

THE MUSTARD SEED

& The Politics of Jesus

¹**Daniel 4.9-12**—I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth. Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the wild animals found shelter, and the birds lived in its branches . . .

²**1 Peter 2.11**—“Beloved, I urge you as ALIENS AND STRANGERS . . .”

Philippians 3.20—For our CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1.1—Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as ALIENS, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen.

2 Corinthians 5.20—We are therefore Christ’s AMBASSADORS, as though God were making his appeal through us.

Ephesians 6.19,20— . . . the Gospel, for which I am an AMBASSADOR in chains.

The Subversive nature of fighting via a Cross and Resurrection.

Religious, Political, Economic
Three Temptations of Jesus

Luke 13.18-21—Then Jesus asked, “What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches.” Again he asked, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”¹

Acts 17.6-7—When they could not find them [Paul and Silas], they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, “These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here [Thessalonica] also, and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another King named Jesus.”

Acts 16.31—They answered, “Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.”

Acts 9.20—And immediately he [Paul] began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”

Acts 10.36—You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching PEACE by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of All.

1 John 4.14—And we have seen and do testify that the father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world.

John 18.36—Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”²

A New Social Order

Luke 22.24-27—“The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors.’ But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.”

Luke 4.25-29—All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.

“That the world may be healed.” — John 3.17

All Texts Quoted from the NRSV Unless Otherwise Noted

³“Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals.”—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

⁴The Difference between The Mustard Seed and the Christian Moral Majority or Christian Right

Luke 6.20-26—Looking at his disciples, he said: “Blessed are you who are poor . . . Blessed are you who hunger now . . . Blessed are you who weep now . . . Blessed are you when people hate you . . . woe to you who are rich . . . Woe to you who are well fed now . . . Woe to you who laugh now . . . Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you . . .

A Shared Table and A Values Shift

Learn to integrate the diverse experiences of life into a meaningful and coherent whole.

Matthew 23.8—But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one Master and you are all brothers.

Early Jesus Followers were a subversive community experimenting, growing and putting on display that societies on this earth could be ordered in a radically different way. (All Things In Common) (WHAT they were trying to do. Not always HOW they were trying to do it.)

“Politics” is defined as the arraignment of society deciding who gets what, when and how.

The Politics of Jesus are:

- Give the poor the entire kingdom.
- Give comfort to those who mourn.
- Give the earth to the meek and gentle.
- Give equity/justice to those who hunger for things to be put right.
- Have bias toward the merciful, the peacemakers, and the oppressed.

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Matthew 7.12—So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you . . .

Matthew 5.43-44—You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies . . .

Matthew 5.38-41—You have heard that it was said, ‘AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.’ But I say to you, do not violently retaliate against an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

Luke 9.23-24—Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it.”³

The Mustard Seed and the Fourth Century

Matthew 25.31-32—“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ALL THE NATIONS will be gathered before him . . .

Daniel 7.13-14—In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; ALL NATIONS AND PEOPLES OF EVERY LANGUAGE WORSHIPED HIM. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Matthew 26.64—“But I say to all of you: **From now on** you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming **on** the clouds of heaven.”

Revelation 15.3-54— . . . “Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways . . . ALL NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

Revelation 21.24—The nations will walk by its [The New Jerusalem’s] light, and the KINGS OF THE EARTH will bring their splendor into it.

Acts 23.11—That night the lord stood near him and said, “Keep up your courage! for just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome.”⁴

The Revolution and Christian Patriotism

Example: Economics and Voting
What Do You Mean “We?”

