

Recap of 6/4/23 message by Pastor Joe (Mark 4:21-34):

1. *The main idea of this passage is to keep working for God's kingdom is growing. Don't get discouraged.*

2. *The meaning of the parable of the lamp (4:21-25):*

a) *Jesus Himself is the Light. We are to shine forth in testimony unhindered by cares and the material things of life or ease and comfort. We all have a responsibility to share the light.*

b) *"I know some people who feel that the Christian ministry is the job of the Pastor and the paid church staff. The rest of us are like spectators in the bleachers. We cheer on the team, but we don't play the game." (Eims)*

c) *We also have a responsibility to hear the Word and respond in belief. "The more we listen to the Word of God with spiritual perception and appropriate it, the more truth about Jesus will be revealed."*

d) *Spiritual prosperity requires spiritual investment. Spiritual fitness requires spiritual exercise.*

e) *"Just as the muscles of the body are strengthened by regular exercise, so are the graces of the soul increased by diligence in using them." (Ryle)*

f) *"Those who respond to truth receive more; those who don't lose what they had." (Ryrie)*

3. *The meaning of the parable of the growing seed (4:26-29):*

a) *The kingdom of God is extended by the sowing of the seed. The power of the seed of the Word of God is in itself. The Sower goes about his duties – the seed germinates, sprouts, and grows by its own power.*

b) *"It is our job to sow the seed; we cannot make the seed germinate and produce a harvest. Even a busy farmer must sleep and let God work! (Wiersbe)*

4. *The meaning of the parable of the mustard seed:*

a) *The mustard seed was the smallest seed known in Palestine. The parable contrasts insignificant beginning of God's kingdom with its future great and power and glory.*

b) *"The parable does, however, picture the kingdom of grace as including multitudes of redeemed persons who through the years have come to swell its ranks to phenomenal size." (Burdick)*