

WARM-UP

- Tell us what you know about making bread. Have you ever tried baking, or would you ever want to try it?
- What is one compliment given to you that has stuck in your mind since you heard it? What is one word people use to describe you?
- Recall a time when you worked hard behind the scenes, even if your work was not visible.

**WORD** <sup>31</sup>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. <sup>32</sup>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." <sup>33</sup>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." **MATTHEW 13:31-33**

The kingdom of heaven is the dominion of God, which is something that we, as His children, look forward to, but is also happening here and now. As a part of this kingdom, the Church, His people, has a mission to preach the gospel, which is the message of the kingdom. During His time on earth, Jesus told the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven, from which we can learn some things about the gospel we preach.

## 1 | The gospel seems insignificant.

*"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."* **MATTHEW 13:32**

Like the tiny mustard seed, smallest of the seeds known and used by those in Israel, the message of the kingdom seems insignificant at first. Sometimes preaching the gospel does not have immediate results. Many great missionaries and evangelists preached for years before they saw any fruit. How can you hold on to faith even when your efforts seem useless? How can you remind yourself that it is God who brings the growth?

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## 2 | The gospel works unseen.

*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."* **MATTHEW 13:33**

The mustard seed grows steadily into a large tree and the leaven works all through the dough. Though it isn't obvious, every seed of the kingdom of heaven makes an impact. Through the power of the Spirit, the gospel works in and through the lives of people although no one can see it. As people receive the gospel, the kingdom grows. How can you move forward in faith even when you don't see the immediate outcome?

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### 3 | The gospel's impact is enormous.

*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." *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." **MATTHEW 13:32,33**

In the end, the mustard seed grows into the largest of trees; the leaven that seems so little spreads amazingly far. In the same way, the gospel has an enormous impact, as it holds the most important message in the world. The gospel goes wide and deep; like the mustard seed and yeast, it influences and transforms although unseen. What does 1 Corinthians 3:6 say about the growth of believers?

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#### APPLICATION

- The gospel is the message of the kingdom. How did the gospel start to take root in you? How will seeing yourself as a work in progress change the way you live?
- View the people around you through a kingdom lens. What action steps can you take to preach the message of the kingdom to family and friends?
- The Church has a mission to spread the gospel. What is your part in this mission? How can you preach the message of the kingdom to those in your community?

