



WEEK 1

The Mustard Seed Revolution

Mustard Seed People

Pastor Jared Herd

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LEADER'S GUIDE

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “order and tidiness are essential to me” and 10 being “chaos and disruptions are okay by me,” what number describes you best? Why do you think this is true about you?

This opener will quietly dovetail with Pastor Jared’s photo of the perfect garden with its neat rows, careful borders, lack of any weeds or other disruptions. Pastor Jared spoke this weekend about getting our hands dirty, getting messy, allowing ourselves to be inconvenienced, and the idea that Jesus’s kingdom is about inviting in those whom others would want to keep out because they’re “not in our row.” We need to first recognize our tendencies toward order to see where we might lack a revolutionary spirit.

2. How is Jesus a different kind of king than what we typically think of? How is He like a regular earthly king? How is He different?

Pastor Jared used the What? Why? and How? Placards to show how the Jews of Jesus’s day were misguided about His kingship. They wanted a political savior to oust the Romans.

Some thoughts on how Jesus’s kingship is like that of an earthly, mortal king: 1. He has the right to rule. 2. He has subjects. 3. He has a kingdom. 4. He is owed our respect. Others?

How is He different? 1. His rule will never end. 2. All people everywhere are His subjects. 3. He doesn’t live in a palace. 4. He does not command military troops. Others?

3. Take a look at Luke 13:18-19. 18 Then Jesus asked, “What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? 19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches.”

What did Pastor Jared say are the three inaccurate ways we tend to think of this kingdom that Jesus mentions here?

1. We **reduce** it: Jesus is not just talking about the church. The kingdom of Jesus is bigger than just the body of Christ that makes up the earthly church.
2. We **postpone** it: Jesus is not talking about our future in heaven, after we die.
3. We **politicize** it: Jesus is not talking about a mere legislative and governmental regime.

What kind of kingdom is Jesus really talking about?

It is a kingdom that transcends time and place. It is here and now as well as in our future home in heaven.

Theologian Sinclair Ferguson wrote: “In its simplest terms, Jesus teachings mean this: His disciples have already – here and now – entered into His kingdom. Yes, it is still to be consummated. Yes, it is still to be revealed in its final glory. Yes, we still wait for the day when loud voices will say, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15). Nevertheless, all the blessings that are expected in that Kingdom *in the future*, are *already* being experienced by Christ’s people *now!*” (“Kingdom Life in a Fallen World, p.67)

4. Why did Jesus use a mustard seed as a comparison rather than a cedar? (See Ezekiel 17:22-23)

Ezekiel 17:22-23 (NIV)

22 “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will take a shoot from the very top of a cedar and plant it; I will break off a tender sprig from its topmost shoots and plant it on a high and lofty mountain. 23 On the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it; it will produce branches and bear fruit and become a splendid cedar. Birds of every kind will nest in it; they will find shelter in the shade of its branches.

He was helping his disciples (and us) understand that He was ushering a new kingdom of grace. He was instituting something new and different. Not only was it new and different but it would seem out of place, revolutionary, unheard of. It would defy norms and “mess up the rows,” so to speak. Look around SoCal, and you can see how wild mustard can quickly take over a hillside. It is hearty and invasive and prolific when allowed to flourish. And each mustard plant begins with a tiny seed.

If you have time, discuss what Jesus would say if he were to liken his kingdom to something from our time? What object from our day and age would compare to a mustard seed?

5. Pastor Jared said the kingdom of Jesus is populated by “broken people who go and do beautiful things.” What did he mean?

One of the more amazing things about Christ’s body of believers (us) is that we’re as flawed as we are loved. Jesus saves us while we’re broken, and then uses us, flawed though we still are, to accomplish His purposes. He could use angels or some other means to accomplish His divine purposes, but He uses us. Not as puppets, but as His hands and feet. Pastor Jared said we need only be willing and available to do and be what He asks.

6. How do these verses reinforce this concept that the kingdom of Jesus is here, now: Matthew 5:3, 10; Ephesians 1:3, and Isaiah 61:1-3?

Matthew 5:3, 10 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs **is** the kingdom of heaven.” “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs **is** the kingdom of heaven.”

Note the present tense of these verses.

Ephesians 1:3 “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who has blessed** us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”

The heavenly blessings have already come even though we are still on earth.

Isaiah 61:1-3 “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.”

These verses are what Jesus read aloud in a synagogue and then told the congregation had been fulfilled in their hearing. Present tense verses.

7. “The expansion of God’s kingdom is the destruction of mine.” – Pastor Jared. Why is this true?

We talked about this concept that there can be only one ruler on the throne when we did the sermon series *Game of Thrones* a few months back. Either God is your commander or you are. Either God is the king of your heart or you are. No country has two kings. To be ready to do and be all that God has called and equipped you to do and be, you need to drop your own agenda and take up His.

8. The takeaway of this week’s first message in this series is that there is a “Mustard Seed Revolution” taking place within the church of Jesus Christ. What is this revolution? Why is it revolutionary?

Jesus is calling us to live out His gospel, to be Christ-ians, if you will. Living out the gospel often looks different than we first might think. A mustard seed if allowed to thrive will soon spread and multiply. Our faith in Christ likewise can be as viral when we live out the gospel like He has asked us to.

Here’s a quote by author Vince Antonucci to round out this question: “...[A] weed comes in unannounced, popping up very subtly, and it starts to grow. Then another weed pops up. And if these two weeds meet up, they’ll get enmeshed, and then they’ll intertwine with another weed. Soon they’re pulling in flowers and plants, and eventually the entire garden is taken over by the weeds. And Jesus teaches us that this is the way of his kingdom. The way his revolution is intended to function, the way it grows best, is not through public meetings, billboards, and TV. No, it’s a love revolution that spreads person to person, one individual to another.” – “Guerrilla Lovers: Changing the World with Revolutionary Compassion”

How do you feel about it?

Talk about what it feels like to consider yourself a revolutionary. Is it optional? Does Christ call some to His revolution and not others? Discuss the concept that we’re all called to it but that we each play a distinct role.

MEMORIZE Matthew 6:9-10 – “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

MEDITATE: This week consider what it is about our fallen world that stirs your deepest passions and therefore should motivate you toward an action or response. How has Jesus wired you to care about the world He loves and died for and longs to reconcile to Himself? What are you doing about this passion of yours? What is one thing you will do this week to begin doing more?