

The Kingdom Is Growing

Read Matthew 13

Sometimes Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God had come. Sometimes He referred to it as a future event. But sometimes He taught it as an ongoing process. God's full rulership on earth is beginning small now, but it will continue to grow.

In Matthew 13, Jesus taught this growing Kingdom through a number of parables. Notice how each parable adds new truth about the Kingdom and its growth.

- 13:1-23 – The Sower Parable: The Kingdom grows and bears fruit, but its growth and fruitfulness depend on the soil; that is, on the way it is received in individual hearts. Much of the seed sown never bears fruit, but the sower is guaranteed of an abundant harvest because the seed (the Word of God) is good, and some hearts will receive it.
- 13:24-30 – The Parable of the Tares: God's enemy has sown worthless weeds among the good wheat. The two look very much alike. At present God is allowing them to grow together. He will sort the weeds from the wheat only when the harvest comes. The weeds will be burned, while God will gather in His wheat.
- 13:31-33 – The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven: The Kingdom of God starts small, like a tiny mustard seed or like a tiny bit of leaven added to a lump of dough. But the Kingdom will continue to grow and spread until it fills all creation.
- 13:44-46 – The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Costly Pearl: The Kingdom of God is like a treasure hidden in a field or like a costly pearl. One who discovers the Kingdom's value will gladly sell everything to attain it.
- 13:47-50 – The Parable of the Dragnet: A fisherman hauls in all kinds of things in his dragnet, some valuable, some worthless. He pulls the net onto shore, and only then will he sort the good from the bad. So it is with the growing Kingdom of God. The evil and the good won't be sorted until the end of the age.
- 13:52 – The Parable of the Householder: The Kingdom of God draws on truth from the past as well as new truth. It includes long-hidden mysteries only now revealed. To teach the Kingdom of God, we must look both backward and forward.

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