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In the Kitchen with Grace

Out of the garden and into the kitchen, Christ continued to practically illustrate truths of the Kingdom of God in a relatable and captivating way. The afore-mentioned illustration of the mustard seed (vv. 18-19) demonstrated the protection and provision of the grace found in salvation. Now Christ turns the table and brings us into the kitchen where a woman is kneading dough.

Considered the most basic staple item in the kitchen, a little bit of leavened dough was always set aside for the next batch. As it was in its keeping it fermented making it useful. Christ says:

²⁰And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? ²¹It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Luke 13:20-21 NKJV

Unlike other kingdoms that are brought about by external force, Christ's reign works internally. It's not found in the advancement of buildings, armies, new roads, newly conquered territories all won by the edge of the sword. No! The Kingdom of God advances on the wings of grace. If it seems to you to have started with such humble beginnings at the cross and resurrection of Christ, wait and see how it will grow out of proportion with its origination!

The people were struggling to understand. He had shared with them before that He was to be a king and there was this kingdom. They were squinting their eyes and questioning—"where is your crown? I don't see a kingdom!"

The ingredients of this recipe are:

- Leaven: the influence of the kingdom of God.
- Meal: the world—all of society—all people.

In the Jewish home eating bread together, joining for dinner, was a culmination of a hard day's work for those who worked outside the house in the fields and for those who worked inside the house. But rarely was the dinner table not crowded with family and even extended family. Three measures of meal (flour) is estimated to be 50 lbs. of flour! Now that's a whole lot of flour! The woman baking this batch of bread is expecting a great crowd and is excitedly preparing for everyone to be served! That amount of bread would probably feed around 100 people! It seems like it would be more than enough to feed the family, extended family and even some who may stop in or pass by! Such is the sufficiency and expansiveness of the kingdom of God.

As a wedding present to her daughter a Jewish mother would gift her with a beginning portion of fermented sour dough. This was received with great gladness, for upon the bride's arrival at her new home she could immediately begin to provide sustenance for her hard-working husband. But this gift was more than a provision for the temporary needs of that home. It signified continuity. What had been known, experienced and familiar to this bride in her child-hood home could now continue into a legacy. **The Kingdom of God is like that fermenting dough that bubbles unseen yet it is transforming lives one soul at a time, unseen but certain!**

The Kingdom of God is a revolution of grace—not of power, politics, laws, rulers... It is the goodness of God as demonstrated in His provision for us in our sinfulness a Savior. In His grace God does not leave a soul unchanged nor does He leave the world without a witness to His good and saving grace through the forgiveness offered at the Cross. It is pervasive enough to reach the four corners of the globe and powerful enough to forever change that one who humbly comes to God in faith and repentance.

(Life Application Questions on reverse side)

LIFE APPLICATION:

1. Of the parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the leaven, which one was meant to illustrate something that is invisibly working?
2. What about this unperceivable growth is like the kingdom of God?
3. What is illustrated by the surprising amount of bread being prepared?
4. How does the kingdom of God show continuity since its first founding?
5. What hope is there for all people based upon this illustration?
6. Have you believed upon and trusted in the pervasive power of Christ's saving grace in your life? Have you experienced the inward effects of God's grace giving you new life in Christ?

