

**The New Testament Church**  
**Kingdom Rising #6 – *Leavening your World***  
**September 17, 2023**

I With all that is going on... *we will be examining the kingdom parables of Jesus in Matthew 13*

- A. If politics are the consequences and not causes, *where should be our priorities?*
  - 1. Proverbs 4:18 – **What God has saved us to is greater than what He has saved us from!**
  - 2. Matthew 16:18 – **God is preparing His Ekklesia for victory over the gates of hell!**
  - 3. Hebrews 12:26-29 – **God is shaking and exposing evil as His Kingdom rises!**
- B. Let us remember that the Kingdom rising will mean...
  - 1. Heart attitudes need to be focused toward God and our minds renewed in Biblical principles
  - 2. As we learn to share the gospel using our testimony, we are disciplined in the new and old
- C. As an illustrated introduction to today's message on Matthew 13:33; let us remember...
  - 1. Today is Constitution Day – 236 years ago the draft was sent to the States for ratification
  - 2. As the church goes, so the nation – Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists (43 of the 55 delegates) created a civil government with greater balance than their churches!
  - 3. An example of believers (52 of 55 were orthodox) leavening their world (kingdom rising)!

II Matthew 13:33 – Parable of the Leaven (see also Mark 4:32 and Luke 13:20); Revelation 17:14

- A. A parable about leaven (or yeast) – a microscopic living organism (see Mark 4:32 and Luke 13:20)
  - 1. Leaven is made of living organisms that spread *from within*
    - a. Flower gets moist with water, it begins to change form (mixed with microbes in the air)
    - b. A lump of old dough is mixed with the new and it causes bread to rise (expand)
  - 2. So leaven has two aspects to its function like truth – *how the Kingdom of God expands!*
    - a. It **expands** – puffs up – rising to make room for air – Holy Spirit driven!
    - b. It **modifies** – altering the texture from within – transformative from the inside out!
- B. Leaven is used both negatively and positively in the Bible
  - 1. It is used symbolically for sin – 22 times in the OT, and 17 in the NT
    - a. In the OT – Ex. 12:15 – sin or evil – the Passover – feast of unleavened bread (Jesus)
    - b. In the NT – Gal. 5:9 – small sins to big ones; unrepentant sin affects the whole lump;
    - c. 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3; 5:2-8 – sexual sin must be confronted; false teaching of Pharisees (Mt. 16:6-12)
    - d. Also leaven of Herod or tyrannical politics (Mt. 4); and hypocrisy (Lk. 12:1)
  - 2. It is used positively as a symbol of the Kingdom's advance
    - a. In the OT where leaven is considered holy
      - 1. Lev. 7:13 – a voluntary thanksgiving offering built on our position of peace with God
      - 2. Lev. 23:17 – for the wave offering of the first fruits of Pentecost unto God
    - b. In the NT – Ro. 11:16 and 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 5:8 – there is old leaven and new leaven (unleavened bread) so that all our lives, including our faults, display the righteousness of the Kingdom!
  - 3. A woman hides leaven in three measures of meal
    - a. The woman is the Church or bride of Christ who has the Kingdom within her heart...
    - b. The meal must be *prepared* for the yeast – the Church is to help people understand pressure
    - c. We leaven our world – ourselves, families, church, outward through loving service
      - 1. Spiritually – prayer, a right attitude of love toward others and the culture
      - 2. Socially – through relationships, friendship, commitment – accountability
      - 3. Physically – opportunities to serve – many (food bank, AHTC, neighbors)
  - 4. The whole will be leavened by increasing **air (Spirit) and modifying our character (Word)**
    - a. Sin is like leaven since its environment is a catalyst; but Christ is the leaven of the Kingdom
    - b. The incremental mixture of the righteous will eventually leaven the whole lump!
    - c. The leavening process is messy, and at times it will appear as a mixture of good and evil
    - d. The Kingdom will ultimately win and leaven the whole world (Daniel 2:34-35)