

**How God Shows Up**  
**Jan 24, 2010**  
Psalm 1 and Mark 4:26-34  
Dr. Jeff H. McCrory Jr.

**Synopsis:**

We all have expectations about how God *should* show up in our lives. But what if God's way is not our way?

The Bible teaches that the Kingdom of God shows up not in the *spectacular* but in the *ordinary*, in Jesus to whom we must listen lest we miss God's presence.

I.

**What It Might Look Like for God to Show Up**

Mark 4:30 With what can we compare the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God = God Showing Up

- Bible's way of saying that God shows up: OT and NT
- Sounds spectacular!
  - E.g., Disneyland fireworks, *Avatar* special effects
- READ Psalm 18:6-15 POW! BIFF!
- Kingdom in Jesus' day = Kick out Romans!

\*Isn't this what we want? God to show up with dazzle!

\*This happens sometimes, E.g. signs (John) in healing

What is God's plan for showing up here on earth?

What is God's plan for showing up in our lives?

II.

**How God Actually Showed Up**

Mark 4:11 To you has been given the secret of the Kingdom of God

Jesus' Announcement: Mark 1:14-15 = Kingdom of God here

- God is showing up now
- reach out and touch it = Jesus
- turn and trust him

What happens next? Sequence of Mark's Gospel

## ACTION BEFORE TEACHING

- calls apprentices = ch 1
- heals = ch 1-2
- runs into conflict = ch 2
  - \*Forces question = “Who can forgive but God?”
  - \*Supplies answer = “Son of Man has authority”
- more healing, conflict = ch 3

\*What if God’s plan to show up is like this?

- through a person = Jesus
- through calling apprentices
- through healing and conflict

## TEACHING AFTER ACTION: 4:1-34 = Parables

- about the action
- about Kingdom of God
- section on parables

How do parables help us see God showing up?

## III.

### **How God Shows Up Today**

Mark 4:31 It is like a mustard seed

#### Parables = Jesus’ favorite teaching tool

- over 60 in Gospels
- rabbinic and OT teaching tool
- about the Kingdom of God = God showing up

What is a parable?

- Greek *paraballo* = throw something beside
- a comparison, “It’s like this . . .”

-Do three things:

1. Refer = compare (4:30)
2. Respond = listen (4:3, 9, 23, 24)
3. Reflect = discover (4:13)

#### 4 Parables in Mark 4 = Key to Jesus’ teaching

- also key to finding God present in life now

Notice what happens in parables (LOOK AT MARK 4)

1. Ordinary comparison = something in our lives now

2. For Jesus = agriculture

Sower = speaking and response

Lamp = God's Kingdom comes to light

Growing Seed = happens without our notice

Mustard Seed = becomes the greatest thing

Psalm 1 = a tree soaking up the stream

Our response: "Listen!" (4x)

-pay attention to our ordinary lives now

-Jesus is speaking now

-what are you hearing?

-how can you respond now?

-what can you discover?

-how can you plant yourself by the stream?

\*You will miss God showing up if you don't pay attention

E.g. Dr. Bernie Show

STOP = Stop and pay attention right now

LOOK = Look at what is happening

LISTEN = Where is Jesus speaking?

\*This is how God shows up in our world