**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | The Mystery of the Mustard Seed and the Devil’s Dirty Birds |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Matthew 13:31-32 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2044 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
	1. In Matthew 13, there are seven parables.
		1. These are the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.
		2. These parables span history from the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ until the final judgment.
		3. They help us to understand what the course of this age will be like.
			1. They help us know what to expect so that we will not be taken by surprise.
			2. They help us know what to expect so that we will not be disappointed or have doubt come to us.
				1. Because things may not be as we think they ought to be.
	2. A parable is an earthly story that has a heavenly meaning.
		1. The Parable of the Sower teaches us that not everyone who hears the Gospel will be saved.
			1. The sower may be fine.
			2. The seed may be fine.
			3. But it also depends upon the soil.
				1. Some seed will not fall on good ground, but some will.
		2. The Parable of the Tares shows us that weeds and wheat are sown together.
			1. This tells us that we can expect hypocrites in Christendom.
				1. In the church and out of the church, there will be hypocrites.
				2. Don’t let a hypocrite keep you from giving your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.
	3. Today’s message will look at the story of the mustard seed.
		1. Matthew 13:31-32
		2. We will learn from this why there are false cults in the world.
			1. Not only do we have those who reject and imitate the Gospel, but we also have those who actually pervert the Gospel.
	4. False cults did not take the Lord by surprise, and they should not take us by surprise.
		1. This world is full of false cults and apostate Christians.
			1. There are many who trudge to church Sunday after Sunday whose lives are not changed.
			2. They are twice-fold the child of Hell because they are in false religion.
		2. This false religion may be dead and decadent, or it may be set on wildfire and zeal from Hell.
			1. But it is not Bible-based, it is not Christ-honoring, and it is not Spirit-filled.
	5. The devil has many ways to sabotage God’s work.
		1. In the Parable of the Sower, the devil catches away the seed that was sown.
		2. In the Parable of the Tares, he imitates the good seed.
		3. In the Parable of the Mustard Seed, he perverts and corrupts it.
	6. In today’s message, we will look at the Parable of the Mustard Seed.
		1. We will look at the sower, the seed, the shrub, and the shade tree.
2. the sacred sower (matthew 13:31, 37)
	1. Matthew 13:31
	2. Who is the man who does the sowing in these parables?
		1. Matthew 13:37
			1. He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.
	3. The Lord Jesus was starting something.
		1. He was planting a field.
	4. The sower is the Son of Man, Jesus, because there will be a church.
		1. Matthew 16:18
		2. Philippians 1:6
		3. There will be a godly crop.
			1. God has promised.
			2. He cannot fail; He must prevail.
3. the small seed (matthew 13:31-32)
	1. This seed is very small.
		1. It is like a fleck of pepper.
	2. The smallness of the seed:
		1. We are a little flock.
			1. We are the Master’s minority.
			2. We are the faithful few.
		2. The Gospel is not something large and grand with a lot of fanfare.
			1. It is quite small in its simplicity.
				1. It is not so high and lofty that we cannot get up to it.
			2. It is so small that few get down to it.
		3. A great theologian once said that the greatest theological truth that he knew was, “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”
	3. The strength of the seed:
		1. Matthew 17:20
		2. A mustard seed is fiery and pungent.
		3. There is a story about Darius the Great as he invaded Europe.
			1. He sent Alexander the Great a bag of thousands of sesame seeds.
				1. They were going to cover the land like those sesame seeds.

There would be so many of them that Alexander the Great would never defeat them.

* + - 1. Alexander the Great sent Darius back a bag of mustard seeds.
				1. Darius would meet fire, power, and strength like he had never known before.
		1. Not only does the mustard seed speak of smallness and insignificance, but it also speaks of strength.
	1. The secret of the seed:
		1. The kingdom of Heaven is like a seed.
			1. A seed has life.
		2. The Lord frequently mentions seed.
			1. The Word of God is like a seed.
				1. Luke 8:11
			2. The good seed are the believers who are sown in the world.
				1. Matthew 13:38
		3. A seed has the germ of life in it.
			1. It can reproduce.
			2. Anyone can count the seeds in an apple, but only God can count the apples in a seed.
				1. A seed can reproduce and reproduce.
1. the significant shrub (matthew 13:32)
	1. The seed begins to grow, and it becomes a shrub.
	2. An herb is a bush that does not have a woody stem.
		1. It has a pulpy stem, enough to support leaves, flowers, and seeds.
		2. It is not a great lofty thing like a tree, but it is a significant shrub.
	3. This represents what the Gospel is supposed to be.
		1. It may not seem like much compared to a great cedar of Lebanon or a mighty oak.
		2. But it is a shrub that can reproduce and bear whatever fruit, flowers, or seed that it is to bear.
	4. It is not known for its prominence or its loftiness.
		1. It speaks of lowliness.
2. a strange shade tree (matthew 13:32)
	1. Shrubs don’t become trees in the natural world.
		1. Our Lord was talking about something that is monstrous.
			1. Something that is unnatural.
			2. Something that should not have developed.
				1. Herbs don’t become trees.
	2. Genesis 1:11-12
		1. There is an herb that yields after its kind, and there is a tree that yields fruit after its kind.
			1. The herb does not produce a tree.
				1. Someone would never get a tree from an herb in the natural world.
				2. Stems of herbs never develop woody tissue.
	3. The Lord was talking about something that was abnormal.
		1. Don’t read something normal into this.
		2. This is talking about strange developments, mysteries in the kingdom.
			1. It is not normal to have tares among wheat.
				1. A farmer does not expect that.
			2. Someone would not expect an herb to become a tree.
		3. People who don’t think straightly about these seven mysteries get confused.
			1. They say that it is wonderful that the Gospel starts from a little seed.
				1. It becomes a shrub.
				2. Then, the shrub becomes a great, big tree.

And all the songbirds come and twitter in the branches of the Gospel tree.

That is not what this parable is talking about.

These are not sweet little birds that are in the limbs of this tree.

* 1. Jesus did not explain this parable.
		1. He explained the Parable of the Sower.
		2. He explained the Parable of the Tares.
			1. But He didn’t explain this parable.
		3. He expected the people to have enough understanding of the Old Testament to understand what this parable is about.
	2. Daniel 4:20-22
		1. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar what his kingdom was like.
			1. Nebuchadnezzar was the king in Babylon.
			2. Babylon was the root of all false religion.
				1. It was begun by Nimrod whose name means “rebel”.
				2. It began with the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 11:1-10

* + - * 1. Babylon was the seedbed of all apostate religion from that time to now.
		1. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, was a type of antichrist.
			1. He typified this monstrous tree and the final form of apostate Christianity in the last days.
	1. The rise of false cults and liberal churches that deny the Bible are typified by this tree.
		1. They have not taken the Lord by surprise.
			1. It is abnormal, but it is not unexpected.
	2. How do we know these are not just sweet little birds?
		1. Matthew 13:32
			1. These birds are the ones that come and steal away the seed.
				1. Matthew 13:3-4
		2. Daniel said that the fowls were lurking in the Babylonian tree.
			1. Daniel 4:21
		3. Matthew 13:19
			1. The birds represent the devil, the wicked one.
				1. They don’t represent sweet, little songbirds.
				2. These are the devil’s dirty birds.

They are lurking in the branches of apostate Christianity.

* + 1. Revelation 18:2
			1. Babylon stands for false religion.
				1. Babylon was like a tree.

The fowls lurked in the branches and in the shade of this tree.

* + 1. These are the devil’s dirty birds that are in the shade of apostate Christianity.
			1. Satan is not against religion.
				1. He uses religion to accomplish his purpose.
		2. In these parables, birds stand for that which steal away the seed.
			1. They stand for that which is apostate and that which is wrong.
	1. This tree is a monster tree.
		1. Shrubs don’t become trees.
		2. These dirty birds lurk in the branches of apostate Christianity.
			1. There is the compromiser, the liberal, the cult, and the blasphemer.
		3. False religion has the power of Satan behind it.
			1. Revelation 18:2
	2. These dirty birds are not easily spotted.
		1. The devil is a master of deception and a master of camouflage.
			1. Matthew 7:15
	3. These dirty birds may do the following:
		1. They may use the Bible.
			1. 2 Peter 3:16
			2. Just because a person says that he believes the Bible does not mean that he is not an apostate.
		2. They may perform miracles.
			1. Matthew 24:24
		3. They may appear to do good works.
			1. Matthew 7:22-23
		4. They may have Sunday schools and church services.
		5. They may have revival services, Bible conferences, magazines, books, miracle-working power, a mission society, and youth activities.
			1. Counterfeits often look like the genuine thing.
	4. How will you know whether they are genuine or whether they are one of the devil’s dirty birds?
		1. There is the source test.
			1. Do they believe that the Bible, God’s Holy Word, is the source of their information, or do they get it from someplace else?
			2. Revelation 22:18-19
			3. If they don’t come from a Bible-based ministry, then we know that they are a false cult.
		2. There is the Savior test.
			1. What do they believe about Jesus Christ?
				1. Do they believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God and God the Son?
				2. Do they believe that Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with Almighty God?
			2. Do they worship Jesus?
				1. In the Bible, it is obvious that He is worshipped.
				2. If they don’t worship Him, then they are not practicing Biblical faith.
			3. 2 John 1:9-10
				1. This passage does not mean that you cannot bring him into your house to witness to him.
				2. To “receive” means to welcome him as a brother in Christ.

We are not to receive him in this way.

* + 1. There is the subject test.
			1. Is their primary task preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
			2. Do they understand what the true Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is?
			3. Galatians 1:8-9
		2. There is the salvation test.
			1. Do they believe in salvation by grace through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His atoning work on Calvary as the only basis for the forgiveness of sins?
				1. It is not the blood of Jesus plus anything.
				2. It is not faith plus works.
				3. It is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; the finished, atoning work of Calvary.
			2. Salvation is trusting the Lord Jesus as your Lord and Savior; receiving the gift of God, not any achievement.
			3. Are they depending on any achievement of their own for salvation, or are they trusting exclusively in the grace of God?
		3. There is the sanctification test.
			1. Do they live a righteous and holy life?
			2. Do they teach purity?
			3. Do they teach “holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”?
				1. Hebrews 12:14
			4. Do they preach, teach, and live in accordance with the standard of holiness?
		4. If a person can pass these tests, then we can say that we have a brother or sister in the Lord Jesus Christ.
1. CONCLUSION
	1. The sacred sower is the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus.
		1. The one who plants the good seed will reap the harvest.
			1. We can be sure that there will be a harvest.
			2. The Lord will build His church.
	2. The small seed is the truth of God’s Word.
		1. It may be small, but it is strong.
		2. It has a secret.
			1. It pulsates with life, and it will reproduce.
	3. The shrub represents not a great lofty tree, but the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ that can reproduce over and over again.
		1. It does not put its roots down deep because this world is not our home.
	4. The tree represents apostate Christianity.
		1. Daniel 4:20-22
		2. Revelation 18:2
		3. The very parable itself teaches that these dirty birds that have been stealing away the seed, come and find haven and rest in the branches of this tree.
	5. What does this mean to you personally?
		1. It is a word of warning.
			1. Don’t get carried away by some false cult and apostate Christianity.
			2. Many people who were once in Bible-believing churches are drawn aside because they do not have the ability to be a spiritual bird watcher.
				1. Matthew 7:15
		2. It is a word of comfort.
			1. You don’t have anything to fear from the cults.
			2. You don’t have anything to fear from apostate Christianity.
			3. Truth is stronger than error.
			4. 1 John 4:4
			5. What we must fear is our own missionary apathy, lethargy, and ignorance of spiritual truth.
				1. We must fear our failure to preach the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.
			6. We have a bag full of seed, and Satan is the one who should be afraid.
	6. It is obvious in these parables that you can hear the Word of God and not receive the good seed.
		1. You can be like weeds among wheat.
			1. You can be one of Satan’s tares rather than God’s shaft of golden wheat.
		2. There are those who seem to imitate Christianity but are in false cults and are not truly in the kingdom of God.
	7. Would you like to be saved?
		1. This is not asking if you are religious.
			1. The devil is religious.
		2. 2 Corinthians 13:5
		3. If you were to stand before God right now and He were to ask you why He should let you into Heaven, what would you say?
			1. Why don’t you get it settled right now.
				1. Don’t let the devil’s dirty birds steal away the seed.
	8. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
	9. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
		1. Romans 3:23
		2. Romans 10:9-10
		3. Romans 10:13
		4. Acts 16:31
		5. John 3:16