

January 12, 2020

The New Testament!
Matthew 13:31-35
**"The Parable of the Mustard Seed
and Yeast"!**

Matthew 13:31-35

Introduction

This is the why He taught in parables, only those who were serious would seek the understanding. We have looked at the parable of the sower, the reasons for parables, the parable of the weeds, the parable of the treasures and the pearl and today we come back to the parable of the mustard seed and yeast.

31 He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. 32 It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Most or many expositors argue that this is the continual and in the end spread of the gospel around the world.

33 He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

Some expositors argue that this is the power of evil in the church or in the heart.

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So what do you say?

We can learn a good lesson from either

O God from evil preserve us!

O God may holy influences be upon us and the world!

Prophecy and Parables

34 All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. 35 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables;

I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."

The prophet spoken of was David or Asaph, Ps 78, "Give ears O my people, to my law"

This could only be speaking of God

So in Ps 78 the person who is both God and man must be our Lord Jesus Christ

I want to follow a lesser traveled road

Most Bible students believe that these two parables are about the Kingdom's steady expansion and growth so that in time it will fill the entire world

Others see these parables as more warnings to the church against the devices the devil will use to corrupt the church

One camp is represented by William Taylor

He says that the parable of the mustard seed is about "great results from a small beginning"

He says of the yeast, "the truth here illustrated is that the Lord Jesus, by His coming and work, introduced an element which works a change on society that will continue until the entire society is transformed"

Postmillennialists and many amillennialists take this approach

Postmillennialists-Christ comes after the tribulation

Amillennialists-The tribulation encompasses all the time between the ascension of Christ and the 2nd coming

They do not believe that Christ will literally reign for a thousand years on earth

They believe the Kingdom of God will take over before the return of Christ

The other view point is represented by Arno Gaebelein

He sees the parables as teaching warning against the abnormal and bureaucratic expansion of the church and devil's work in undermining it by the infusion of sin, which the yeast represents

He believes all these parables in chapter 13

represent the growth of evil in the modern church

Where churches are evaluated by numbers: how many members, how much money, how many baptisms, what they might be doing that everyone can see and they are no longer evaluated by the spiritual fruit exhibited by the members

How many people are really followers of Jesu

So what are we to do?

We have to take one approach or the other

Let me tell you the approach I am going to take today and why

I am going to take the second approach, the approach that the secular and modern church is becoming more and more worldly, evil and looks more and more like society

Here is why I want to take this approach

1. In the context of Matthew 13, the parable of the seeds and the parable of the weeds we see the devil at work in the sowing of the seed
The birds have resting in the branches of the mustard plant have been associated with the devil in verse 4
The yeast would represent the same thing as the birds do in v32
2. In almost all cases in the OT and NT and in Jewish life "yeast is a symbol of evil"
Yeast was forbidden from being added to any offering made by fire
During the feast of unleavened bread the houses had to be searched and ridden of yeast
Getting rid of yeast represents the putting away of sin
3. Look at what is before and after the parable of the mustard seed and yeast!
The parable of the devil sowing weeds
And the explanation of the parable of the weeds
It just seems that the parable of the mustard seed and yeast would be there to expand on the parable of the weeds rather than departing from what was already being taught

Today read these texts and talk about what is happening in the church today. Ask this question: Is the church influencing the culture or is the culture influencing the church? What can we do to reverse the trend?