

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #50

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 13:18-21

Sermon Date: Sep 3, 2006

Thy Kingdom Come?

You've probably said "thy Kingdom come" thousands of times, particularly as you recited the Lord's prayer. But do you have any idea what this means? For instance, could you explain it to someone else?

We are now entering a part of Luke's gospel which is especially full of parables and word pictures through which Jesus teaches us things which we are hardly able to understand. The bad news is that he was speaking to an audience from a different country in a different language at a different time in history. The good news is that we have the benefit of some great historians and Bible scholars who stand ready to help us understand and interpret these parables. Even better news is that we who are born again followers of Jesus have the counsel of the Holy Spirit which we have been given so that we can understand everything that Christ taught!

So take a minute to thank God for that gift of His Spirit, and for His guidance as you turn the page and take a few steps further toward the Kingdom of God.

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and posting at www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact studieditor@southshorebaptist.com

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Bible Study:

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;">Sermon Text:</p> <p>Luke 13:18-21</p> <p>¹⁸ Then Jesus asked, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? ¹⁹ It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches."</p> <p>²⁰ Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? ²¹ It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."</p>	

2. Explore the parallel passages from the other gospels and note your additional observations and questions, as well as what you notice that is different in these other accounts.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;">Parallel Passages:</p> <p>Matthew 13:31-33</p> <p>³¹ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."</p> <p>³³ He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount^a of flour until it worked all through the dough."</p> <p>a. Greek <i>three satas</i> (probably about 1/2 bushel or 22 liters)</p> <p>Mark 4:30-32</p> <p>³⁰ Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. ³² Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."</p>	

Dig Deeper:

3. What do you understand about the Kingdom of God from your reading of the mustard seed comparison in Luke 13:18-19?

4. What do you understand about the Kingdom of God from your reading of the yeast comparison in Luke 13:20-21?

5. For the mustard seed and perhaps the yeast, there is a time where the growth or spreading is not visible to us, even though it is indeed happening and, in time, will become very evident.

a. What kinds of progress were Jesus' disciples expecting to see but unable to see? (Recall that they thought he was their Messiah who had come to lead them to victory and establish a throne as a king.)

b. After Jesus' resurrection, what experiences did the early Christians have that might have caused them to doubt that the Kingdom of God was really growing and soon to be the "biggest tree in the garden"?

c. What are you experiencing that sometimes causes you to doubt that the Kingdom of God is really growing and soon to be the "biggest tree in the garden"?

6. Now explore some of the broader teachings in scripture about the Kingdom of God. First consider some of the other comparisons Jesus uses in the passages listed below. For each one, describe some of the **characteristics or principles of God's Kingdom** that are revealed by the comparison. Jesus said that the Kingdom of God is like ...

a. Mt 13:24-30 (... a man who sowed good seed in his field)

b. Mt 13:44 (... a treasure hidden in a field)

c. Mt 13:45-46 (... a merchant seeking fine pearls)

d. Mt 13:47-48 (... a dragnet that was cast into the sea)

e. Mt 18:23-35 (... a king who wished to settle accounts)

f. Mt 20:1-16 (... a landowner who went out to hire laborers)

c. Luke 4:43

g. Mt 22:2-14 (... a king who arranged a wedding feast)

d. Luke 6:20

h. Mt 25:1-13 (... ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom)

e. Luke 10:9, 10:11

i. Mt 25:14-30 (... a man going on a journey who gave talents of money to his servants)

f. Luke 11:2

k. Mark 4:26-29 (... a man who scatters seed on the ground)

g. Luke 11:20

h. Luke 12:31-32

i. Luke 17:20-21

j. Luke 18:16-17

7. At other times, Jesus taught more directly (i.e. not in parables) about the Kingdom of God. Explore the following passages and record the characteristics or principles about God's Kingdom that are taught.

a. John 3:3, 3:5

k. Matthew 5:3, 5:10

b. Luke 1:33

l. Matthew 25:34-35

8. Now test your understanding of the Kingdom of God and your ability to communicate about it by developing a few comparisons or word pictures of your own. First, take a few minutes to review the themes and aspects of the Kingdom of God that you noted in the questions on pages 4-7 above. Then try to come up with some of your own analogies to things you are familiar with that share some characteristics with God's Kingdom. Record these by finishing the two sentences below.

a. As I understand it, the Kingdom of God is like ...

b. What shall I compare the Kingdom of God to? It is like ...

9. How can you apply in your own life what you have learned from this study? Are there any seemingly small ways you could be helping to grow God's Kingdom, trusting that He will be faithful to bear mustard-tree-size fruit through your mustard-seed-size contributions? How can you trust God's promises about His Kingdom more and take some bold steps ... this week?