



19 Minutes With the Messiah

The Yeast

(Matthew 13:33-35)

Jesus' Body as the Temple
The Living Water
New Cloth
New Wine in Old Wineskins
The Salt of the Earth
The Light of the World
The House Built on the Rock
The Two Debtors
The Sower
The Weeds
The Growing Seed
The Mustard Seed
▶ **The Yeast**
The Hidden Treasure
The Fine Pearl
The Net
I AM the Bread of Life
Becoming Childlike
The Unmerciful Servant
I AM the Light of the World
I AM the Gate
I AM the Good Shepherd
The Good Samaritan
The Friend at Midnight
The Rich Fool
The Wise Servant
The Barren Fig Tree
The Great Banquet
The Lost Sheep
The Lost Coin
The Lost Son
The Shrewd Manager
The Rich Man and Lazarus
The Unworthy Servants
I AM the Resurrection and the Life
The Persistent Widow
The Pharisee and
the Tax Collector
The Workers in the Vineyard
The Ten Minas
The Two Sons
The Wicked Tenants
The Wedding Feast
The Fig Tree
The Householder
The Ten Virgins
The Talents
The Sheep and the Goats
A Lesson About Foot Washing
I AM the Way
I AM the True Vine
The Woman in Labor
I AM the Alpha and the Omega

³³[Jesus] told them still another parable: "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."

³⁴Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. ³⁵So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

1. In the above parable, what does the yeast represent? What does the dough represent?

2. Jesus' picture is easy to understand: When yeast is added to a batch of dough,

___ it may cause the dough to rise.

___ I don't know; I don't bake.

___ it permeates, causing the whole batch to rise.

___ portions of the dough will rise.

3. In a companion parable—that of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31,32)—Jesus revealed that one of the characteristics of the gospel is that although unimpressive in appearance, it has the power to grow and create a vast kingdom. What characteristics of the gospel are revealed through the parable of the yeast?

4. The rising of a batch of dough is the visible, outward evidence that yeast is in the dough and that it has permeated the entire batch. Make a list of the internal changes that are worked in a person by the gospel as well as the external evidence of these changes.

Internal

External

5. The Lord told Nicodemus the Pharisee (John 3) that no one can enter God's kingdom unless he is born again by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the gospel. He then went on to speak of the Spirit's work. Explain Jesus' words in the following passage and how they relate to the parable of the yeast.

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

6. Like so many of Jesus' parables, this one teaches us about the efficacy of the gospel. With what comfort and confidence does this teaching fill us as we worship?

as we partake of the Lord's Supper?

as we take time for family and personal devotions?

as we share Jesus with a coworker or friend?

For Further Study

7. React to the following statements:

- Perhaps the best example of the quiet and invisible nature of the gospel is the baptism of an infant.
- "Right now my faith is more like a wafer of matzo than a loaf of Wonder bread."
- When we return to our seats after receiving the Lord's Supper, we should feel that our faith has been strengthened.
- Sometimes you can tell that the yeast of the gospel is not at work on the inside because there doesn't seem to be any "rising" on the outside.

8. Why did Jesus use parables to teach?

Helps: (1) The yeast is Christ and his gospel that work in the dough of human hearts and lives. (2) Yeast permeates a batch of dough, causing the entire batch to rise. (3) The gospel of Christ works quietly and invisibly (nonetheless powerfully) like yeast in a batch of dough. (4) The gospel has the power to turn people's hearts from unbelief to saving faith in Christ. With faith, there is the beginning of a renewal of the image of God in which a person's will, intellect, and emotions are in harmony with those of God. This renewal of God's image will give evidence of itself in a person's thoughts and desires, as well as in kindly words, loving actions, treatment of spouse and children, etc. (5) We can understand the Spirit's working as little as we understand the blowing of the wind. We know that the wind blows because we hear and feel it. Yet, when will it blow and from which direction? Likewise, we know that the Spirit works within us because we believe in Christ as our Savior. Yet no one can fully comprehend all the workings of God's Spirit. Part of the mystery lies in the gospel's nature to work quietly and invisibly within human hearts. (6) We can find comfort and confidence in the truth that, although we may not perceive that the gospel is working, it is working nonetheless. The gospel works quietly and invisibly to call people to faith and to strengthen faith. (7) Discuss the fact that, although an infant may appear no different on the outside after being baptized, a wonderful and saving change has taken place on the inside by the power of the gospel. This gospel not only works faith, but it strengthens faith, even a faith that is "flat." This is an objective truth, even when we may not subjectively feel or sense that our faith has been strengthened (for instance, after receiving Holy Communion). While Jesus said that the yeast of the gospel in one's heart will be evident in one's outward life, we must be very cautious in our judgments, especially in the case of weak or immature brothers or sisters. (8) Verse 35 indicates that Jesus, in perfect obedience to God, used parables to fulfill Old Testament prophecy (Psalm 78:2). Scripture tells us that the Lord also used parables to conceal sacred truths from those who rejected him as Savior but to reveal these truths to his followers.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, Comforter and guide, by the power of the gospel in the Word and sacraments, continue to work quietly and invisibly, yet powerfully, in my heart and life. Assure me of the forgiveness of my sins in Christ, empower me to live for my Savior, and guide and direct me in my new life as a redeemed child of God. Amen.