

A.L.I.V.E. Bible Study
Date: April 8, 2018
Mark 4:26-34

1. How does this parable begin, according to 4:26?
 - a. This is what the kingdom of God is like.
 - b. A man scatters seed on the ground.
 - c. Wait, haven't we heard this one before?

2. What happens, according to verses 27-29, after the seed is spread on the ground?
 - a. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows.
 - b. All by itself the soil produces grain – first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.
 - c. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come.

3. What is he talking about?
 - a. It seems like he is reminding us how very little we have to do with whether a seed takes root in someone's life.
 - b. Perhaps this is similar to what Paul was trying to say in 1 Corinthians 3:6-9.
 - c. Well, Matthew records a parable in this spot that seems to have a different point entirely (Matthew 13:24-30). Is it possible that there was more than one meaning in some of Jesus' parables?
 - d. I think that, in all of this, he may have been reminding us that after we have done what God has called us to do, the rest is in the hands of God.

4. What does Jesus say in verse 30?
 - a. What shall we say the kingdom of God is like...?
 - b. What parable shall we use to describe it?

5. What, according to verse 31, is the kingdom of God like this time? _____

6. What is it about this seed, that Jesus wants us to know, according to verses 31-32?
 - a. It is the smallest of all the seeds on earth.
 - b. It becomes the largest of all garden plants.

7. What does Jesus mean by this?
 - a. This sounds a little bit like "the last shall be first" (Matt 20:16).
 - b. I don't know, but at least this time Matthew says about the same thing (Matt 13:31-32).
 - c. Perhaps he is speaking of the great things that can come out of us, though we seem feeble and weak.
 - d. I wonder if this could be combined with the other mention of mustard seeds in Matt 17:20. What might it take for great things to come out of us?

8. Who was the seed in the first parable? _____
What if Jesus was using these two parables side-by-side to remind us of what he is trying to do in us that we don't think is possible or know how (verse 27)? _____
