

"THE LONG VIEW"

Silence, stillness, and centering before God (2-5 minutes)



SCRIPTURE / MATTHEW 13:31-33

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 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."

33 He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."



DEVOTION BY PASTOR JOSIAH NORDGREN

There are two main ways you can interpret these verses - either a warning against corruption in the church or an illustration of how the church will grow and influence the world. For this reflection we will go with the latter interpretation. In both parables Jesus describes something incredibly large (The Kingdom of Heaven), but points out that it starts out small, as a seed or yeast. Jesus could've come and established a firm kingdom on earth. Satan even offered it to Him, but instead He chose to pour into 12 normal guys who would go on to change the world.

When it comes to Spiritual growth you and I are very impatient. We want the results to show up at the same time we put in the work. We are often quick to get discouraged and have given up more times than we can count. Many of us give up on our "Bible in a year plan" a couple months in and there are some who probably didn't make it this far in this book.

We are reminded today that the kingdom starts small; it happens below the surface before it is truly seen. Slow down and take a longer view of your life. Don't get so hung up on what isn't working right now, where you've fallen short, and where you wish you were. Remember all real genuine growth takes time. Spiritual growth takes time. Don't get so hung up on some future destination that you miss the

journey that God has you on. Remember Jesus didn't die for some future version of you; He just died for you.



REFLECT

Think deeply, process, and talk to the Lord (2-5 minutes)

- Look back, reflect, and appreciate how far God has brought you.
- Breathe in and understand that He loves you right now, the good and the bad, He is not impatiently waiting for you to become someone else.
- Ask Him for not just strength but the will and desire to keep growing beyond this booklet.