

To Speak in Parables
 Proclamation of the Gospel in the Parables of Jesus

Caring Ministries Day at Hallowood
 Saint Luke Lutheran Church

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www.CrossMarks.com

To Speak in Parables
 Proclamation of the Gospel in the Parables of Jesus

Parables function as metaphors

- *Not simply, "An earthly story..."*
- *Not simply allegory*
- *Not simply a way to make a moral point*
- *Like an artistic work, a rich/thick way to invite new and multiple interpretations*

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Parables function as metaphors
 challenging or inviting the audience
 into a new or deeper experience

- *Experience affected by context*
- *Expect to be surprised*
- *Don't 'domesticate' the parable > how might it be 'subversive'*

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Parables function as metaphors
 challenging or inviting the audience
 into a new or deeper experience
 of God's dominion,

- *Parables remain important and true for us because they help us experience God's dominion*
- *We can expect a consistency in the parables > They are a proclamation of the Gospel that reflects what God has been doing since creation and in Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection*

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Parables function as metaphors
 challenging or inviting the audience
 into a new or deeper experience
 of God's dominion,
 a dominion identified with the
LAST LOST LEAST LITTLE
 and **LIFELESS**

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This Is for the Birds
The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Mark 4.30-32

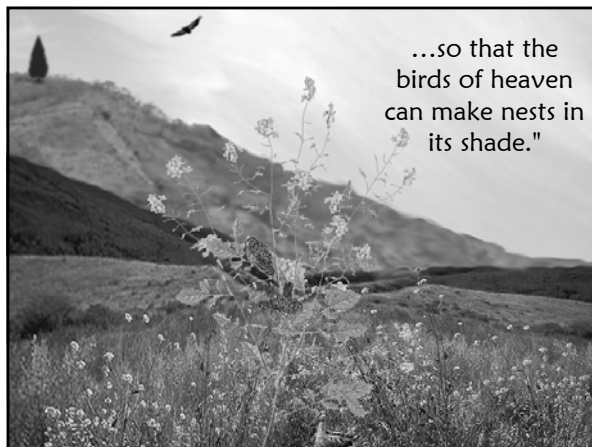
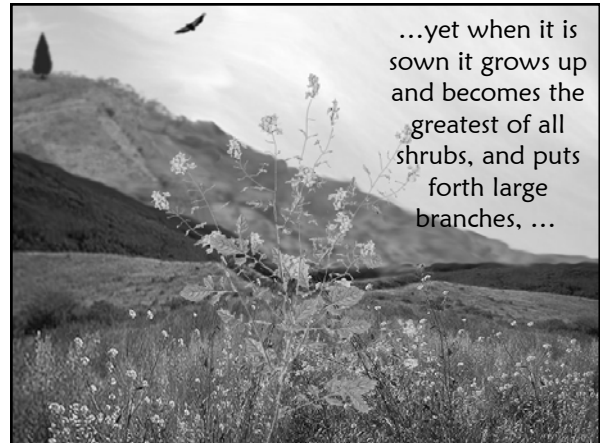
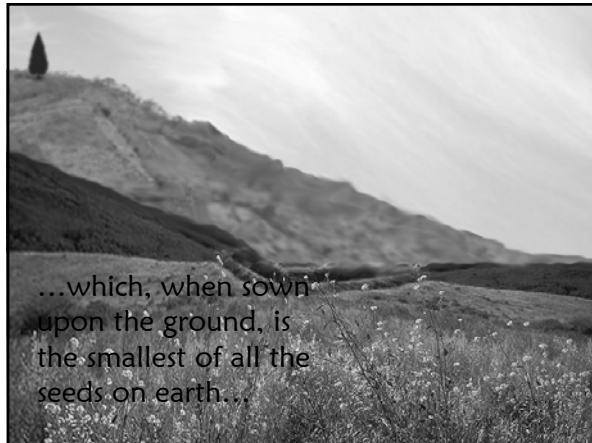
The parable as a point or moral

This parable provides moral instruction:



Jesus said,
"With what can we
compare the
Dominion of God,
or what parable will
we use for it?"

It is like a
mustard seed, ...



Matthew 13:31-32

The Dominion of
heaven is like a
mustard seed that
someone took and
sowed in his field;
it is the smallest of
all the seeds, but
when it has grown
it is the greatest of
shrubs and
becomes a tree,
so that the birds of
heaven come and
make nests in its
branches.

Mark 4:30-32

...the Dominion of
God, ... is like a
mustard seed, which,
when sown upon the
ground, is the
smallest of all the
seeds on earth; yet
when it is sown it
grows up and
becomes the greatest
of all shrubs, and
puts forth large
branches, so that the
birds of heaven can
make nests in its
shade.

Luke 13:18-19


... the Dominion
of God ... is like a
mustard seed
that someone
took and sowed
in his garden; it
grew and
became a tree,
and the birds of
heaven made
nests in its
branches.

<p>Matthew 13:31-32</p> <p>The Dominion of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and make nests in its branches.</p>	<p>Mark 4:30-32</p> <p>...the Dominion of God, ... is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of heaven can make nests in its shade.</p>	<p>Luke 13:18-19</p> <p>... the Dominion of God ... is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of heaven made nests in its branches.</p>
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Where would a person plant mustard?

JEWISH GARDENING PRACTICES
 No kind of seed may be sown in a garden-bed, but any kind of vegetable may be sown in it. Mustard and small beans are deemed a kind of seed.
Mishnah, Kilaim 3.2

GREEK GARDENING PRACTICES
 There are three seed-times for all things grown in gardens,.. [In the winter period] is sown beet, lettuce, rocket, monk's rhubarb, mustard, coriander, dill, cress...
 Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants VII*




<p>Matthew 13:31-32</p> <p>The Dominion of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and make nests in its branches.</p>	<p>Mark 4:30-32</p> <p>...the Dominion of God, ... is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of heaven can make nests in its shade.</p>	<p>Luke 13:18-19</p> <p>... the Dominion of God ... is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of heaven made nests in its branches.</p>
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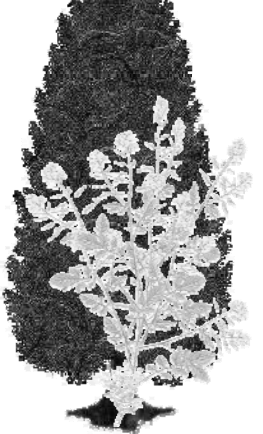
A mustard "tree"?

Birds make nests in its branches?



The mighty cedar tree grows to about 100 feet tall.

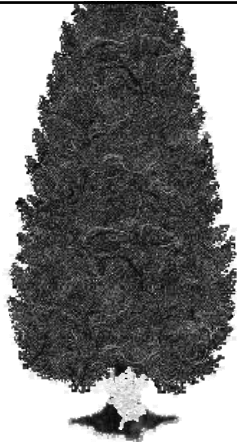
A mustard plant grows to at most 8 feet tall.



BIBLICAL BACKGROUND:

Ezekiel 17:22-23

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; ... On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it, in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind.



WHY A MUSTARD PLANT?

Smallest seed
An ignoble plant
Planted in wrong place
and yet...
it grows large and
provides a place of shelter



What are the dominions of the world like?



What is the Dominion of God like?

The Blooming Prairie (MN) Blossoms!

Richland High School (WA) Bombers!

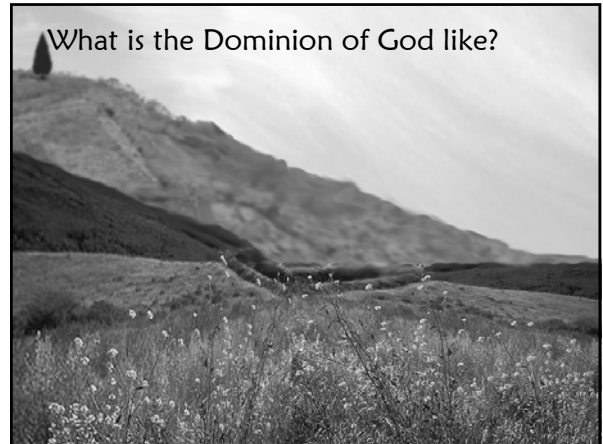
2006 - 2007

Richland High School
RICHLAND, WA

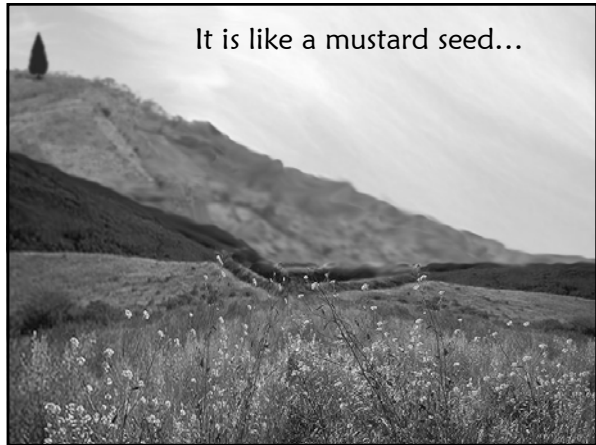
Concordia College (MN) Cobbers!



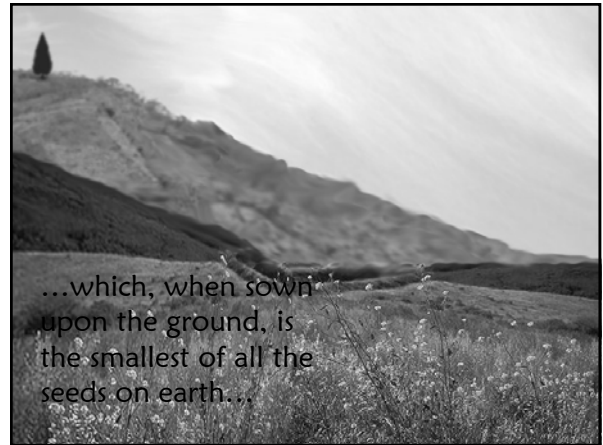
It is like a dandelion planted in a backyard...



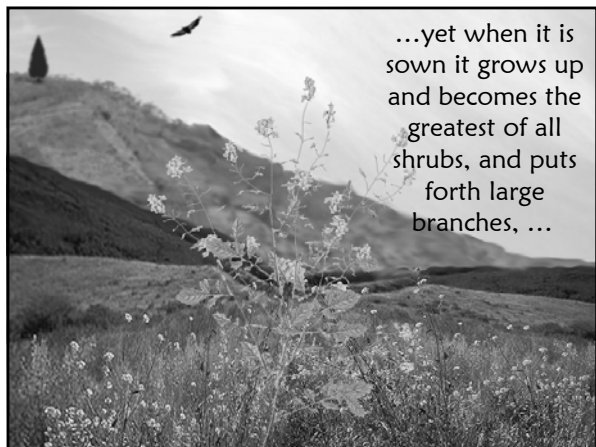
What is the Dominion of God like?



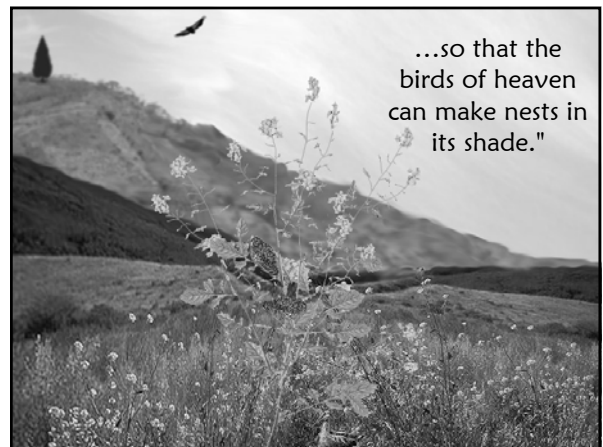
It is like a mustard seed...



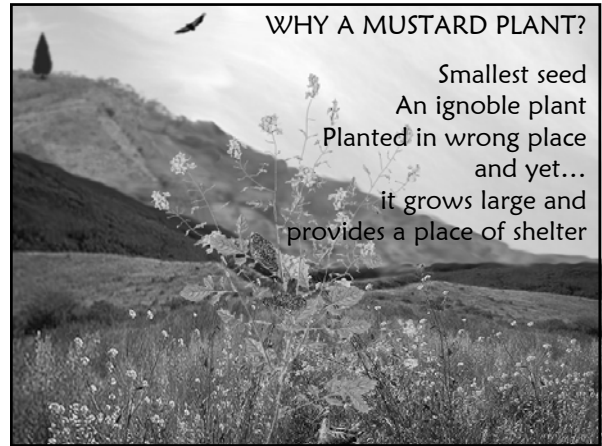
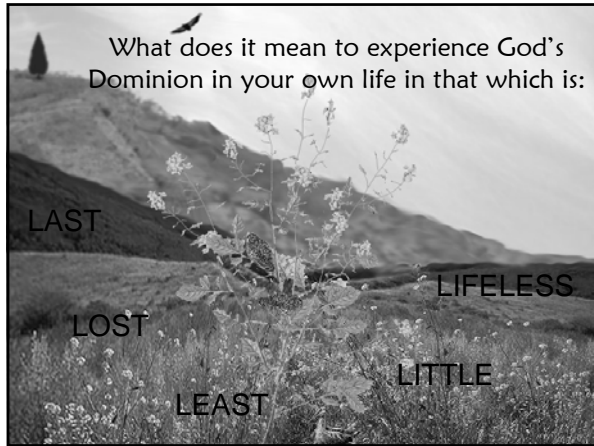
...which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth...



...yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, ...



...so that the birds of heaven can make nests in its shade."



What does this mean...
for Caring Ministries?

- God's dominion is experienced not as a power imposed but a presence exposed
- Caring Ministries are not simply about doing good deeds but creating an infrastructure of support
- ???

What tree is more ignoble than a
"mustard tree"?

What tree is more ignoble than a
"mustard tree"?

What is the Dominion
of God like?