

Mustard Seed

Study Guide - Matthew 13:31-32

“He told them another parable: ‘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.’”

1. Why do you think God refers to our faith being like a mustard seed? Are you thankful He doesn't require faith the size of a mountain? What are you believing God for today?
2. How does it make you feel when God doesn't immediately give you what you ask Him for? Why do you think He does that? (see also James 4:3; John 15:7).
3. Read Hebrews 11:1. What is faith? Read Heb. 11:33-40. How did God answer those who had faith?
4. Notice how Jesus refers to the mustard weed as being a tree; it is unnaturally large. Discuss the concept of unnatural growth and how our human pride can get in the way of the kingdom of God.
5. Discuss together how prayer is an exercise in humility. Prayer is to be “scripture fed, Spirit led and worship based” (Daniel Henderson). How can prayer increase our faith and prevent us from being presumptuous of God?

Application

Take a few moments to cast your burdens on the Lord. Ask Him to give you enough faith to believe in His goodness and trust Him for results.

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Message Slides - Matthew 13:31-32

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I. Small Beginnings

A. Faith of a mustard seed.

See picture of mustard seed

Hebrews 11:33-40

“...who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again.”

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“There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”

B. Church History

See picture of church history tree

II. Unnatural Growth

See picture of mustard plant and bush, both on one slide

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1. Flawed
2. Tree
3. Bird

Rev. 18:2 "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and has become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

III. Prayer prevents unnatural growth

Luke 13:27

"And he will reply, 'I tell you, I don't know you. You can't come in here, guilty as you are. Go away.'