

I. Read Luke 13:18-20

- A. In verse 19, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed. Elsewhere in Scripture He uses the mustard seed to describe a related but different matter. What else does He compare to a mustard seed? (Read Matthew 17:20; Luke 17:6.)

- B. What point is Jesus making in comparing the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed? (Read Job 8:7.)

- C. To whom and to what was Jesus referring in the phrase “*a man took and put in his garden*”? (verse 19, NKJV)

What was Jesus getting at?

- D. Why did Jesus compare the kingdom of God to “a large tree...which would house the birds of the air in its branches” (NKJV)?

- E. In view of the great benefit and positive effect that Christianity (the kingdom of God) has had on the world, how do the cultural elite of America usually portray Christians?

- F. If we take Jesus’ words in Luke 13:19 seriously, what would the likely effect be on our evangelism, cultural involvement, efforts toward social justice, etc.?

- G. In Luke 13:20, Jesus compares the kingdom of God to “leaven.” What point is He making?

- H. Since the Christian faith and the kingdom of God do indeed tend to spread rather than remain static, why do some reject the gospel of Christ? (Disregard the doctrine of election for the purposes of exploring the nature of unbelief and approach this question from the human perspective.)

Comment on the following: (Again, from the human perspective.)

“The rejection of Christ is often not so much of the *mind* but of the *will*; not so much *I can't*, but *I won't*.”

“I have met many people with intellectual excuses, but few with true intellectual problems with the gospel.”

“Many folks speak of the contradictions in the Bible, yet few have taken the time to read and study it. If they did, most would be surprised at what they found in it!”

“To the extent that a culture or society deviates from the truth of God’s Word, it can expect to meet with one problem or disaster after another.”

“Those I have met who have said they tried Christianity but gave it up, really only tried *churchianity*. No one who truly knows Christ turns from Him.”

“America is a post-Christian society. If it ever was Christian, it no longer is today. In fact, America has more in common with the pagan cultures of the ancient world than Christianity!”