

*The Kingdom of Heaven is like  
Seeds & Yeast*  
Troy Knight

# TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture:

**Matthew 13:31-32**

*Here is another illustration Jesus used: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed planted in a field. 32 It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a tree, and birds come and make nests in its branches."*

**Matthew 13:33**

*33 Jesus also used this illustration: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman used in making bread. Even though she put only a little yeast in three measures of flour, it permeated every part of the dough."*

**Luke 17:20-21**

*20 One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will the Kingdom of God come?" Jesus replied, "The Kingdom of God can't be detected by visible signs. 21 You won't be able to say, 'Here it is!' or 'It's over there!' For the Kingdom of God is already among you."*

**Acts 2:41**

*Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.*

**2 Corinthians 3:16-18**

*16 But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.*

**Mark 7:37** *They were completely amazed and said again and again, "Everything he does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak."*

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Did you or someone you know go through the naturalization process to become a citizen of the United States? What were some of the requirements to become a US citizen?

Start **thinking**. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- When did the kingdom of heaven begin on this earth? What's the difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven?
- How do you become a citizen of God's kingdom? If you consider yourself a citizen of God's kingdom, what have you done to declare your citizenship?
- **Read Matthew 13:31-32.** What's the point of Jesus' parable? Have you experienced this kind of mustard seed growth in your life? Explain.
- **Read Matthew 13:33.** Troy said that the kingdom of heaven grows and spreads like yeast. Have you witnessed this in a family, a church, or a business? What happened?

Start **sharing**. Choose a question to create openness.

- In the message, Troy explained that the Kingdom is like the snowball that starts an avalanche, starting small but growing exponentially as it rolls down the hill. How can we ensure that the momentum to spread the love of Jesus that we've built in our community continues?
- **Read 2 Corinthians 3:16-18.** Have you experienced the transforming power of God's kingdom in your life? How? What's God been teaching you lately?
- Plants that need full sun won't grow in the shade. Crops die without the proper amount of water. The Kingdom of God cannot grow unless you create the right conditions for it to flourish. What steps do you take to cultivate the Kingdom in both your heart and your community?
- Families, businesses, and nations that welcome the kingdom of heaven are blessed because of it. Why do so many families, businesses, and nations reject God's kingdom and are even antagonistic toward it? What can we do as individuals to bring the kingdom of heaven to our families and our nation?

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Commit to taking a step this week to further the kingdom of God in your life and community.

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- God, we thank you for who you are. Help us to learn to be confident when stepping out to share our faith in You with others. Give us boldness to further Your kingdom here on earth. Amen!

Start **digging**. For further study.

- Read the 2nd page and discuss it.

## **Question: "What is the meaning of the Parable of the Leaven (yeast)?"**

Answer: Jesus' Parable of the Leaven (yeast) is found in two of the Gospels. It is a very simple story—a snapshot of life, really: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough" (Matthew 13:33; cf. Luke 13:20-21).

Jesus uses this story as an object lesson to illustrate the kingdom of heaven. A woman takes yeast (leaven) and mixes it into dough. Eventually, the whole of the dough is leavened. What does it mean?

First, it's important to define "kingdom of heaven." By this, Jesus is referring to His domain as the Messiah. In the current age, the kingdom of heaven is spiritual, existing within the hearts of believers (Luke 17:21). Later, the kingdom will be manifest physically, when the Lord Jesus establishes His throne on this earth (Revelation 11:15).

In the Parable of the Leaven, we learn several things about the working of the kingdom in our present age. Each of these lessons stems from the nature of yeast.

First, the kingdom of God may have small beginnings, but it will increase. Yeast is microscopic in size, and only a little is kneaded into the dough. Yet, given time, the yeast will spread through all the dough. In the same way, Jesus' domain started with twelve men in an obscure corner of Galilee, but it has spread throughout the world. The gospel makes progress.

Second, the kingdom of God exerts its influence from within, not from without. Yeast makes dough rise from within. God first changes the heart of a person, and that internal change has external manifestations. The gospel influence in a culture works the same way: Christians within a culture act as agents of change, slowly transforming that culture from within.

Third, the effect of the kingdom of God will be comprehensive. Just as yeast works until the dough has completely risen, the ultimate benefit of the kingdom of God will be worldwide (Psalm 72:19; Daniel 2:35). "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

Fourth, although the kingdom of God works invisibly, its effect is evident to all. Yeast does its job slowly, secretly and silently, but no one can deny its effect on bread. The same is true of the work of grace in our hearts.

The nature of yeast is to grow and to change whatever it contacts. When we accept Christ, His grace grows in our hearts and changes us from the inside out. As the gospel transforms lives, it exerts a pervasive influence in the world at large. As we "reflect the Lord's glory, [we] are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).