

TITLE: The Secret of the Kingdom of God pt. 2

SCRIPTURE: Mark 4

ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME: 15-20 minutes

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Also find time to catch up together on how the assignments from last week turned out.

SERMON REVIEW: 5-10 minutes

Last week, we learned that Jesus hid the secret of the Kingdom of God within a little story about a farmer (God) who sowed His seed (Jesus) and the ground that he sowed on (our lives). There's no better secret to understand than that of the Kingdom, and the way to learn that secret is to simply ask Jesus. This week, we explored a handful of parables that Jesus told to give us insight into God's purpose in the sowing. In the story of the lamp, we learned to make space (measures) to receive the seed, so we can hear from God and be filled with His light. In the story of the growing seeds, we learned to put what we hear from Jesus into practice in our everyday lives and have faith that the seed contains all the power it needs to grow. In the story of the mustard seed, we learned that the kingdom seed starts small but always bears kingdom-sized fruit that we should anticipate and celebrate. The challenge is to "resolve to reduce" - making space to hear from God. Then we must faithfully accept what we hear, put it into practice, and rejoice in the results of the harvest, whether they are thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times during the coming year.

THE MAIN THOUGHT: *keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*

When you learn the secret of the kingdom of God - asking Jesus - and you hear and put into practice what He sows in your heart, the kingdom will always bear fruit in your life.

SEE IT – Questions 10-15 minutes

Picture: What is the importance of the image of the *measure* in understanding how we should hear from God? How does the growing seed encourage patience as we put into practice what we hear God saying? What is the kingdom potential of the mustard seed?

Mirror: What is the quality of the *measure* that you are bringing to Jesus to fill? Where are you letting multitasking, crises, or anything else impede you from making space to hear from God? How are you putting into practice what you are hearing?

Window: What are some little signs of growth in and around you that you can celebrate? Where is God inviting you to harvest within your family, community, and world?

BE IT – Practice 10-15 minutes

Change UP // Exercise 5 minutes

Create empty space to hear from God. Take two to five minutes of silence and ask God what empty *measure* He is asking you to bring, how well you are embracing what He says, and how He wants His seed to be embedded in your life.

Change IN // Group Activity 5 minutes

Do a start/stop analysis for your group. What do you need to discard (stop) personally or as a group in order to make space to hear from God? Specifically identify one or two things to "tidy up" and share those with the group. Encourage each other to not just "resolve to reduce" but to actually do it (start)!

Change OUT // Life Application Assignment 5 minutes

Celebrate what God has been doing and anticipate the harvest to come. In your group, call out specific examples of growth you have seen this year or that you are claiming for the coming year. Pray over each example in thankfulness to the sower for the power of the seed, Jesus!

CLOSING PRAYER 5 minutes

Take a few minutes to gather any prayer requests and pray for each other to SEE IT and BE IT this week.