

05 – The Kingdom **Luke 13: 17 - 21**

Materials: 9 Word cards (power, strength, large, small, planted, hidden, dough, spread, throughout); any others you think might be helpful.

Step 1: Link back

We've been reading the story of Jesus in the book of Luke. We are in chapter 13. Last time we read a story about the Sabbath.

What is the "Sabbath" - ? (. . . *a day of rest, worship*)

What did Jesus do on the Sabbath - ? (. . . *healed a woman*)

What happened after he healed the woman - ? (. . . *some people were happy about it, other people were not happy*)

Today's story follows that story. In fact, we will reread the last verse of the last story so we can see the connection between the two stories.

Step 2: Introduction (mustard seeds and yeast)

In today's story Jesus asks an important question. His question is, "**What is the Kingdom of God like?**" (write halfway down the board) First, let's ask "What is the Kingdom of God?" (write on top: . . .) The Kingdom of God is two things. One, the Kingdom of God is heaven. (write) Two, the Kingdom of God on earth is the Christian Church. (write: *the church*)

Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to two things in nature. First, he compares it to a mustard seed. (write) What can you tell me about a mustard seed - ? (. . . get them thinking. If they don't know anything, pass out the handouts. Ask again: *the seed is very small but the tree is very large.*)

Second, Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to yeast.

Have you ever made bread? (. . .)

What can you tell me about yeast - ? (. . . again, get them thinking)

Step 3: Key Questions

- **What happened to the mustard seed?** (*v.19 grew and became a tree*)
- **What happened to the yeast?** (*v.21 made all the dough rise*)

Step 4: Read Luke 13: 17 - 21

Step 5: Answer the questions

Step 6: Talk about it

What is Jesus teaching us about the Kingdom of God? What does this story say to you - ? (. . . *give each time to share something*)

If needed and if time: (gradually lay out the word cards as helps and prompts)

The people listening to Jesus thought the Kingdom of Heaven would come with power and strength, like a big parade, or a *ha-na-bi tai-kai* (*big fireworks display*) Were they right - ? (. . . *no!*) The people listening to Jesus were very surprised by his comparisons.

The mustard seed and the yeast were both very – what? (. . . *small*) They were both very small, and – what did someone do with the mustard seed - ? (. . . *planted it*) So the small seed was planted, it was hidden, no one could see it. How about the yeast - ? (. . . *it was also hidden*)

While the seed was planted, hidden, what was happening to it - ? (. . . *it was growing*) Could anyone see it growing - ? (. . . *not until it came through the soil*) Did it continue to grow - ? (. . . *yes, it became a large tree*) It became a large tree, and it became a safe place for birds.

Jesus is saying that the Kingdom of God will start out so small that no one will see it, but it will surely grow and grow, it will become big and everyone will see it, and the Kingdom of God will be a safe and restful place for many people. (use the handout as you explain)

How about the yeast? After the woman hid the yeast, did anyone ever see it again - ? (. . . *no*) So, how did anyone know there was yeast - ? (. . . *they could see the dough rise*) The yeast sort of disappears, but the dough rises, so we know that the yeast went everywhere in the dough.

Now, if I tell you that the dough means the world, what is Jesus saying about the Kingdom of God - ? (. . . *it will spread throughout the whole world*) Do we see that happening today - ? (. . . *yes, of course!*) I have come to Japan to spread the Kingdom of God to you. I am a little piece of yeast hoping to spread the Kingdom of God to you, and throughout [Chiba].

Do you have any questions or comments?