

Sometimes we wonder what Jesus would think of various things we enjoy in our lives today. Would He have enjoyed television, listening to music, or eating a delicious sandwich with mayo and mustard? Speaking of Mustard, it is a fantastic tangy condiment that provides a real punch when we taste it. Truth can be like that: surprising, delightful, savory and rich. So, let us take a “Truth” bite out of this parable that Jesus gave to us as He never grew weary of explaining the kingdom of God to His group.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.” Jesus (Mathew 13:31)

Seeds are amazing little things. They do not look like much in their dormant tiny state, but find the right kind of dirt, in the right place, where the sun will shine on it and with your fingers dig a bit and place that dinky seed in the ground. Cover it up carefully. Water appropriately and step back. Now consider what you just did right there:

You placed a meager seed into favorable conditions for growth!

A farmer cannot MAKE his seeds grow and neither could we. That seemingly insignificant seed holds all of the properties within itself to react to dirt, water and sunshine and something within it begins — on its own — to g r o w!

With faithful care that teeny seed will become a seedling. It will grow upward to the sun and with budding leaves use photosynthesis to push its way up toward the heavens. There will be small roots that begin to push the granules of dirt out of the way for them to grow down, down and down more. Those roots are searching for life-giving water.

That seed will grow on its own in two directions!

Many days later you will go out to check on your baby seedling to find that it has now become quite a large plant that is actually producing flowers. Those flowers ultimately give way to their new seeds. Strong branches grow to provide a place for birds to land and nest in. Those herb seeds may become either new plants themselves or become the familiar yummy tangy condiment. What an amazing process of life that comes from that tiny unimpressive rock-like seed. And it did it all on its very own. God put it all in place within that itty bitty core. He created it to “know” exactly what to do in its material environment.

Jesus said the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed!

Jesus taught us in His gospel message that ‘The kingdom of God dwells within you’. The kingdom of God is not our faith, for we are in control of that within our own free will choice. Jesus taught that faith is the doorway to this kingdom of God which we ENTER INTO. Jesus likened our fleshly temples to the material soil in which the mustard seed potentially grows. We are the spiritual soil that this Kingdom seed resides in. We may choose to purposefully utilize our own internal favorable conditions for spiritual growth that this indwelling kingdom of God has primed.

Faith is knowing that when we try to spring forth with our own spiritual development, His living waters will nurture us. His light of Life will foster our capacities for spiritual insight. The kingdom of heaven is what morphs us, feeding us living truths.

178:1.15 This gospel of the kingdom is a living truth. I have told you it is like the leaven in the dough, like the grain of mustard seed; and now I declare that it is like the seed of the living being, which, from generation to generation, while it remains the same living seed, unfailingly unfolds itself in new manifestations and grows acceptably in channels of new adaptation to the peculiar needs and conditions of each successive generation. The revelation I have made to you is a living revelation, and I desire that it shall bear appropriate fruits in each individual and in each generation in accordance with the laws of spiritual growth, increase, and adaptative development. From generation to

generation this gospel must show increasing vitality and exhibit greater depth of spiritual power. It must not be permitted to become merely a sacred memory, a mere tradition about me and the times in which we now live.

It is what will produce new tendrils of spiritual understanding.

This inner portion of God waits for our child-like faith, our invitation to allow Him to take control within our minds, to develop deep pure roots of love that eventually bear appropriate fruits. *This kingdom of God is the very will of God Himself* residing in our own hearts and minds. It is like the seed of the living human being, which, from generation to generation, while it remains the same living seed, unfailingly unfolds itself in new manifestations and grows acceptably in channels of new adaptation to the peculiar needs and conditions of each successive generation. This revelation Jesus has given to us is a relevant living revelation, and Jesus desires that it shall bear much fruit in each individual and in each generation in accordance with the laws of spiritual growth, increase, and adaptive development. From generation to generation His gospel of this kingdom of God that dwells within must show increasing vitality and exhibit greater depth of spiritual power. It must not be permitted to become merely a sacred memory, a mere tradition ABOUT Jesus and the times in which He lived.

This is the religion *OF* Jesus!

We must become supportive branches, each inspiring the other to hold fast to the Vine of Life our beloved Jesus the Christ. When we do this, we will also grow in two directions — one is deeply personal, and the other will be beautifully social, as we share what God is doing diversely in the adorableness of each other. This will become our new and loving brotherhood and sisterhood founded upon the Fatherhood of God Himself and we are ALL His dearly loved children, citizens in His Kingdom.

To turning off the televisions a while — silencing the cacophony a bit — in a timely manner putting down every other distraction we are tempted with; creating silence in our spaces. All this in order to allow the Light of His living truths to change us from within remembering it is HE who does most of the work. We simply provide favorable conditions for our spiritual growth.

To coming into childlike, faithful, and private worship to seek God and to FIND Him – within.

To becoming still and knowing God!

Jesus said faith is all that is required. ~ *Marin DeJohn*

Questions for discussion:

1. How is spiritual growth like a seed?
2. Why do you think Jesus used this analogy?
3. What is the goal of spiritual growth? Why?
4. If you feel comfortable, please share your own spiritual growth story.

Now is a good time to say as a loving group **The Lord's Prayer** all together. Please turn these sheets

back in. Write down any questions you may have and give them to your leader. Feel free to write down a **prayer request** and give it to your leader.

Next, week #51 we will discuss *Celebration of Life: Baby Dedications*