

Now as Jesus has given the agrarian analogy of the sowing seed and **growing crops**, He wants to impress upon the disciples the **divine nature** of crop **growing** and **reaping** in the **Kingdom**. And so He gives yet another parable in like manner, The **Parable of the Seed**. He wants them to see that growth and fruit are indeed **gifts of divine grace**, and much like the mystery of plant growth happens as God causes the growth, so it is in the Kingdom. **"26 And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; 27 and goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts up and grows — how, he himself does not know. 28 "The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. 29 "But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.""** The disciples won't be able to make the crop grow on their own, but they can only spread the **seed** of the **Word**, and like a farmer go to bed and wait for it to grow. They can only **plant** and **water**, but **God** must **cause the growth** (1 Cor 3:6-7). This Jesus says is **"what the Kingdom of God is like."** Here see the Kingdom of God is a reference to the realm of salvation and the spreading of the Word of God and it growing and taking root and producing fruit, or if you will, people being saved and producing the fruit of **salvation**. Surely these ideas of the Kingdom and Salvation were something very new and different for these Jews to hear. You don't get these concepts from reading the Law, but Jesus has brought a new and better covenant with a new and better way of salvation. The **disciples distribute** the message of the **Gospel**, and some of the hearers respond with saving faith, but this work is done secretly by the power of the **Holy Spirit in regeneration**. No disciple can take credit for this, but **God causes** the growth in those whom He chooses. The main point of the parable is clear, the disciples must sow the seed, and wait for God to cause the growth and eventually the harvest.

Mark 4:30-34 - 30 And He said, "How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it? 31 "It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, 32 yet when it is sown, grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade. " 33 And with many such parables He was speaking the word to them as they were able to hear it; 34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.

And with yet **another parable** Jesus **illuminates** the Kingdom of God for us. **"30 And He said, "How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it? 31 "It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, 32 yet when it**

is sown, grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade.” Here the **Parable of the Mustard Seed**. This parable was obviously meant by Jesus to give His disciples **confidence** that **their work** of spreading the Gospel would not be in vain, but would have lasting and **fruitful results**. In the same way that a mustard seed is small yet grows into a large bush-like tree, so the Kingdom would start small but would grow to a very large proportion. MacArthur comments, *“In spite of its small beginnings the Kingdom of God would become so large it would provide security and blessing to the whole earth”* **end quote**.

It is a remarkable thing how the Lord used these **familiar images** of the **natural world** around the disciples to explain to them what the **spiritual world** of the Kingdom was like. And yet only those with **ears to hear** would He give the understanding to. Jesus was purposely withholding the This also was a remarkable thing. **“33 And with many such parables He was speaking the word to them as they were able to hear it; 34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.”** Let us see in these parables the very profound work of **Sovereign Grace** that the Lord does in those **He chooses** to bring near to Himself and **use** as His instruments in the world to spread the news of His Kingdom which Jesus told us, was **“at hand!”**

Mark 1:14-15 - 14 And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”** NASB

Mark 4:35-41 - 35 And on that day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 And leaving the multitude, they took Him along with them, just as He was, in the boat; and other boats were with Him. 37 And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. 38 And He Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" 39 And being aroused, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. 40 And He said to them, "Why are you so timid? How is it that you have no faith?" 41 And they became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

As the story unfolds we see an even **greater miracle** wrought by Jesus than those we have previously seen. In seeking to convince us that **Jesus** is the **Son of God**, Mark now makes it even clearer. Only God can do what Jesus now does! Not only

can Jesus heal sickness and disease with a spoken word, and cast out demons with the same amazing power, but has **power over nature** itself. **“35 And on that day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 And leaving the multitude, they took Him along with them, just as He was, in the boat; and other boats were with Him.”** Now we see that Jesus has left the bustling district of Capernaum to the quieter shores on the other side. As they traveled to get there, the sea erupts with a severe storm, which is common on the Sea of Galilee. **“37 And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. 38 And He Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" 39 And being aroused, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.”** Jesus here does something of astonishing wonder, He **calms a fierce storm** on the Sea of Galilee with a spoken word. More than this, He even **calms the waves on the surface of the water** in a moments time. What miraculous power is this? And Jesus wondering why after all they have seen are they **wavering in trusting** that He has them firmly in His hand He asks, **“40 And He said to them, "Why are you so timid? How is it that you have no faith?”** Who but God could do such a thing? Only God, only God! And isn't that the point? Only God could do something so astonishing as this. And so we all see just how clear it is just exactly who this man is! **“41 And they became very much afraid and said to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”** And this of course is something that everyone who reads of this account must answer, **“41 Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”** Truly Mark has me convinced, Jesus is the Son of God!

Mark 5:1-20 - 1 And they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. 2 And when He had come out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, 3 and he had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; 4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 And constantly night and day, among the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out and gashing himself with stones. 6 And seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; 7 and crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What do I have to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!" 8 For He had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" 9 And He was asking him, "What is your name?" And he said to Him, "My name is Legion; for we are many." 10 And he began to entreat Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11 Now