

Word One Bible Study

Parables About the Kingdom of God

by Mark and Wendy Nimitz

Text: Mark 4:26-34 for the Third Sunday after Pentecost, Lectionary Series B

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Realize the important part they play in the expansion of the Kingdom of God.
2. Discover a minimum of one practical way of spreading the Good News of the Gospel.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bring a small packet of seeds, such as beans or corn. Bring enough so that each member of the study may take one with him/her.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

1. Instructions: Choose two of the following Discipleship Questions. Have the groups form a circle. Go around the circle twice, the first time sharing your name and the second time answering one of the two Discipleship Questions the leader has chosen. This will help your group get acquainted and feel more comfortable in sharing with one another.
2. Discipleship Questions
 - a. Name a blessing that happened to you this past week.
 - b. Name your favorite thing to do on Friday night.
 - c. Name your all-time favorite movie.
 - d. If money was not a factor, where would you want to go, or what would you want to do?

3. Involvement Activity

Break the larger group into smaller groups of three or four youth. Have the youth answer the following questions. Later we will gather in the larger group to discuss our findings.

- a. What experiences have you had in growing plants from seeds?
- b. What are some examples of small things that grow into something big? (You may want to include items other than plants and animals in your list, too.)
- c. If Jesus Christ had been sent to Earth during our generation, what do you think He would have chosen to tell us in His parables?

LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

1. Read Mark 4:26-29: The Parable of the Growing Seed, and Mark 4:30-34: The Parable of the Mustard Seed. Each person in the group may take a turn reading aloud.
2. Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the two parables you have just read.
3. If time allows, discuss the following questions:
 - a. How does the message of these two parables help us better evangelize and teach?
 - b. How can you nurture the conditions the Holy Spirit creates so the Word of God will grow?
 - c. In what ways, if any, does this parable encourage you to persist in your faith?

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

1. Based upon these two parables, finish the following sentence.
"I learned that I..."
2. What one word would you use to describe how you feel right now about your part in expanding the Kingdom of God?

3. What word or message from the Bible can you share with someone at home, school or work this week? How do you plan to share this message?

CLOSING

1. Gather the small groups together into the original larger group for the closing. Here you may want to discuss the answers you discovered in the small groups.
2. Give each member of the group a seed that they may carry in their pocket throughout the coming week. The seed will serve as a reminder of our goal and objective in today's study, to expand the Kingdom of God by reaching out with the Gospel message.
3. Close with prayer. You will want to ask the Lord to bring opportunities for you to witness this week, to recognize the opportunities when they arise, and have the words, courage and strength to share your faith.

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