Why would He choose a thief and betrayer to be one of His disciples?

5. The Beauty of God's love and the power of the Cross of Jesus. (John 3:16, 15:13, Romans 5:8, Hebrews 9:22, Ephesians 2:4-7)

- They were just ordinary men such as fishermen, and some were despised tax collectors, whom God used to do extraordinary things for His Kingdom. (Matthew 4:18-21, Matthew 9:9)

D. There are Four Things that Jesus described in the Parable of the Mustard Seed. (vs. 31-32)

1. Jesus Christ is describing the growth and greatness of His Kingdom. (Haggai 2:6-9, Hebrews 12:25-29, 1 Peter 4:14-17)

2. Jesus Christ is describing the growth of Christianity and the effectiveness of His Church (the body of Christ) reaching the unbelievers or unsaved in the entire world. (Matthew 16:18, Acts 1:15, 2:38-47)

3. Jesus Christ is describing the growth and effectiveness of every true believer. (Matthew 13:31-32)

4. Jesus Christ uses this parable to give encouragement to every true believer. (vs. 32)

a. It is an encouragement to our hope in eternity. (John 5:24, John 14:1-6, 1 Peter 5:10, Romans 5:21, 6:22, 1:20-21, 1 John 2:25, John 10:28-30)

b. It is an encouragement to our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. (Galatians 6:9, Philippians 1:6, Zechariah 4:10, 1 Corinthians 15:58, Proverbs 3:5)

c. It is an encouragement to live our lives completely devoted to Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:1, Colossians 2:6, 1 John 2:6, Acts 17:28, Galatians 2:20)

d. It is an encouragement to wait on the promises of God. (Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 37:7-9, 23-25, Lamentations 3:25-26)