

**Title: See the Hidden Kingdom**

**Passage: Mark 4:26-32**

**Date: 26 February 2023**

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**Series: ever seeing**

Read Mark 4:26-32

**It seems for all the things Jesus preached, the big idea which summed up everything was the Kingdom of God.** This is what life looks like when a compassionate God is in charge instead of Emperors, governors, and the religious elite [slide]

Every time he spoke, Kingdom

- If Jesus was teaching about praying...kingdom
- tell us about taxes...Kingdom
- tell us about heaven...Kingdom
- we haven't got enough food to eat...Kingdom

Do you have any other things to say Jesus?  
Kingdom

Which at one level was deadly – Because there was another King.

Jesus was making a claim of God's Kingdom versus Rome Emperor Caesar's

It will in the end be part of the accusations brought against him and the title nailed above his head on the cross

Luke 23

Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king."

3 So Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

What message did his accusers hear from Jesus' lips?

**Some of us may have in mind the message of the Kingdom is about a Christian being a nice person or we hear the Kingdom of God is about having eternal life after you die**

Never forget when Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom he got in real trouble in the real world. [slide]

If we listen to Jesus' messages of the Kingdom - we will find it will mess with our real world and we might find ourselves in trouble too with the Caesars of our time if we dare proclaim it.

**The kingdom was the primary topic of Jesus' preaching.**

In the Gospels, Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God over one hundred times.

Jesus continued to teach his disciples about the kingdom of God even after his resurrection:

(Acts 1:3) After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. [slide]

**Jesus expected his followers to do the same**

We read in Matthew 10:5-8 Jesus sending his twelve Disciples off to the local towns...

5 ...with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy,[a] drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

What about the apostle Paul? Did he teach about the kingdom of God?

Luke records that Paul came to Ephesus and

Acts 19:8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. [slide]

Or again in finishing his record Luke writes of Paul's imprisonment in Rome

Acts 28: 30 For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

**I wonder how you would sum up all the sermons you have heard preached?**

- What would you say they were about?
- Would you have said - the Kingdom of God? "what life looks like when a compassionate God is in charge"

Jesus preached and taught about the kingdom of God, and he expected his followers to do the same.

**Today we read of 2 brief parables about what happens when we spread the good news of the Kingdom of God.**

Parable of growing seed [slide]

Jesus planted God's seed by speaking and showing what the Kingdom of God was like

- and then "all by itself the soil produces grain"
- When you plant God's seed, something is happening even though you can't see it.
- and then suddenly out it comes from the soil and it grows up into something amazing and confronting.

God at work. The Seed of the Kingdom has power to produce fruit even when you can't see it growing.

That by Jesus plant the seed, you can be confident there will be fruit, we will see the kingdom

Parable of the Mustard seed [slide]

Small seed, a plant that takes over the whole garden. [slide]

"It is hard to escape the conclusion that Jesus deliberately compares the rule and reign of God to a weed"

**Jesus parables were in part managing expectations**

Amazing things happening. Why not Kingdom of God now?

This has started something that God will use to bear fruit

**These parables also set expectations for what happens when the Kingdom of God is proclaimed.**

**So much encouragement here**

To state the obvious [slide]

**If you plant seed, it will bear fruit**

**If you don't plant seed, you will not bear fruit**

**If you want fruit, you have to plant seed**

**The encouragement is to plant Kingdom seed.**

Take what Jesus started and live it out in the world.

When we sow Jesus' words and actions and the promise is it has the power to bear God's fruit.

The work we can do is plant seed, we can trust what God will do.

**If we took these seed parable seriously, what expect to see?**

We would plant lots of seed. Parable of soils – casts seed everywhere!

When we plant, what we can be certain of, it will bear fruit.

We cast seed everywhere in

What we do as a church

We do in our own lives and families.

What we do with other churches and organisations

- Schools / EWF / Iranian / ABCC / BB / playgroup / YG / Council / Street Party / SALA / friends

Last year – work of God was a real encouragement.

Faith, baptisms, growth,

This year?

What happens when we take what Jesus started and live it out in the world.

What happens when we share and show people what life looks like when a compassionate God is in charge instead of the powers of this world?

[slide]

40 Days of Prayer – praying for this hidden work of the Kingdom to flourish, bear fruit, take over the garden produce a crop.

Response/Prayer/Care cards