

DISCUSSION GUIDE || September 6–11, 2026

REFLECT

1. *What's something from this week that you're saying **"Thank you, God"** for?*

REMEMBER

- A **parable** is a disruptive story in which something ordinary is laid down (*ballo* in Greek) next to (*para* in Greek) something else in order to challenge us to reimagine our thinking, prioritizing, or living.
- **Jesus connects ordinary elements to matters of the Kingdom of God.** Told as a story, the parables are able to make their way into our imaginations and renovate our lives from the inside out.

READ MARK 4.30-34

2. Mark tells us that Jesus was routinely using parables in his addresses to the crowd. What's fascinating is that we have far more of Jesus' parables than Jesus' explanations or commentaries on them. ***Why do you think Jesus used parables?***
*Why do you think Jesus **told them more than he explained them?***
3. *Why do you think Jesus used **everyday elements** in his parables?*
*What does that **ordinariness** convey about Jesus and the kingdom of God?*
4. Parables have **layers of meaning**. *What might a **peasant farmer** take from this story of the tiny seed that grows into something large and useful? How might an **upper class religious leader** feel **challenged or offended?***
5. *What does this parable **reveal about growth in God's kingdom** (in the sense of both our spiritual maturity or the gospel movement)?*
6. *How does this parable **disrupt or challenge us to think or act differently** in light of God's kingdom?*
7. *What do we need to pause and pray for this week?*

ANNOUNCEMENT

- New Bible Study—JAMES: LIVING FAITH. Saturdays after worship from Sep. 19—Oct. 24, 6:30 to 8pm
 - Bring your own food (picnic style)
 - Childcare available for a donation
 - Drop in every Saturday you can!