

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

July 12, 2026

SUMMER IN THE MINISTRY

Mustard Seed

Matthew 13:31-35

Pastor Matt Manning

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NOTES

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard for the first time, stuck with you, challenged or confused you?

What is the one important thing you will take away from this weekend's message or our community group discussion? Is there any challenge, difficulty or praise that you would like to share with the group for prayer?

Pastor Matt reminded us that in the parables Jesus was echoing the language of the prophets and declaring that the kingdom he is inaugurating will extend beyond Israel to embrace people from every nation. What begins as something almost imperceptibly small will become a kingdom with global reach, offering refuge, belonging, Shalom, and life as it should be for all who come under the reign of the King.

MY STORY

Describe something that started out as a small thing that ended up changing your life.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO HEAR?

He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened." All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. 35 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet:[a] (Matthew 13:31-35)

Pastor Matt said, "Right now in this age, that we are all a part of it, it works like leaven. It is largely invisible. It is spreading. It is catching on. It is transforming. In our modern language, we'd say something like it is viral. It is having its effect."

Why did Jesus deliberately use the imagery of relatively small things, like the mustard seed and leaven, to help us to understand how the Kingdom of God advances?



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How have you seen the Kingdom of God work itself from the inside out until there is significant transformation?

What does God want us to hear? Based on the passages above, what are the factual “takeaways” that are meaningful to you?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO DO?

Pastor Matt said, *“The Kingdom of God usually grows quietly, in a conversation that seemed small. In a decision that felt insignificant. In a moment of obedience no one else saw. In a prayer that didn’t feel powerful at the time. And over time, those moments don’t stay small. They spread. They reshape how we think. They reshape how we love. They reshape how we forgive. They reshape how we respond when life doesn’t go the way we planned.”*

Describe a relatively small, kind gesture on the part of someone toward you that made a significant impact on your awareness of God’s activity in your life.

Make a list of relatively small gestures that believers can make that have the potential of having a great impact on others, for the Kingdom.

What does God want us to do? Flowing out of our reading and interpretation, what action does this passage or the Spirit’s nudging us toward?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

Pastor Matt said, *“The question isn’t whether the Kingdom of Heaven is advancing. The question is whether we’re paying attention to where it’s already at work. Because if Jesus is telling the truth, then the most important transformations in your life are probably not going to feel like earthquakes. They’re going to feel like leaven. Small. Hidden. Quiet.”*

What are some small, hidden, quiet things you can do this week to advance God’s Kingdom impact in the hearts of others?

Pick one of the gestures described in the previous step, do that thing, and see what God creates out of that effort.

What does God want ME to do? What is the personal application and action step that the Holy Spirit is calling you toward?