

Life Group Notes

Sunday 1st October 2023

Speaker: Andy McCullough

Title: Kingdom Come: Kingdom Mystery

Passage: Matthew 13:10-23

The disciples ask Jesus “Why do you speak to them in parables?” This passage is Jesus’ reply. Jesus could have answered methodologically (stories are a good way of communicating truth), but instead he answers theologically.

What do we learn about the Kingdom of God from this passage?

1. The Kingdom is a gift – unmerited, undeserved, unearned – “to you it has been given to know.” We glimpse here the sovereignty of God in election – he chooses to whom he will reveal himself.
2. The Kingdom needs to be understood. Digested. Thought about. Talked about. That takes work. The good soil is the heart where the “word of the kingdom” takes root and flourishes. It is not easily or immediately grasped, which is why Jesus teaches in parables.
3. The kingdom comes gradually, not all at once. Like a seed that needs to germinate. Where we would like the Kingdom to come dramatically, it is often slow, hidden, under the surface, unremarkable.
4. The kingdom starts small and then grows. Seed produces fruit which produces more seed. So “those who have will be given more...” Jesus is saying that understanding begets understanding, and revelation leads to more revelation.
5. The word of the kingdom works inside your heart. The kingdom comes *through* us. Through our understanding and faith and obedience, through our personal involvement in prayer and action. The kingdom comes *through* us.
6. The word of the Kingdom produces much fruit through your life. Kingdom seed will produce kingdom fruit; kindness and justice and hope and gentleness and courage and generosity. The Kingdom of God grows from the church to impact society.

Suggested Questions:

1. Why do you think parables are important? Why did Jesus teach in this way?
2. How does it make you feel that God chooses those who are to be saved? What is an appropriate response to this grace?
3. What is the personal ‘responsibility piece’ of this passage? How can we make sure we are taking responsibility to respond to the word of the Kingdom?
4. In what ways can you bring the kingdom this week? What needs are you seeing around you? How could you respond?
5. Why do you think it is so important that the kingdom comes *through* the church? Why does God require our involvement?