



DAILY REFLECTIONS: 8<sup>TH</sup> June 2020

## Understanding God's Kingdom

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It can be hard to get our heads around the idea of a “kingdom of God”. While we live under a constitutional monarchy, we have no practical, firsthand experience of living in a kingdom. My dictionary defines kingdom as (1) an organised community headed by a king (2) the territory subject to a king. As Christians, we *do* live in a kingdom: the Kingdom of God. What is this kingdom like? Matthew 13 records a series of stories Jesus told to help us understand this.

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”*

*“The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”* **Matthew 13:31-33**



With the arrival of Jesus on earth, God's kingdom came among us. From one man (Jesus) and his small group of followers it has grown (like the mustard plant) and spread (like yeast through dough). Its presence has brought comfort, security and joy to many; its influence has permeated and changed the cultures it has touched. We see many of its effects; many others escape our notice.

So what is happening in Australia, the country we love? If, as the Bible teaches, the kingdom of God is in conflict with the kingdom of this world, our side seems to be coming off second-best at the moment. This often leaves us feeling (a) *disappointed and frustrated* – we really expected to see more growth and progress in our times; and (b) *guilty* – have we done all God could reasonably have expected from us to foster his kingdom's growth? (Probably not!)

We do well to remind ourselves whose kingdom it is (God's, obviously); and who is sovereign and bears ultimate authority and responsibility for what takes place there (he does!). It is our privilege to work within his kingdom, and our faithfulness (or lack thereof) will have an impact. His kingdom is principally a spiritual one. His “territory” is the hearts and minds of his children. Opposition to God's kingdom comes from an enemy who has been defeated and will ultimately be destroyed. We've chosen the right side!

The mustard plant will continue to grow! The yeast remains active!

**Prayer:** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name! Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Establish your kingdom within *my* heart. Do your will in *my* life. Reveal those aspects of my will that remain unsundered. Help me, by your grace, to give them to you. Use me, as you will, in your kingdom. Amen

**Song:** This Kingdom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99vflkoNC3w&pbjreload=101>