

The Kingdom of Heaven is a breathing, living kingdom. It is a living organism, thus it grows. We can see three aspects of its growth through the following three parables.

1 Mark 4:26-29: The Growth is Mysterious

When a man plants a seed, he expects it to grow. Day by day, the seed grows. But the man does not know how the seed grows. Despite scientific research in the world today, we still cannot explain how life comes about. And yet the answer is simple: God is the One who gives life. This describes the hidden operation of the Kingdom of Heaven. We do not see how the seed grows, but we know it is growing. Just as we are able to see the effects of the wind without seeing the wind (John 3:8). After a seed is planted, it will progress through each stage of growth, and it will result in it bearing fruit. Christ uses the seed to describe the growth of the Kingdom of Heaven and a Christian. When the seed is planted, the man does not need to do anything to create life. The seed simply germinates. In our case, we just need to believe in Christ! There will be progression and growth in our spiritual lives. He is the One who gives the spiritual increase.

2 Matthew 13:31-32: The Growth is Impactful

This is the parable of the mustard seed. In the days of Christ, this mustard seed was the type that could grow into a huge tree. This tiny mustard seed’s growth represents the growth of the Kingdom of Heaven, which also has a humble beginning. It can grow to a point when “...*the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof*” (Matt 3:32). The “*birds...lodge in the branches*” refer to the impact of Christianity on the rest of the world. Two examples are as follows. How our years are counted today: AD stands for Anno Domini, i.e. “the year of our Lord.” How we have seven days in a week: God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh (Gen 2:2). As Christians, our impact on the world must not be artificial, but genuine. We are to impact those around us as “...*the salt of the earth...*” and “...*the light of the world...*” (Matt 5:13-14).

3 Matthew 13:33-35: The Growth is Internal

This is the parable of the leaven, where Christ used the picture of breadmaking to describe how our entire lives must be touched by the Gospel. Bread is made by adding yeast to flour. In the process, the yeast cannot be seen. But it works inside the dough, working its way into every part of the dough. Similarly, when we believe in the Gospel and we grow spiritually, our spiritual growth will influence every part of our life. When the Gospel has permeated every part of our lives, its effect will be seen in our daily life and actions. Every aspect of our life must be for Christ and His glory.

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