



Introduction

To those who lived during Jesus' day his ministry could easily be written off as something small and seemingly insignificant, like a seed. Yet, it's in the very picture of a seed that Jesus likens his kingdom. There is nothing particularly beautiful or attractive about a seed. But when a seed is planted in the ground, something miraculous happens and new life begins. In the same way, Jesus (like a seed), will be planted in a grave and three days later, sprout up giving life to a garden which will cover the whole earth. Jesus' life, death and resurrection will change everything.

Observation/Interpretation

- In verses 26-29 what significance does a farmer who sows seed and does not know how it grows have on the coming kingdom?
- Jesus no doubt echoed passages like Ezekiel 17:23-24 and Daniel 4:12, 21 when he told this story. Read these passages out loud and discuss their connection to this parable.

Application

- Often we use language that sounds like Christians are called to “build God's Kingdom”, yet in reality, God is building his kingdom while we're called to participate. Why is this subtle distinction important? How does this distinction re-center the emphasis upon God's work instead of our work?
- Knowing that God's kingdom moves forward with absolute certainty, how does this give you hope in the midst of the difficulties and hardships?

Prayer

- Pray that God would give you a peace and confidence in the power of his word (the seed) to accomplish what it will, even though you do not always see immediate results.

Community Group Discussion

- Read the passage together out loud.
- Involve your group by asking/answering the study questions, taking the time to share.
- Ask for prayer requests and be sure to pray together.

Family Discussion

- Have your child/children read the passage aloud, if old enough otherwise you read it aloud.
- Involve them by asking questions.
- Ask for prayer requests and invite them to pray together as a family.

A great way to use of these notes is to start/join a Community Group

These notes can be used for personal bible study, yet, another way would be to invite some people together. We call these intentional gatherings, 'Community Groups'.

What is a Community Group?

Community Groups are small gatherings of believers (non-believers welcomed too!) that meet regularly for accountability, friendship, study of the Bible and prayer. Community Groups are an essential part of the mission of Calvary SLO Church as they are a place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life God intends. Each community group is unique and molded by the people who attend it. Most community groups gather weekly and involve food, dialog, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and loving service to one-another. They're meant to be an organic and authentic expression of the church, actively living like the body of Jesus.

Why should I join/start a Community Group?

God is a Trinitarian God who is revealed as one in three persons: Father, Son and Spirit. We've been made to image God, which means we're designed for community & friendship. We often suffer when we're not in community, due to the brokenness of life, complexity of this world and the temptation to isolate ourselves. We encourage you to gather with a small group of friends, family or roommates on a weekly basis and use these discussion notes to press deeper into God.

How do I join the Calvary SLO Community Group eco-system?

We're enthusiastic about all forms of biblical community, however there are definite benefits to joining with the Calvary SLO Community Group (CG) eco-system. In short, the benefits are:

- **Training:** We have trainings intent on equipping leaders.
- **Support:** Each CG leader is assigned a coach to provide assistance and ongoing support.
- **Visibility:** CG's are promoted via the bulletin, website & given access to The City (our online social network).

To join all you have to do is sign up for the next upcoming training! Info: pastor James: james@calvaryslo.com.