

**The way the Kingdom of heaven takes over in the world  
(Matt 13:31~33)**

I'm so delighted and honored to stand in front of you today with God's message.  
I came from the ends of the world, from your standpoint.

Around 40 years ago, I was adopted as a son of Tom who's right here and his wife Joan who is in the heaven.

Since then for such a long time, I have greatly benefited from them both economically and spiritually.

Especially Tom and Joan led me to Jesus, so I began to know Jesus and follow Him from that time.

Now, I am finally here to say this to you in echo hill community.  
I believe that everything is Lord's will and purpose.

So, I'd liked to thanks to God and Praise the Lord who led us like this.

Now, let's pray.

**"Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for calling us as Your people  
so that we worship you.  
Help us to understand You better through this worship  
and lead us to hope to the Heavenly Kingdom.  
I pray In Jesus name, Amen."**

Today, I'd like to share with you how the whole world is being taken over by the Kingdom of God by looking at the Scriptures.

Matthew Chapter 13 is well-known as it cherishes the largest collection of the **Kingdom of heaven Parables**.

In this chapter, we can find seven parables about The Kingdom of heaven.

**What we've just) read covers**

the third and the fourth parables about The Kingdom of heaven which are the Mustard Seed and the Leaven.

This two parables mean almost the same thing.

With these parables, I'd like to show you three features of the way the Kingdom of Heaven expands.

**First, The Kingdom of Heaven expands in a foolish way.**

**This is paradox. God's wisdom is showed foolish to people who belong to this world.**

If you are in Israel in March and April, especially in the low plains around Galilee, you will find mustard flowers everywhere in full bloom in bulky bundles.

Mustard plants are very common perennial wild plants scattered in the field or mountains.

If anyone wants mustard, all they have to do is go outside and gather as much as they want.

Therefore, no one would till their lands and sow mustard seeds to obtain mustard.

In Jesus times that's such an easy thing to get mustard.

So, it would be stupid sound for anyone to plant mustard seeds in their fields.

Maybe the people would mock when they hear parable about mustard.

Like this, Sometimes God does very foolish in the eye of people.

However, Jesus tells us that this is the Kingdom of God.  
God's work is not always reasonable in our understanding.

The Bible teaches us that the wisdom of God is not like that of man.

**Isaiah 55:8, 9 says**  
**"for my thoughts are not your thoughts,**  
**neither are your ways, declares the Lord.**  
**As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher**  
**than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.**

The grand prize of God's foolishness was the Cross.  
The cross definitely seems a foolish way to conquer the world.

**1 Cor. 1:23 says.**  
**we preach Christ crucified:**  
**a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,**

Israel people expected to political leader. Because they have dreamed like the Kingdom of David and Solomon. So they want and have the powerful Messiah.  
So They couldn't believe that Messiah died at the Cross.  
And Gentiles want to have wisdom from the wise. Cross was the death tool for the criminal.  
They also couldn't understand that Messiah died at the Cross without any words.

The Resurrection was also foolish.

**Acts 17:32 says**  
**when they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered.**

The ancient Greeks thought that the body was at odds with the soul or even evil.  
Consequently, in their version of salvation, the body and the soul would have been far removed from each other.

The idea of resurrection must've been far from being desirable to them.

The notions of the Cross and the Resurrection are not convincing or understandable in our sense.

Nonetheless(넌덜래스), God did save us in such a foolish way.

What seems to be foolish can be God's wisdom,  
and His wisdom is to be declared not to be understood by people.

The Kingdom of God expands in a foolish way to those belong to in this world.

## **Second, The Kingdom of God expands by His Grace**

No one sow mustard seeds in the field in Israel.

For the sake of the owner of the field, he would have been way better off  
to sow other seeds than mustard.

It means that common sense for a farmer to plant something valuable.

Therefore, on the part of the mustard seed,

it's an Amazing Grace to be chosen to be planted in the field.

The mustard seed means the person who is saved.

Like this, God (쵸우즈) chose us who are humble like mustard seed or even unqualified  
to be planted in His Kingdom.

Well, we know that there are still lots of people outside church

who are greater, smarter and more capable.  
We also know that God called us not because we are special,  
not because we are worthy.  
He saved us when we were still sinners abandoned in the world.  
That makes the Kingdom of God the Good News,  
and that's why our God is a so good God.

One of the reasons that Kingdom of God spread slowly is that  
we don't know fully acknowledge God's Grace.  
To know God's Grace is to realize how sinful we are.  
The reason that people would not to come to the Lord and could not devote is  
they don't know how they are terrible sinners.

The more we understand that we live by His Grace,  
the more we devote ourselves to pass it on.  
Only the few who truly appreciate God's Grace can devote for the Kingdom of God.

When the church community confesses that all things are by God's Grace,  
it will make a perfect organization where no one tries to speak for themselves.

And, Grace is a gift given to the undeserved.

As I said,

Forty years ago, I was adopted as a son by Tom and Joan.

They had absolutely nothing to gain when he gave me such a big present.

They have helped me abundantly so far, while I did nothing for them.

I have been given over and over again from them. Just being given to without paying back.

**Above all, the most gift is the right I can call them Father and Mother or Mom and Dad.**

(I have no father in Korea. My blood father died for traffic accident when I was 7 years old.

My mother became a widow and we are very poor, and after two years old,

I could have a father and another mother, and call dad again.

**It is a privilege to me to call dad someone.**

Anyway they just kept giving to the undeserved.

But, there's nothing I can do to pay back to them.

If anything, it would be far from what he did for me.

I think that's the example of what God's Grace is.

Well, that's not the end of the story.

For I received grace from father and Mother,

I have started to give to another people when I become adult.

At last I became a missionary staff of inter varsity christian fellowship which is campus evangelism association..

And later I became a pastor and can help people at campus, middle and high school and church. I've been able to live sharing grace and giving for many students and young men.

As given, I also give.

I want to say **"Grace** makes us move on and sacrifice for the world and God."

**Third, The Kingdom of God expands by making disciples.**

In Matthew chapter 13 verse 32(thirty two)

Jesus says that the mustard seed will grow to be a tree

so that the birds come and perch in its branches.  
As a matter of fact, the mustard plant is not a tree. It's more like a plant.  
By the way, considering the Israelites called anything with stems "trees",  
maybe yes, let's call it a tree.

In spite of that, the mustard tree cannot grow taller than 1.8 meters  
or at best around 2 meters,  
which means it's not large enough for birds to perch in it.

Generally speaking, birds fly into a tree over 3 meters at least.  
Besides, mustards plant are clustering plants.  
We cannot expect that a mustard seed will grow to be a tree large enough to invite birds.

For all that, God says He expects it to be so!

Just as they don't think of growing mustard plants in their fields,  
no one will try to put leaven in three measures of flour.  
Chances are... it's simply not likely that such a large amount of flour will get  
**fermented** just by a little yeast. It's almost impossible that time.  
Nevertheless, God expects it to be so!

These parables imply that the Kingdom of God may not seem reasonable.  
God does what we think unreasonable and what we think impossible.

What is God expecting to us?

What's mean that mustard to be a tree and all leaven?

I think , For each one of us to be a tree, or to be a little leaven

means we become **the likeness or image of Jesus.**

God has called you and me to let us take after His Son's image.

Romans 8:29

He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son.

The Greek word for "image" is "icon".

We call those little pictures on the desktop of our computers icons.

When we click the icons, we can get into the linked programs.

Like that when people click us, they can see Jesus as well. That is God's program for us.

To be the image of Jesus Christ indicates that we have Jesus' love, patience, wisdom, charity,  
obedience, righteousness, meekness, ————— everything becomes our character.

Believing in Jesus does not merely mean that we go to the far Heaven beyond this land  
when we die.

Believing in Jesus does not merely mean that we are one of church members.

But, Believing in Him signifies being His own disciples.

And, then being disciples means the soldier of Jesus. That is the mean of Christian's word.

And, Being his disciples implies being just like Jesus Christ.

Maybe, that sounds way too far from where we are now.

It seems impossible for us to be like Jesus.

In spite of our thinking so, God says He expects it to be so!

Today, Korean churches are sending out more missionaries than any other country

except for the United States.  
For a small nation with the christianity history of hundreds of years, this is a miracle.

On the other hand, the Korean Church is now undergoing a crisis.  
A credible survey shows that only 17 % of Koreans say Christians are reliable.  
The number of Christians in Korea is decreasing rapidly.  
But it was not so at first time. Korea Christians were faithful, gentile, charity and reliable.

When we testify the Good news nowadays, people are not responding  
with respect no more.

What counts more than the message is the messenger.  
If we fail to be Jesus' disciples, it is hard to reach people with the gospel.  
If the church community fails to love, people will turn away from the church.

That's because people will see what we do before they listen to what we say.

**John 13:34, 35**

**"even as I have loved you, that you also love one another, By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."**

God works to expand His Kingdom using His own disciples and the community of such disciples.

We are all called to be disciples of a community bearing God's special purpose.  
Though this may seem impossible, God still expects it to be so and he is still working.

Finally, I want to say briefly one sentence about the Kingdom of God.

**What is the Kingdom of God?  
It is just yourself and your church which our Lord God have dominion.  
It is impossible to men, but it is possible to God.**

Brother and sister of echo hill church in Lord Jesus Christ.

I challenge and invite you and me  
to have God's wisdom, His grace, and Jesus icon in the hope of Kingdom of God.

God bless us.

**Let us pray.**

Dear Heavenly Father,  
Thank you for understanding the secret of your nations.  
Thank you for grace for us.  
I pray make us understand your wisdom about your kingdom  
And respond to Your Grace.

Please make Eco-Hill Community packed full of your disciples living out Your image,  
so that the visitors of this community will find you and say "Oh, Jesus is right here!",  
I thanks to God and praise Lord.

I pray in Jesus name, Amen.