

MORE KINGDOM PARABLES...

Statement...when Jesus spoke of God's Kingdom, it was bible talk for GOD'S DREAM/ETERNAL PLAN, what the world WILL BE LIKE one day when his will is done. He evokes images of what that day will be like

The Kingdom is like a MUSTARD SEED, YEAST, or a FINE PEARL.

Bible scholars label them as "growth parables" Something small or undetectable becomes large/significant. Jesus meant it as a sign of how God's Kingdom grows from small beginnings.

A MORE COMPLICATED STORY...Jesus then interjects an irritating story

THE PARABLE OF WHEAT AND WEEDS. HOW DOES THE STORY STRIKE YOU? WHAT PARTS OF IT SHOCK YOU OR ANNOY YOU? WHY?

We prefer a world where we reap what we sow; where DOING GOOD bears RESULTS and doing WRONG brings punishment. Jesus doesn't deny weeds or pretend that the world is free from evil. Weeds have their uses. They wake up wheat; they remind us who we are. When our field gets messy, our search for THE SOWER turns urgent. We all are a mixture of wheat/weeds. Jesus didn't come to pull weeds. He came to give us God so nothing could separate us from God. God doesn't work on our schedule. God works in all places simultaneously and that gives us freedom, latitude in our choices, and the time to do what is right.

THE FIG TREE...his Disciples stare at the Temple. He predicts its fall, but they get nervous. It prompts him to tell of "end times", all the "natural international signs" that will proceed his return. The parable of the FIG TREE is born.

As a tree's sprouting leaves are a "sign" of changing seasons" so the events he describes will serve as SIGNS foretelling his return.

His words sound ominous, not the signs of something wonderful to happen. He urges his Disciples to interpret signs, and to stay alert.

GOD'S WEDDING PARTY...the last Kingdom Parable is provocative. He compares it to a wedding banquet, a party unlike any this world has seen. It will be a wedding feast-not an IRS audit, or a foreboding or morbid event. It is his son's wedding! Not the wedding of 2 FAMILIES but the larger story of GOD'S FAMILY. As a parable, it isn't a LITERAL EVENT; it is an ETERNAL EVENT. After all the invitations are sent, the excuses start rolling in.

What excuses has God heard from us? Was this Jesus' way of warning us? What if his warning us is a part his loving us?