

# STILL.HEAR.

LISTENING CLOSELY TO JESUS

PART 1: *Soil Samples*  
 PART 2: *A Serious Lack of Judgement*

## PART 3: *For the Birds*

Whoever has ears, let them hear.  
 ~ Jesus

### APPETIZER: Who Are “The Birds” For You

Matthew 5:43-48 & Luke 6:27-28

#### OUR ACTION DECREASES

1. do good to
2. bless
3. pray for

#### AS THEIR ACTION INCREASES

- those who hate you,  
 those who curse you,  
 those who mistreat you.

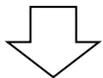
The key...

### DINE IN: Small Beginnings

Matthew 13:31-33

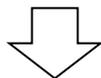
Who we are and what we do as part of the kingdom of heaven...

CITIZENS



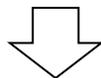
Contribute

SOLDIERS



Advance

AMBASSADORS



Represent

Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:20; 10:3-5;  
 Ephesians 2:19; 6:11-17; Philippians 3:20; 2 Timothy 2:3-4

Ezekiel 17:22-24; 31:6  
 Matthew 11:25; Matthew 18:3; Matthew 19:14  
 1 Corinthians 5:6; Matthew 16:6

#### RESOLUTION 1:

We will be simple, slow, and gentle.

#### RESOLUTION 2:

We won't be afraid of but will welcome our own growth,  
 for the good of “the birds”.

#### RESOLUTION 3:

We will make space for those who are not like us,  
 and may not like us.

### TAKE OUT: On a Different Tree

The mustard seed became a “tree”. Jesus must have thought about the “tree” that lay ahead for him, upon which he would be crowned king.

Today we commemorate the coronation of our king, and our role as citizens, soldiers, and ambassadors.

Jesus would also give his disciples bread to eat as a sign of his broken body. Today we eat that bread and drink the cup of Christ to welcome our role in the growing kingdom of heaven.

#### This Week's Meditation:

Practice breathing on purpose as a reminder of our dependence on God's Spirit. Then Meditate on **Matthew 13:24-30**. Feel free to continue on to the rest of the chapter and beyond. Keep it up!

NEXT WEEK: *Local Teaching!*

WEEK AFTER THAT: *Did it really happen? A Christmas Investigation*

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## Home Church Questions

NOTE: You might want to make time this week, or some week soon, to have communion together. When you do, focus on the kingdom of heaven, with Jesus as our king, wearing a crown of suffering, ascending to his throne of sacrifice. Invite Jesus to show you how to help experience and extend his kingdom through gentle, slow, relational means.

### HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. Review the sermon – any lingering questions or helpful revelations?
2. Have you read the blog post on breathing at [bruxy.com](http://bruxy.com)? Before diving into scripture, take a few moments to pray silently, while breathing deeply. Then talk about the role of deeper, slower, intentional breathing in prayer and meditation for you.

### HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

3. Read **Matthew 13:31-33**, slowly, more than once, in different translations.
  - a. What verse, phrase, word, or idea stands out to you the most? What might God be saying to you through this?
  - b. How is Jesus' movement like and unlike a typical "kingdom"? List as many similarities and differences as you can.
  - c. Growing large was what people expected of God's kingdom in Jesus' day. What they were surprised by was a) it starting small and quietly and gently, and b) it making room for the birds (gentile nations) who were currently oppressing them. Are there things about the way of Jesus that have surprised you?
  - d. What does kingdom growth look like in your life practically? In the life of your home church? In the life of The Meeting House? Talk about specifics and share them with your elder and pastors.
  - e. Review the three "resolutions" of The Meeting House. What are some practical examples you can imagine for each?
4. Optional Home Church Activity: Watch "Godspeed" together and then talk about kingdom lessons we can learn about Time (slowing down for relationships), Travel (letting roots settle down and finding contentment right where you are), and Treasure (living simply, with less distraction). Note how all this connects to the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven. Go to <https://www.livegodspeed.org/watchgodspeed-cover>

### HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

5. Let's continue using our huddle questions. Do you have a copy? If not, talk to your home church leaders.