

SCC Small Group Discussion
Plot Twist: The Mustard Seed - Mark 4:30-32

Derived from a sermon on September 14, 2025 by Dr. Jeff Chandler

Again, he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade." Mark 4:30-32 NIV

Getting Started:

Can you give an example of something in your life which started small and then became a major influence on yourself or others?

Searching the Scriptures:

1. How would you define "the kingdom of God"? Why do you think parables are necessary to understand it?

2. What does Jesus' parable of the mustard seed tell us about the nature of God's kingdom? What do you notice about the contrast between the seed's size and the plant's final form?

3. What are some ways you have seen God's kingdom grow from small beginnings, such as a relationship with someone or a seemingly insignificant event?

4. Why do think we are tempted to place limitations on God's kingdom, his kingship, or his activity in the world?

In Zechariah 4:6-7,10, God encouraged Zerubbabel and the returning exiles, who were rebuilding the Second Temple after the Babylonian captivity. An angel said *"It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. Nothing, not even a mighty mountain, will stand in Zerubbabel's way; it will become a level plain before him! ... "Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin."* NLT

In the Gospel of Matthew 17:20, Jesus alluded to this passage and used the example of the mustard seed as well! *"Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."* NIV

5. In Zerubbabel's case "the mountain" was the opposition to rebuilding. What role does trust play in our willingness to be involved in kingdom work? What is Jesus saying will happen?

6. What is a mountain in your life that you are facing?

7. Do you ever get discouraged when you see little or no evidence of God's activity? How do you remind yourself that God is always working (see John 5:17)?

Application of the Scriptures:

What "mustard seed" opportunities might God be inviting you to plant right now, even if they seem insignificant or small beginnings?

Who might find "shelter" or blessing in the branches of what God is growing through you?

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