

# **Understanding Breeds Understanding**

Mark 4:21-34

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Jesus said to his followers:

Would anyone light a lamp and then cover it up to block its light? Of course not. A lamp is allowed to shine so that everything that is currently being hidden or kept secret will be brought into full view. If you're willing to hear, you should listen and understand. And be sure to pay attention to what you hear so that you'll understand even more. Understanding breeds understanding. But if you neglect what you're hearing, you will not benefit from it.

What is the Kingdom of God like? The Kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed in a field. Whether he tends it or not the seed sprouts and grows; the farmer doesn't even understand how it happens. The soil produces a crop all on its own – first the stalks, then the heads, then the kernels. And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes with a sickle to harvest it.

What is the Kingdom of God like? What story should I tell to illuminate it for you? The Kingdom of God is like a tiny mustard seed. It's one of the smallest seeds you can plant in the ground. Yet it grows to become one of the largest plants in the garden. Birds of the air come to find shelter among its branches.

Jesus was always using parables to teach the people as much as they could understand. In fact, he never taught them anything without telling them a story. And whether or not the people understood, later, when Jesus was alone with his disciples, he would explain everything.