56th & Vine Church of Christ

Sunday Morning Lesson

Are you a dedicated disciple of Christ?
Mark 4:30 – 5:20

October 18, 2026

Reading from the NIV

Parables and Miracles of Jesus near the Sea of Galilee

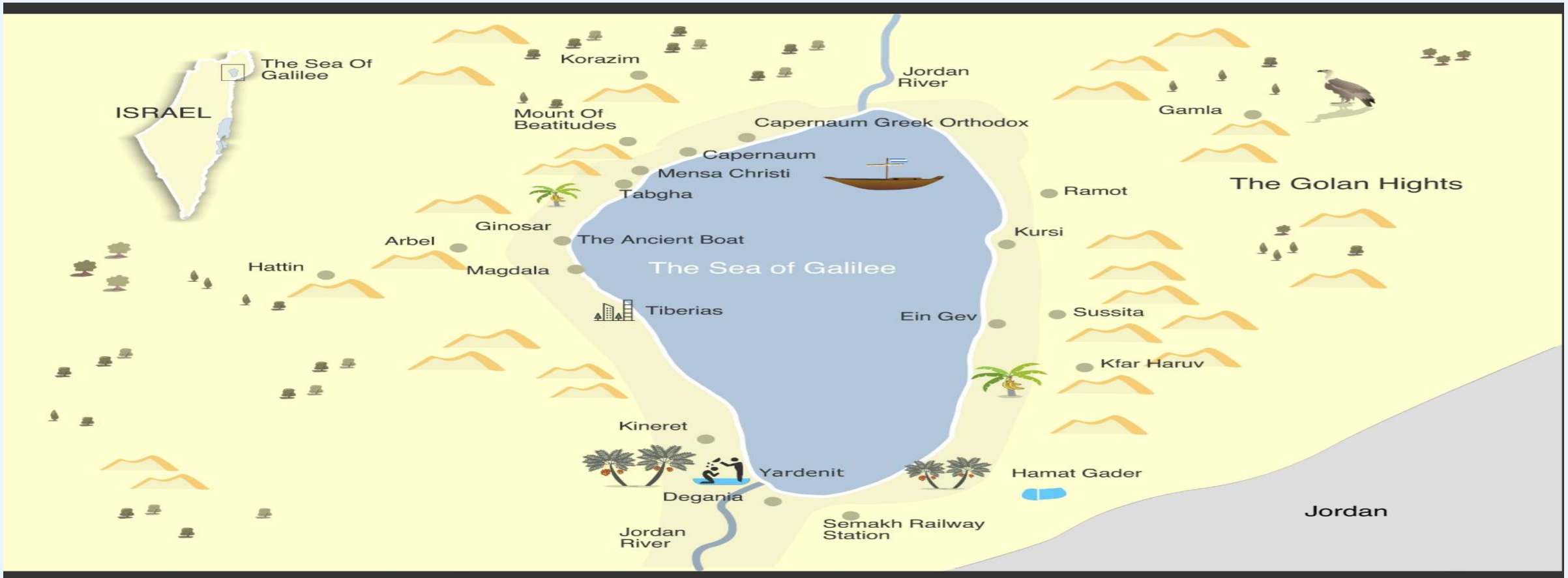
Opening Words

- Good morning, Church!
- Audience participation, repeat after me:
  - This is the day
  - That the Lord has made
  - Let us rejoice and be glad in it

Setting the Scene

Where?

The Sea of Galilee — where Jesus spent much of His ministry.



The Mustard Seed Parable · Mark 4:30–32

Again, he said, 'What shall we say the Kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?

It is like a mustard seed, the smallest seed on earth.

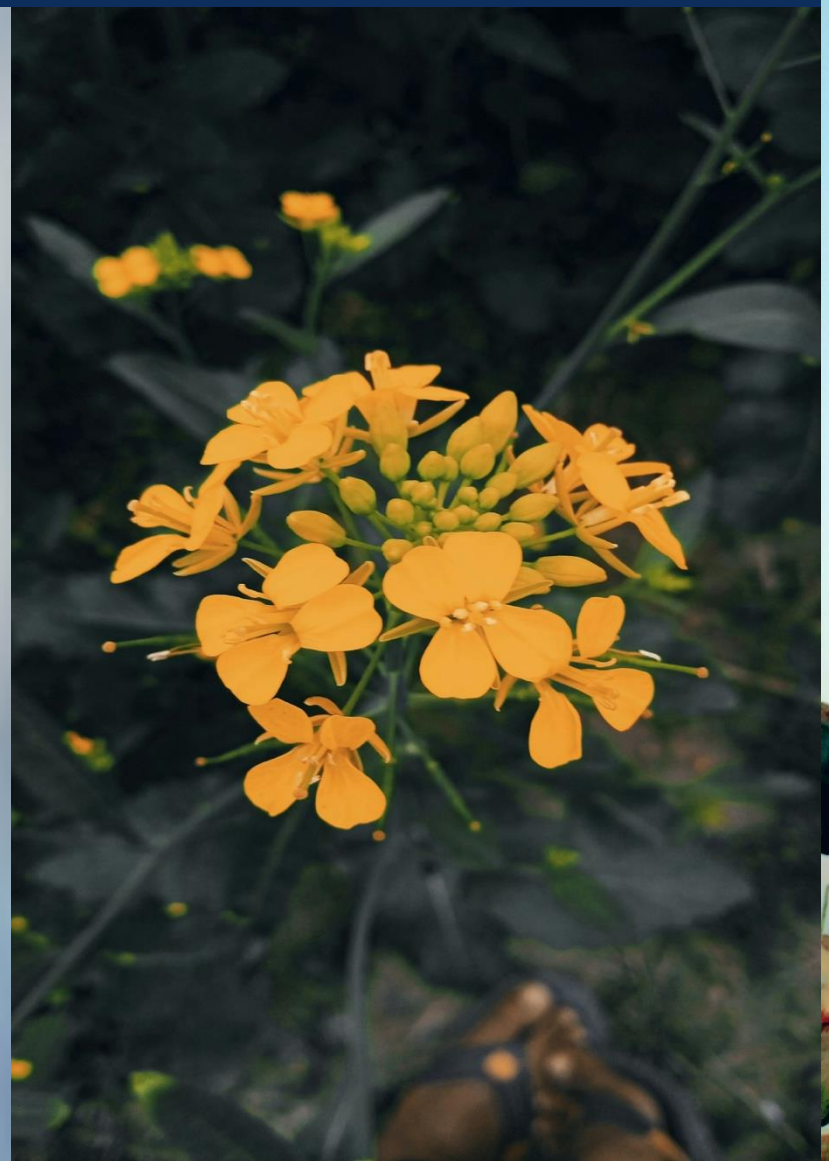
Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all the garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.'

Mark 4:30–32 (NIV)

Key Idea: The Kingdom of God starts small — but grows beyond expectation!

The Mustard Seed Parable · Mark 4:30–32







How Jesus Taught · Mark 4:33–34

> *With many similar parables, Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.*

Public Teaching

Jesus always used parables with the crowds — stories they could understand at their level.

Private Teaching

With His disciples alone, He explained everything fully and directly.

Mark 4:30 – 5:20

God's Kingdom: Small Beginnings, Great Growth

"He did not say anything to them without using a parable."
— Mark 4:34 (NIV)

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Discussion & Reflection: The Mustard Seed

What does it mean that the Kingdom of God starts small?

Where do you see that in your own life of faith?

Discussion & Reflection: Kingdom Kids

How do we 'raise them up in the nurturing and admonition of the Lord' in our congregation?

Discussion & Reflection: Parables

Why do you think Jesus chose to teach in parables?

What does it tell us about how God communicates with us?

Discussion & Reflection: Private and Public

Jesus explained everything to His disciples privately. What does that say about the importance of close community in our faith?

Setting the Scene

What?

Parables and stories from
Mark 4:35 through Mark 5:20



That Same Evening…

Mark 4:35-41

"That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, 'Let us go over to the other side.' "

(The action moves from the shore to the Sea of Galilee)

On the other side

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.[a] 2 When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. 3 This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. 4 For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him.

On the other side

5 Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he
would cry out and cut himself with stones.
6 When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell
on his knees in front of him. 7 He shouted at the top
of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son
of the Most High God? In God’s name don’t torture
me!” 8 For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this
man, you impure spirit!”

On the other side

9 Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”
“My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”
10 And he begged Jesus again and again not to send
them out of the area.
11 A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby
hillside. 12 The demons begged Jesus, “Send us
among the pigs; allow us to go into them.”

On the other side

13 He gave them permission, and the impure spirits
came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about
two thousand in number, rushed down the steep
bank into the lake and were drowned.
14 Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this
in the town and countryside, and the people went
out to see what had happened.

On the other side

15 When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who
had been possessed by the legion of demons,
sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and
they were afraid. 16 Those who had seen it told the
people what had happened to the demon-
possessed man—and told about the pigs as well.
17 Then the people began to plead with Jesus to
leave their region.

On the other side

18 As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him.
19 Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”
20 So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis[b] how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Example of a good servant:

Can you think of an example of a good servant of Christ in scripture?

Example of a good servant:

Can you think of an example of a good servant of Christ in scripture?

We find an example from Paul in Philippians 2:5-11

5 In your relationships with one another, have
the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
6 Who, being in very nature[a] God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be used to his own advantage;

Example of a good servant:

7 rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature[b] of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

Example of a good servant:

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

Example of a good servant:

11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Example of a good servant:

We see another example in Philippians 4:4-9

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it
again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be
evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be
anxious about anything, but in every
situation, by prayer and petition, with
thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Example of a good servant:

7 And the peace of God, which transcends all
understanding, will guard your hearts and your
minds in Christ Jesus.
8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true,
whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever
is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is
admirable—if anything is excellent or
praiseworthy—think about such things.

Example of a good servant:

9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Paul invites us to imitate him

Philippians 3:12-21

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.
13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead

Paul invites us to imitate him

Philippians 3:12-21

14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for
which God has called me heavenward in Christ
Jesus.
15 All of us, then, who are mature should take such a
view of things. And if on some point you think
differently, that too God will make clear to you.

Paul invites us to imitate him

Philippians 3:12-21

16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

17 Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.

Paul invites us to imitate him

Philippians 3:12-21

18 For, as I have often told you before and now tell
you again even with tears, many live as enemies of
the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction,
their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their
shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. 20 But our
citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a
Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Paul invites us to imitate him

Philippians 3:12-21

21 who, by the power that enables him to bring
everything under his control, will transform our
lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious
body.