

## V. Harvest and a Heap of Fish (47-51)

A. A Great Ingathering and Separation

B. How can we ever live up to the demands of God's justice?

### LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.*

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- What is surprising about how Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 13?
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "A king who dies on the cross must be the king of a rather strange kingdom. Only those who understand the profound paradox of the cross can also understand the whole meaning of Jesus's assertion: my kingdom is not from this world." How do the parables of our text reveal this same paradox?
- What conclusion might we draw from the fact that Jesus nestles two, nearly identical, micro-parables between the parable and its explanation? (Or, then later between that and another parable?)
- How does the biblical use of trees as a picture of the kingdom help us understand the parable of the mustard seed? What is the key theme? How is it like the parable of the leaven? What can we learn from it about how God works in the world?
- How are the two parables, one about a treasure and the other about leaven, alike? What is the key point? How are they different? What might they tell us about how God works in the world? How might they be encouraging to us as believers following Jesus?
- What does it mean to say that the works Jesus calls us to do not merit or earn salvation, but rather reveal faith?

## DISCIPLE 1.0 – Parables of the Unexpected Heavenly Kingdom

Jerry Cisar — October 13, 2019

Text: Matthew 13:24-52

### Introduction

Donald Kraybill: "The kingdom of God announced by Jesus appeared odd and utterly upside down in first-century Palestinian culture. And the upside-down surprises of God's kingdom continue to startle people as it breaks into diverse cultures today." (*The Upside-Down Kingdom*)

### I. Unheavenly until Harvest (24-30)

A. This sower has servants and enemies.

B. The Servants

i. The Servants' Question

ii. The Servants' Solution

iii. A harvest, the **darnel** is used for fuel and the wheat gathered into the barn.

### II. Hidden and Invisible (31-33)

A. Two Micro-parables

B. The Mustard Seed

i. This image of a kingdom *as* a tree is familiar.

a) Daniel 4:10-12

b) Ezekiel 31:5-6

c) Ezekiel 17:24

ii. The kingdom of heaven is like... a seed!

a) What do you do with seeds?

*The kingdom of heaven is like something really small that gets buried.*

b) Is this about the church taking over the world?

➤ It grows to be the largest vegetable plant in the garden!

➤ The parable goes from buried seed to finished product, with no focus on the in-between.

➤ When humans do “kingdoms,” we can’t resist doing so in worldly empire building (oppressive) ways.

c) What is the believer’s role in this?

d) The *birds of the air* are the poor, those who mourn, the meek, and those who hunger and thirst for justice.

C. The leaven parable is ultimately the same as the mustard seed.

### III. Hidden Until Harvest (37-43)

A. The Cast

i. Jesus is the master.

ii. The field is the world.

iii. You (if you are a Christian) are the seeds!

a) In the parable of the farmer, the seeds are the message.

b) Matthew 5:44-45 makes the connection between being sons of the Father and those who love their enemies, just as the Father does!

iv. The darnel are the “sons” or children of the evil one.

B. You are the seeds that are buried in the ground.

i. Doing what Jesus says is a lot like being buried in the ground and hidden! (1 Corinthians 15:42-43)

ii. The harvest is the end of the age.

a) The darnel turn out to be “anything that causes sin” and lit. “the workers of lawlessness.”

b) Worldly success looks like the real thing, but may prove to be darnel in the end—the work of the evil one.

Understanding *hiddenness* is essential to understanding how the sons of the kingdom are to operate, for we are the seed buried – hidden.

### IV. Happy Abandon (44-46)

A. Treasure in a Field and Pearl of Great Price

B. Those in the know –those who understand the value of the kingdom—are encouraged along the way. They have a “happy abandon.”