

What is the Kingdom of Heaven Like?

Sermon Based Life Group Notes for the week of February 21

Getting To Know Each Other

- What kind of a gardener are you? Green thumb? Greatest hobby or plant killer?
- What needs sorting out in your garage or basement? Trash or treasure? Give examples.

Into the Bible

Read Matthew 13:1-23

- What is a parable? Why did Jesus speak in parables? Verses 10-11
- What do parables accomplish that simple speech lacks? Verses 14-16
- What does Jesus mean in verse 9? Can we choose to understand and believe?
- What does the seed represent? What is the message of the Kingdom? Verse 18-19
- What do the four soils represent? What are their good and bad qualities?
- From the information in this parable, which soil (people group) are actually saved?
- Application: What proof have you found in your life that shows your fruit?
- Application: Which soil type did you have to overcome to know Christ, grow roots, and bear fruit?
- Application: When has trouble, persecution, worries or deceitfulness of wealth tried to choke out your faith?
- Application: How have you tried to keep the callouses off your heart? What specifically have you done – and continue to do – to grow fruit in your life?

Read Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

- Who is the sower and what does the wheat represent?
- Who or what is the enemy? What are weeds? How do they get into the good soil? V 38
- The owner's servants want to pull out the weeds. Why is this dangerous? Verse 29
- Who are ones that are allowed to pull and destroy the weeds? Verse 39-40
- From these first two parables, how can God tell if our faith is authentic or not?
- Application: How have you let "weeds" creep into our hearts?
- Application: If God only lets the angels decide (not the farmer or field hands) if someone has real faith or not, what does this mean about how we judge others?

Read Matthew 13:31-35, 44-45

- What do the parables of the mustard seed and yeast mean?
- What is the promise of the small seed and the yeast?
- How is the kingdom like hidden treasure or valuable pearls?
- When we discover the saving grace of God, through Jesus, or the value of following Him, what should we do?
- Application: How valuable is the kingdom of heaven to you? How have you showed its value by your lifestyle or what you prioritize?
- Application: Do you still need heart surgery to remove the callouses on it? How have you scheduled an appointment with the Heart Doctor to deal with this?