

The Book of Mark (Mark 4:21-32)  
**Sermon Series:** Who is this man? [Sermon #16]  
**Sermon Title:** The Realities of the Kingdom  
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As we continue looking today at the parables of the kingdom, I think it would be good to remind ourselves that....

when we say “the kingdom of God”, we aren’t talking about some kind of philosophy of life or just a message but....

a real person named Jesus who is really a king and he’s building a kingdom....

and eventually he will come back to earth in bodily form and rule. We are talking about a king and his kingdom.

Pray

Turn in your Bible to Mark 4:21-23 and let’s read together.

**21 And he said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? 22 For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”**

# I. THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHOULD NOT AND WILL NOT BE HIDDEN!

The first parable is the Parable of the Lamp.

It's quite simple but with a profound meaning.

Lamps are not to be HIDDEN but are to SHINE & GIVE LIGHT IN DARK PLACES.

This phrase, "Is a lamp brought", should read "Does a lamp come?"

The lamp is Jesus.

## See the contrast here:

Not under a measure basket or a bed— —but....on a stand.

Not hidden. — — — — — — — — — —but...to be made manifest.

Not secret. — — — — — — — — — —but...to come to light.

Well, is Jesus contradicting himself?

We have already seen in the beginning of Mark, (in Mark 1:44, Mark 3:12) what's called the Messianic Secret and we will see it again in Mark 8:30-31, Mark 9:9-10.

Jesus is telling people to keep it a secret and not tell others.

But here he is saying, "It's not supposed to be a secret but should be 'manifest' or 'on a stand' or 'in the light.'" So, what's going on?

Jesus' kingdom mission is to go to the cross and die for sinners and then be raised again.

That is the mission.

The FULL truth of who he is...is hidden now....but after he dies and rises again, as **Matthew 10:27** says,  
**“What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.”**

**THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHOULD NOT AND WILL NOT BE HIDDEN**...and has not been hidden for 2000 years. It has gone around the world and will continue to do so.

As my mentor Thom Wolf said, **“Show me where the gospel of Jesus hasn't gone and I'll show you where history is going.”**

The kingdom of God should not be hidden but should be 'in the open'.

Believers, we should consider these verses!

Am I hiding it?

Am I keeping it a secret?

Or....am I sowing seeds of the kingdom....putting Jesus on a lamp stand?

And then we come to verses 24 and 25 of Mark chapter 4.  
Let's read them.

**24 “And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. 25 For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”**

We should understand these verses by looking at **2 Corinthians 9:6**, which says, **“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully (literally ‘with blessings’) will also reap bountifully.”**

If we sow a lot of seeds, God will give us more to sow.

If I don't sow seeds of the kingdom,....then I won't GO to the kingdom!

That's why he says in **verse 25**, **“from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”**

Sounds a lot like the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25, where the ones who were faithful with the money, were given more and the one who “HID” what the Lord had given him... was cast out.

**Matthew 10:32-33** says, **32 “So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”**

So, **THE KINGDOM OF GOD...THE MESSAGE OF JESUS... SHOULD NOT AND WILL NOT BE HIDDEN...**and believers should be concerned about how they sow.

Which leads us to the next Parable...the Parable of the Growing Seed. This parable is meant to remind us what God's part is and what our part is.

## **II. THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL GROW BY GOD'S MIRACULOUS POWER... AS BELIEVERS SCATTER SEED.**

**Mark 4:26-29** says,

**26 “And he said, The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. 27 He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows, he knows not how. 28 The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”**

The man's job is to scatter seed.

Perhaps water it.

But God sends the rain and the sun and by a miracle, it turns into a plant and food.

How?

Oh yeah, science can explain how the seed does it- but God created the seeds with power in them. It's a miracle. So it is with a person's conversion.

We share with people.  
Seeds are planted.  
We say this or say that.  
Time goes by.  
We think nothing of it.

Some seeds fall on the path, some on the rocks, some among thorns and some on good soil.

Even in the most unlikely of environments and situations the seed grows by God's miraculous power..the power of the Holy Spirit in regeneration....and someone is born again. We know not how!

The earth produces 'by itself' or 'automatically'.

**THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL GROW BY GOD'S  
MIRACULOUS POWER...AS BELIEVERS SCATTER SEED.**

God will do his work.

We must do our work.

As **Cameron Townsend** said,

**"If we will do the possible, God will do the impossible."**

**Isaiah 55:10-11 says, "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing which I sent it."**

**Jeremiah 1:12 says, “I am watching over my word to perform it.”**

The fact that God’s doing the heavy lifting.....that salvation is God’s responsibility.....should give us courage and boldness.

The results are not on us. We simply scatter seed.

\*The kingdom of God....the message of Jesus...should not and will not be hidden. We should consider how we are doing as sowers.

\*The kingdom of God grows by God’s miraculous power, as his followers scatter seed. That should give us **courage** to sow, knowing it’s not up to us.

Lastly,

### **III. THE KINGDOM WILL GROW SO BIG THAT THE NATIONS WILL REST IN IT.**

**Mark 4:30-32 says,**

**30 And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? 31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, 32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”**

The kingdom of God starts out small but will not stay small. From 12 people it has grown quite a bit. A little seed was planted and it took off around the world and turned the world upside down.

In **Genesis 12:2-3**, God made a **promise** to Abraham saying, **2 “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all of the families of the earth shall be blessed.”**

There would come a ‘seed’ an ‘offspring’ from Abraham who would bless the nations.

In **Revelations 7:9** we see the fulfillment of that promise as there are people from every tribe, nation, and language standing before the throne of God.



verse 32 or Mark 4 says that the “birds of the air can make nests in its shade”.

Many scholars believe this is a reference to Ezekiel 17:23 where God will take a tiny twig and plant it on the mountain of Israel and it will grow to be very large and ‘every kind of bird and every sort’ will nest there.



Listen to **Matthew 24:14**.

**14 “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.**

You want the end to come? Get busy sowing.

### **Summary:**

**The kingdom of God....the message of Jesus...should not and will not be hidden.** (That’s the parable of the lamp and the parable of the measure)

**\*The kingdom of God grows by God’s miraculous power - as Jesus’ followers scatter seed.** (That’s the parable of the growing seed)

**\*The kingdom of God will grow so big that the nations will rest in it.** (that’s the parable of the mustard seed)

### **Application:**

What are some things we can take away from this today?

1. The first section of parables we should **CONSIDER**.

How am I doing with the lamp?

How are you doing?

Am I hiding it or letting it shine?

How are we doing as a church?

Most people don’t even know we are here at this school each Sunday!

That concerns me.

We should do whatever it takes to be a “city set on a hill that cannot be hidden.”

Why not put OUR name on the minibus advertisements?

Why not?

Why do we let underwear and wine and such post their message on buses and we don't post ours?

To what lengths will we go to put out the lamp?

2. The parable of the Growing Seed should give us **COURAGE** to sow.

Meditate on this fact- God miraculously makes the seeds that we plant -grow.

The results are not ours.

They grow by themselves and we sleep and rise, night and day.

Maybe we are afraid we will fail and so we don't share.

But...we can't fail. It's on God. We must do the possible. God will do the impossible.

3. The parable of the little mustard seed that grew into a huge tree makes me think of many things.

Firstly, we should not look at ourselves and say “We are small.” Size means nothing to God. It never has.

**There is no such thing as a small church....only small faith.**

God took 12 men and that little seed of the gospel has grown to many nations. Not all nations.

Many nations have never heard the gospel.

What could he do with 80-100 people here at CBIBC?

Only what we limit him by our lack of faith.

We will talk about that next week!