

## I. The Mystery of Inherent Productivity

### A. Four Parables with Purpose

1. To those who hear the gospel and respond with hope
  - a. To those who encounter the good news of God's grace in Christ with faith
  - b. To those who believe with their whole heart that the life and death of Jesus Christ satisfy the just demands of God's holiness on their behalf
  - c. To those who have entrusted themselves to God's promise to forgive their sin and grant them eternal life and joy on account of Christ
  - d. To those whom God has chosen and called and justified, making them by His will, the work of Christ, and the wonder of the Spirit citizens of the kingdom of God
  - e. To those who once faced judgment and death and hell because of sin but now look for mercy, and life, and heaven through the blood of Christ,
  - f. To these, to God, Jesus brings a message of the Kingdom of God.
2. **The message of Jesus to His disciples: regardless of your external circumstances, the kingdom of God within you will prevail in your life, and ultimately in the world.**
3. This is the mystery of inherent productivity

### B. Third Parable: The Mystery of Inherent Productivity

1. The parable and the mystery of inherent productivity
  - a. The parable
    - (1) Kingdom of God compared with basic agricultural process
      - (a) The kingdom of God is the rule of God in the hearts of believing men and women and boys and girls that will one day expand to the absolute rule of God in every component of creation
      - (b) **Jesus invites kingdom citizens to understand something of how the kingdom of God will work in and through their lives, so he introduces us to the mystery of inherent productivity.**
  - b. The mystery of inherent productivity
    - (1) The sower sows, the reaper reaps
    - (2) In between, the mystery of inherent productivity:
      - (a) the God designed ability of seeds to produce a new generation of their own kind without outside influence.
      - (b) Genesis 1:11-12
        - i) The third day of creation
        - ii) *<sup>11</sup> And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.*

- (3) The mystery of inherent productivity is the God-designed ability of a created thing to reproduce itself without external assistance.
2. Two approaches to understanding and applying the parable: Mission and Majesty
    - a. Mission Approach (the evangelistic approach)
      - (1) That we, who by faith enter the kingdom of God and become missionaries of the gospel, will experience the growth of the kingdom as a work of God in the context of our faithfulness in ministry
      - (2) The mission approach means you can trust the gospel to accomplish the work of God as you share the gospel in the world
        - (a) **Romans 1:16 (ESV)** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*
        - (b) The mission approach means you are confident in the health and vitality of the seed, of the seed's ability to produce a crop, of the gospel's built-in, God-given ability to produce spiritual transformation in hearts prepared to hear it.
    - b. Majesty Approach (the discipleship approach)
      - (1) That Jesus, as the God-appointed, God-anointed Savior, sows His disciples into the world like a farmer scattering seed,
      - (2) and the inevitable outcome of their presence in the world is a harvest the Son will gather when the fruit is ripe.
        - (a) **Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV)** <sup>18</sup> *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*
        - (b) **Acts 1:8 (ESV)** *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*
        - (c) **Revelation 14:14-16 (ESV)** *Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.*
      - (3) The authority of Christ and the power of the Spirit at work in the lives and ministry of Christ's disciples inevitably bring the world to the point of harvest readiness.

### C. **Implication of the Mystery of Inherent Productivity:**

1. The mystery of inherent productivity represents the God-given ability of the

gospel at work in believers, and through believers, the world, to bring about transformed lives for the kingdom of God.

2. With the **mystery of inherent productivity** in place we can have absolute confidence in several spiritual, kingdom outcomes.

## II. **The Mystery of Inherent Productivity at Work (Confidences)**

### A. **In light of the mystery of inherent productivity you can have confidence that the kingdom of God will be realized in the world in the timing of God regardless of the prevailing political conditions.**

1. The gospel grows even under adverse conditions
  - a. **Philippians 1:12-14 (ESV)** *I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*
  - b. Paul is chained to a guard and imprisoned because of his faith in Christ, yet he rejoices because even under these personally unpleasant circumstances the testimony of Christ spreads among his captors
2. The kingdom of God will be realized in the world in the timing of God regardless of the prevailing political conditions.
  - a. **Hebrews 12:1-3 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.*
  - b. **In light of the mystery of inherent productivity, keep your eyes on Jesus and make faith your first priority.**
    - (1) Politics will not stop the healthy growth and development of the kingdom of God.
      - (a) Trump can't shut down the church.
      - (b) Biden can't confound the gospel
      - (c) The powers and principalities can alter the context of kingdom growth but they can never defeat the reality of the advance of the kingdom of God in the world.
    - (2) Christian, stop trusting in the world's horses and chariots, in presidents and potentates, and ground your life in the unconquerable person and work of God in Jesus Christ.
    - (3) I'm not saying politics and civic participation are not important.
      - (a) I am saying that Christ is more important to you, Christian.
      - (b) I am urging you, whatever political positions you take, do not forsake Christ and raise politics to the level of heaven.
      - (c) Do not make policies, or politics, or politicians, or parties an idol in your life that unseats the one True King and His

ongoing, enduring, advancing kingdom.

- (4) The true kingdom of God, the eternal rule of God in the human heart for His glory and our joy, retains within itself the power of productivity regardless of its worldly political surroundings.

3. **In this day, you can and should have absolute confidence in the unconquerable, unshakeable, sovereign will and power of God no matter what.**

**B. In light of the mystery of inherent productivity, you can have confidence, Christian, that God will finish in you what He started!**

1. **Philippians 1:3-6 (ESV)** <sup>3</sup> *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,* <sup>4</sup> *always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy,* <sup>5</sup> *because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.* <sup>6</sup> *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*
2. Paul is confident that God will finish what he started in you.
  - a. **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*
  - b. **Ephesians 5:25-27 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup> *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,* <sup>26</sup> *that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*
3. Spurgeon, Morning & Evening Sept. 29
  - a. Sin mourned and confessed, however black and foul, shall never shut a man out from the Lord Jesus. Whosoever cometh unto Him, He will in no wise cast out. Though dishonest as the thief, though unchaste as the woman who was a sinner, though fierce as Saul of Tarsus, though cruel as Manasseh, though rebellious as the prodigal, the great heart of love will look upon the man who feels himself to have no soundness in him, and will pronounce him clean, when he trusts in Jesus crucified. Come to Him, then, poor heavy-laden sinner, Come needy, come guilty, come loathsome and bare; You can't come too filthy—come just as you are.
4. In light of the mystery of inherent productivity, you can have confidence that the work God started when He planted the gospel seed in your heart, he will complete.
  - a. Trust Him
  - b. Obey Him
  - c. Honor Him as he works to present you to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that you might be holy and without blemish.