

## **Mark 4:21-34**

### **I. Context**

- a. God's kingdom= His reign; not always visible place but hearts turned to God
- b. Jesus challenging expectations of Kingdom: External Expectation vs. Internal Transformation (c.f. *Luke 17:20-21*)

### **II. The Kingdom's Light to Be Revealed**

- a. The Light of the Kingdom is Not to be Hidden (v. 21)
  - i. Jesus compares the kingdom to a lamp that must be placed where it can illuminate. (Lamp may be alluding to Jesus himself)
  - ii. God is bringing to light his kingdom plans *in Jesus*
  - iii. As believers, we must shine the light of the Gospel. (c.f. Phil. 2:15); can be evangelism but also just practically living out your faith
- b. How people respond to the light (vv.24-25)
  - i. Those who listen & seek understanding will receive more (take time to seek God more, ex: those who asked Jesus meaning of sower parable)

### **III. The Kingdom Grows Mysteriously (vv. 26-29 – The Parable of the Growing Seed)**

- a. The Kingdom Grows by God's Power
  - i. The farmer scatters seed, but growth is God's work (not our control)
  - ii. Process of growth takes place; emphasize farmer's patience; we need patience for kingdom growth in individual lives and in God's work in the world
  - iii. Reminder this is ultimately God's work, not ours; we may not know how our work affects the Kingdom, but it does
- b. The Harvest Will Come in God's Time
  - i. The full grain in the head represents the final fulfillment of God's kingdom; we must trust God for spiritual growth and fruitfulness.

### **IV. Kingdom Starts Small but Grows Great (vv.30-32)**

- a. Jesus movement started small but grew after his ascension
- b. The Kingdom Provides Refuge and Blessing
  - i. The birds symbolize people finding shelter and peace in God's reign.
  - ii. God's kingdom a place of rest, security, & belonging (*Matt. 11:28-30*)

### **V. So what? (Consider our church and future in light of these parables)**

- a. Are we being intentional and missional? Are we acting as shining stars and are we sowing the seed of the gospel?
- b. Are we looking to God for the results or our own cleverness?
- c. How are we measuring success? By our worldly standards or God's kingdom standards? Are we patient with God's ways?
  - i. Rethinking our understanding of power