

## Mark 4:21-34 | *The Kingdom of God is Growing*

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<sup>21</sup> He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? <sup>22</sup> For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. <sup>23</sup> If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

<sup>24</sup> “Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. <sup>25</sup> Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

<sup>26</sup> He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup> Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. <sup>28</sup> All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. <sup>29</sup> As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

<sup>30</sup> Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. <sup>32</sup> Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

<sup>33</sup> With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. <sup>34</sup> He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

### QUESTIONS

1. **Opening Sharing Qn.** What exactly is the Kingdom of God? What part do we feel that we have to play in it?
2. Read vv.21-25 (A Lamp under a Basket). Jesus says of hearing in v.25: “Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

We are called to hear; what exactly are we called to hear and pay attention to, as Jesus proclaims the Kingdom of God? How should we respond?

If Jesus commands us as his followers to “hear” Him, what should be the primary posture in which we approach Him - individually, in small groups, and corporately?

3. Read vv.26-29 (The Parable of the Seed Growing). By whose power is the seed growing? In what ways is the growth of the seed a mystery to us?

If the growth of the Kingdom is essentially a mystery to us, what posture should we adopt as citizens of the Kingdom - particularly in the way that we think about outreach and evangelism?

4. Read vv.30-34 (The Parable of the Mustard Seed). In teaching about the Kingdom of God, why do you think Jesus used a tiny mustard seed as an analogy for it?

What things have happened in the church - either local or universal - which have caused you to feel discouraged or doubtful about the church?

5. **Key Application Qn.** Since we know that God is growing His Kingdom, and that its success does not depend on our own success, how then should we approach our calling in the Kingdom?

And if God is the one who is growing His Kingdom: what does it mean for us that God still calls us to serve Him in His harvest field?