

“To what shall we liken the kingdom of God?

Or with what parable shall we picture it?” (Mark 4:30).

This morning we saw where Jesus likened the kingdom to a **mustard seed**, a very small seed which grows into a tree with large branches (Matthew 13:31–32).

- “The kingdom of heaven is like **leaven**, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal (“flour”) till it was all leavened” (Matthew 13:33).
- Our focus this morning was on the rapid spread of the kingdom, how it started small and grew into something large (and continues to grow).
- Tonight: The **means** by which it spreads.

Leaven used in negative sense

- “Beware of the **leaven** of the Pharisees and the Sadducees” (Matt. 16:6).
- “Do you not know that a little **leaven leavens** the whole lump?” (1 Cor. 5:6).
- “A little **leaven leavens** the whole lump” (Gal. 5:9).

But not in the Parable of Leaven

- “The point is that the kingdom of God spreads by contact, by the spread of influence, NOT by the flashier methods that impress the multitudes” (Bob Waldron).
- “Leaven represents the quickness, quietness, thoroughness, and sureness with which the gospel truth diffuses itself through human society” (J. W. McGarvey).

Speaking of diffusing

- 2 Corinthians 2:14–17
- So how do we diffuse the fragrance of His knowledge in every place?
- How do we become a leavening influence and thus spread or enlarge the kingdom?

How can we add leaven to the lump?

- Make sure that Christ lives in us (Gal. 2:20).
 - Romans 13:13–14
 - Titus 2:9–10; 1 Timothy 4:12
 - 1 Peter 3:1–2
 - “Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua...” (Joshua 24:31).

How can we add leaven to the lump?

- Raise godly children.
 - 2 Timothy 1:3–5; 3:14–15

How can we add leaven to the lump?

- Boldly teach the gospel of Christ, collectively and individually.
 - Philippians 1:12–14.
 - “Your zeal has stirred up the majority” (2 Cor. 9:2).
 - “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:37–38).
 - 1 Thess. 1:6–8.

How can we add leaven to the lump?

- Continue to give generously, or “sow bountifully” (2 Cor. 9:6), so that the gospel CAN be taken to “every place.”

How can we add leaven to the lump?

- Pray fervently and unceasingly for “open doors.”
 - Colossians 4:2–4.
 - 1 Corinthians 16:8–9.

A final word of encouragement

- Mark 4:26–29