From Small Beginnings to Fullness
Matthew 13:31-33

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Who can still believe today that we are developing toward a state in which the kingdom of God reigns in the world of nations, in culture, and in the life of the individual? The earth has been plowed too deep by the curse of war, the streams of blood and tears have swollen all too terribly, injustice and bestiality have become all too cruel and obvious for us to consider such dreams to be anything but bubbles and forth.

– Helmut Thielicke

31 He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is
like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. 32 It is
the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the
garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and
make nests in its branches.”

33 He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that
a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.”

- Matthew 13:31-33

Main Idea

The Kingdom of God starts small, grows with transforming power, and will ultimately reach its fullness.

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Sermon Outline:

1. The Kingdom of God Begins Small
2. The Kingdom of God Transforms (Inside-Out)
3. The Kingdom of God Grows to Fullness

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1. Kingdom of God Begins Small

Key points:

- Smallness of Seed and Yeast
- Small Beginnings in Biblical Covenants

Weakness and apparent insignificance were undoubtedly the characteristics of its beginning. How did its head and King come into the world? He came as a feeble infant, born in a manger at Bethlehem, without riches, armies, attendants or power. Who were the men that the head of the church gathered round himself and appointed his apostles? They were poor and unlearned persons: fishermen, tax collectors and men of similar occupations, to all appearance the most unlikely people to shake the world. What was the last public act of the earthly ministry of the great head of the church? He was crucified like a criminal, between two thieves, after having been deserted by nearly all his disciples, betrayed by one and denied by another."

- J. C. Ryle

1. Kingdom of God Begins Small

Key points:

- Smallness of Seed and Yeast
- Small Beginnings in Biblical Covenants
- Kingdom's Humble Beginnings of Jesus' Ministry

"God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

- *Corinthians 1:27*

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- Small Beginnings to Global Growth
- Kingdom Starts Small in Us

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

- *Ezekiel 36:26*

“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.”

- Colossians 1:13

So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

- 1 Corinthians 3:7

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‘If there is a distinction between this parable and the last one, it is that the mustard seed suggests extensive growth and the yeast intensive transformation. The yeast doesn’t grow; it permeates, and its inevitable effect, is despite the small quantity used. In both parables, it is clear that at present the kingdom of heaven operates, not apocalyptically, but quietly and from small beginnings.’

- D. A. Carson

1. The Kingdom of God Begins Small
2. **The Kingdom of God Transforms (Inside-Out)**
3. The Kingdom of God Grows to Fullness

2. Kingdom of God Transforms (Intensive)

- God's Work in Salvation
  - **Regeneration**: God gives new life by replacing our heart of stone with a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26).

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  - **Regeneration**: God gives new life by replacing our heart of stone with a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26).
  - **Justification**: God declares us righteous through the finished work of Christ (Romans 5:1).
  - **Positional Sanctification**: We are set apart as holy by Christ's sacrifice, once and for all (Hebrews 10:10).

2. **Kingdom of God Transforms (Intensive)**
    - Process of Sanctification
        - Progressive Sanctification - Ongoing work of God's Grace

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- Philippians 2:13

2. Kingdom of God Transforms (Intensive)

- Process of Sanctification
  - Progressive Sanctification - Ongoing work of God's Grace
  - Challenging and Painful

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:[1] sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- Colossians 3:5

2. **Kingdom of God Transforms (Intensive)**

- Process of Sanctification
  - Progressive Sanctification - Ongoing work of God's Grace
  - Challenging and Painful

For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

- Hebrews 2:11

2. Kingdom of God Transforms (Extensive)

- Church as the Visible Expression

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

- Ephesians 4:15-16

2. Kingdom of God Transforms (Extensive)

- Church as the Visible Expression
- Church as a Witness to the World

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another

- John 13:35

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2. The Kingdom of God Transforms (Inside-Out)
3. **The Kingdom of God Grows to Fullness**

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"Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God."

- Revelation 21:3

Application

1. Patience in Spiritual Growth
2. Embrace the Process of Transformation
3. Be a Witness to the World
4. Live with Hope in Coming Kingdom