

## ***A Spiritual Chia Pet***

How the Kingdom of God Grows

### **Living Into the Kingdom Series - part 7**

October 5-6<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Lk 6:43-49; Mk 4:30-32; Mt 13:33

#### **Introduction**

- **Just as the Kingdom of God expands in the world (influence), so must it expand in us**
  - A lot of the same concepts that we are going to learn about building the Kingdom of God outside, can be used for our personal growth on the inside as well.
- **Kingdom Building Needs to be Intentional** - too many of us HOPE that we grow spiritually. We hope that the world starts to change around us. We hope that the person next door will be set free. We hope that someone gets saved. We hope that
  - **But, how do you think God is going to do that?**

#### **Spiritual Growth is both SPIRITUAL and PRACTICAL**

- **In every element of Spiritual Growth, there's Stuff that God Does and Stuff We Do** - btw: He's really good at His part.
- **Benefit of Spiritual Growth (why we should be Christians)** - some of us have been led to believe that we got into the Christian thing for the ticket to heaven and that's all (fear usually is that motivator - which is why I refuse to lead with fear as an evangelism motivation - only relationship sticks, fear fades or creates dysfunctional relationships). But we should have 'got into the Christian thing' because it's what we were built for, that we would be connected to our Heavenly Father right now and live eternal life RIGHT NOW.
- **Spiritual Growth means More God in Us** - I think that we forget that all good and perfect gifts come from God (James 1:17). There is nothing good outside him. We want more Him. It's not about missing out as much as connecting in.

- **Sin definition** - legitimate need being met by illegitimate means (not all sin, but a big majority of it.)

## Lesson

- **How to START Building the Kingdom (outside and inside)**
  - **God's Side** - Drawing all people to Himself
  - **Our Side** - Responding to His Call and setting our foundation upon Jesus Christ.
    - **Starting Foundation: Wise Building on the Rock (obedience is critical to kingdom building)** - Lk 6:46-49 - *"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? <sup>47</sup> Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: <sup>48</sup> he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. <sup>49</sup> But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."*
    - **If the Roots Good, the Fruits Good** - Lk 6:43-45 - *"For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, <sup>44</sup> for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. <sup>45</sup> The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."*
    - **Only once the foundation is solid, can you begin to build in a healthy manner.**
- **How to Grow and Expand**
  - **Growth & Maturity** - Christianity is built with a maturity expectation. That means that it's assumed that a Christian will grow

up into maturity. It means that if at any point we stop growing, there is something wrong with the process. Growth may not always be obvious, but it should be happening on some level.

- **Milk and Solid Food** – Both Paul and Peter use the illustration of milk and solid food in their teaching to describe the simple basics of the faith and the mature portions. The way you can tell what you need is how much Christianity is NATURALLY flowing in your life. If it's still difficult to live a basic life of love like Christ, there's an element of immaturity. If it seems to be flowing through you naturally then you have a foundation on which to build greater faith and do more kingdom building. It's not how much you know (information), but how smoothly and naturally you live it (application).
- **Baby Bottles** – it's entirely appropriate and cute for a toddler to have a bottle. It's a whole other thing when an adult packs their lunch for the office with one.
  - 1 Co 3:1-3 – *“But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, <sup>3</sup>for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?”*
- **Remember (God/People sides):** All spiritual growth has the God side and the people side to it. If we are talking about How God tends to grow things, let's look at a parable from Jesus in Mark 4.
- **God's Side**
  - **Grows Secretly** – Mk 4:26-29 – *“And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup> He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. <sup>28</sup> The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. <sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”*

- **Holy Slinky Encouragement** - Holy Spirits presence means growth. Began a good work and finished.
- **Our Side**
  - **Personal Growth**
    - **Be filled with the Holy Spirit**, not wine
      - **Eph 5:15-18** - *"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."*
    - **2 Ways to be Filled:** 1.) Instant and Overwhelming Experience; 2.) An Alignment Process.
      - **Instantaneous Fillings of the Holy Spirit** = overwhelmed by an outside force. Spiritually speaking, = temporary anointing by the Holy Spirit where He takes over: Pentecost
      - **An Alignment Process - Analogy of the Water Can under the spigot**
        - **Kingdom Poured Down**
        - **Obedience and surrender**
        - **Alignment isn't performance**, it's awareness and adjustment to reality.
        - **Only the Empty Portion of a Container can be filled** - the miracle of the flowing oil for the widow & 2 children (2 Kings 4:1-7)
        - **We are leaky Vessels** - it would be nice to learn it one time and it forever stayed there, but that's now how it works. We leak. We lose a lot of what we know due to distractions, time, lack of use, etc. So we need to continually get filled up.

- **Old Clothes and New Clothes** - Paul & Peter use the analogy of changing clothes when they refer to living into our identity in Christ.
- **Take Off Old Self; Put on New Self** - Eph 4:20-24 - "...<sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."
- **Best Example by Paul is in Colossians 3:1-17**
- **Purposeful growing through spiritual disciplines** - examples: solitude, prayer, reading the Bible, fasting, etc.
- **My joy learning that we can intentionally grow** - *The Life You've Always Wanted*, by John Ortberg.
- **Soaking in our New Identity (Shift)** - Part of growth and in my opinion a HUGE part of the Christian life, is discovering and believing our new identity we have in Jesus Christ. It's learning what He really changed in us, who we are spiritual now, what power and authority and blessing is available to us, what forgiveness and grace means, what victory and freedom looks like, how spiritual warfare works now, etc.
- **Interaction Shift** - It can't just be thinking. It starts there but it needs to move to action if it's legit. If you truly believe that the building is on fire, you get out.
- **Evidence of Kingdom Inclusion: A Different Nature; A Different Life** -
  - **Parable of the Two Sons - Lip Service vs. Action** - engage, don't just talk about it - Mt 21:28-31 - "*What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'* <sup>29</sup> *And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward*

*he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup> And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first."*

- **Jesus told Multiple Parables about how we ought to live differently as Children of God:**
  - **Parable of the Unmerciful Servant** - Mandatory forgiveness of your brother (Mt 18:23-35)
  - **Parable of the Good Samaritan** - Compassion for "enemies" and those 'not your problem' (Lk 10:30-37) (cf. Lk 6:27-36 - loving enemies)
  - **Humility Rules in This Kingdom (seats of honor)** - Don't take the best seats in the house, let God honor you and lift you up. Take the lower seats and serve and let God do the sorting. Lk 14:7-11 (cf. Lk 9:46-48)
- **Kingdom Growth**
  - **Stuff God Does**
    - **Parable of Mustard Seed** (starts out small and insignificant but grows to massive) - Mk 4:30-32 - *"And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, <sup>32</sup> yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."*
    - **Parable of the Leaven** - Need to be worked in till permeates everything (hidden and then effects - gets deep down)
  - **Stuff We Do**
    - **Let it Shine to Draw Others - Parable of the Light and Basket** - make sure your light is good and then let it shine

- **Light of the World** - Mt 5:14-16 - *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*
- **Final Thoughts on Practical Kingdom Building** - how will they know? How will they be set free? We are the body of Christ.
  - Practical sharing of the gospel and what it looks like to share our faith.
  - The restoration of a brother and sister.
  - What our witness means and how we live among those that don't know yet or don't surrender yet.

## **Conclusion**

- **We are expected to Grow/mature** - the Holy Spirit will do some stuff and we need to do some stuff.
- **We are in process** - and that's okay. It's not about performing for Love, it's about growing up into our identity and purpose.
- **If you want to start your relationship with God today** - our prayer team would love to talk more with you up here at the altar.