

The Gospel of Luke

The Kingdom of God

Luke 13:18-21

1. **The Kingdom of God** (v.18)

Whether referring to the Kingdom of God (Matt 3:2, et al.) or the Kingdom of Heaven, the gospels show that this was a primary subject of Jesus' Ministry.

A. **The Subject of His Preaching**

One of the chief aims of Jesus during His ministry was to preach the kingdom of God and to training others to do so as well (Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; cf. Luke 6:47; 8:15; 11:28).

B. **Present with His Ministry**

Regardless of whether the message of Jesus and His disciples was received or rejected, the kingdom of God had truly come near to those who heard His message (Luke 10:9, 11; 11:20).

2. **Parables of the Kingdom of God** (vs.18-21)

While the gospel of Matthew records at least ten distinct parables where Jesus describes the kingdom (Matt 13:24ff, 18:23ff; 20:1ff; 22:2ff; 25:1ff), Luke only records the two found here (cf. Matt 13:31-34; Mark 4:30-34).

A. **The Parable of the Mustard Seed** (vs.18-19)

The mustard seed was a common proverbial illustration for something of small size where its result would be immense (Matt 17:20; Luke 17:6). The primary point of this parable is to emphasize that the message of Christ, though starting out small and relatively insignificant, would become unbelievably enormous.

B. **The Parable of the Leaven** (vs.20-21)

When used as an illustration, leaven is almost always used to represent a wicked influence that permeates all that it touches (Matt 16:6; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1). Here, Jesus uses the picture of leaven to illustrate the unstoppable permeation of His message throughout the entire world.

3. **The Kingdom and the Church Today**

The cataclysmic beginning of the kingdom which the God of heaven will set up and which will utterly decimate all the former powers of the nations is still to come in the future with the second coming of Jesus Christ (Dan 2:44; Rev 20:1-3). During His first coming and ministry Jesus preached the kingdom of God (i.e. the gospel) that men might hear it and, upon responding to it, they would receive the promises of God and dwell with Him.

A. **Evidence: We Have Seen This Truth**

The testimony of Jesus' ministry as well as that of the early church was the continuing growth and spreading of the message of Jesus Christ (cf. Matt 28:19; Acts 10:47; Rev 1:4ff). The centuries following the ministry of the apostles has shown this same pattern.

B. **Opposition: Christ Will Build His Church**

Jesus promised to build His church in the face of opposition that would not overpower Him (Matt 16:18). Regardless of the obstacles and adversaries that stand against the gospel, the church will not be overcome.

C. **Diversity: The Pervasiveness of His Church**

The church began as a group of Jerusalem Jews and Jews from the nations who were saved at Pentecost (Acts 2:41). The gospel of God is, and has always been, for all people (Gal 3:29; Col 3:11; cf. Rev 7:9).

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