

The Hidden Influence of the Kingdom

1. Thinking about the Parable of the Mustard Seed, the sermon states that the kingdom of heaven "starts small, hidden, almost invisible to the world," but becomes "vast, unshakable, protective, and life-giving"¹. Where have you seen this principle of small beginnings leading to immense growth in your own life or in the life of your church?

- Scriptures: Matthew 13:31-32, Ezekiel 17:23²

2. The sermon mentions that God "loves the underdog" and often uses people the world considers insignificant or those with "troubled pasts" to bring Him glory³. How does this idea encourage you in your personal faith journey, especially if you feel unqualified or have a past you'd rather hide?

- Scriptures: 1 Samuel 16:11-12⁴, 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

3. The Parable of the Leaven emphasizes the quiet, internal power of the kingdom, which permeates and transforms everything from the inside out⁵⁵⁵⁵. In what ways do you see this "internal growth" at work in your own heart and in the broader culture? How can we, as believers, be more like leaven in our communities?

- Scriptures: Matthew 13:33⁶, John 17:15-18⁷, Mark 16:15⁸

4. The message argues that Christians are called to be "in the world but not of it," like yeast mixed into dough, to bring about transformation⁹⁹⁹⁹. How do you balance engaging with the world around you while remaining distinct from its values? What are some practical ways you can be a "carrier of the gospel" in your daily life?

- Scriptures: Matthew 5:13-16¹⁰, Romans 12:2¹¹, 2 Corinthians 5:20¹²