

The Growth of the Kingdom

Sermon 42 in the Matthew Series

Matthew 13:24-43

The Sower was the first of eight “Kingdom Parables” given by our Lord in Matt. 13.

I. What is “The Kingdom of Heaven?”

A. The Kingdom of Heaven/God is the church and the New Covenant

It is this New Covenant Age – and extends to all eternity.

It is the OT remnant of Israel and the Gentiles brought together in a world-wide gospel.

It is part of what we call “the already and the not yet”.

B. Some incorrect ideas regarding the Kingdom of God/Heaven.

1. The Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven are two separate things.
2. The Kingdom of God is only for a future date.
 - Dispensationalism sees the Kingdom as future and the church age as a parenthesis.
 - Radical Dispensationalism (rare) basically ignores the OT and the Gospels
 - Progressive Dispensationalism – going back to the original intent of Pre-Mil
3. Theological Liberalism
 - The Kingdom of God is “within you”, as Jesus said in Luke 17:21.
 - It is totally spiritual and not a reality. It is God’s rule in your heart.
4. A Political Reality
 - That Jesus came to set up an earthly kingdom and to be King of Jews.
 - This was the disciple’s apparent belief, and something they had to learn was false.
 - Acts 1:1-8**
 - Acts 28:21-31**

The Parable of the Wheat and Tares 13:24-30

We will explain this in verses 36-43

II. The Parable of the Mustard Seed 13:30-32

(Also Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19)

The mustard plant starts out as a tiny seed – and grows into a garden plant that is so large that the birds of the air can sit in it – like a tree.

In the OT – large kingdoms are often compared to trees.
Ezekiel 17 – the entire chapter.
Ezekiel 31—again, the entire chapter.
Daniel 4 – Nebuchadnezzar was the tree – judgment!

God’s kingdom is one that can NEVER be destroyed.

III. The Parable of the Leaven 13:33-35

(Also Luke 13:20-21)

A. In this case the leaven is not sin but total permeation.

The leaven leavens the whole lump.

The Kingdom of God influences the entire earth.

B. The Tribulation -- Revelation 7:9-20

Acts 14:22 – (Paul) strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, “We must through many **tribulations** enter the kingdom of God.”

John 16:33 -- These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have **tribulation**; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Christianity exploded on the scene with a remarkable growth spurt in the 1st century.

Daniel 2:36-45; 7:9-10; 13-14

IV. The Parable of the Wheat and Tares Explained 13:36-43

The first parable of “the sower” was told to the crowds – as was the two we just examined and this one. The reason we deal with this one now is – because the disciples privately asked Jesus for the explanation.

Christ sows the good seed. The field is the world. The devil sows the darnel (weed).

The tares are the unconverted. The harvest is the end of this age. The reapers are the angels.

The tares will be burned, and the children of the kingdom will enjoy God forever.

The field is not the church – as some claim (otherwise church discipline would be impossible).

The saved and unsaved grow together in this present world.

We do not use the carnal means of the world to punish those who disobey spiritually.

For the sake of the wheat – the darnel also must grow until the time of harvest.

What is not said – must be discerned from other Scriptures.

Darnel (a form of rye grass) cannot be turned into wheat – except by the power of God.

Regeneration is the miracle of taking the natural children of wrath, and making them to become the children of God.