

I. The Parable of the Leaven

1. The kingdom of heaven (the church) is likened to leaven ([Mt. 13:33](#)).
 - a. Leaven is “a substance (as yeast) used to produce fermentation in dough or a liquid” (Merriam-Webster, Inc. Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh ed., Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).
 - b. Leaven is also defined as “something that modifies or lightens” (Ibid).
2. A woman took the leaven and hid it in three measures of meal ([Mt. 13:33](#)).
 - a. hid (*enkrypto* G1470 verb) “*to conceal in something...contextually, to mingle one thing with another*” (Thayer, Joseph Henry. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti, Harper & Brothers., 1889, p. 167).
 - b. Three measures of meal is said to be the common quantity for a baking (cf. [Gen. 18:6](#); [Jdg. 6:19](#); [1 Sam. 1:24](#)).
 - c. “A woman is named because baking was part of her household duty” (McGarvey, John William, and Philip Y. Pendleton. The Four-Fold Gospel. The Standard Publishing Company, 1914, p. 338).
3. The whole measure of meal was leavened ([Mt. 13:33](#)).
 - a. Leaven permeates the entire substance it is placed in.

II. The Explanation

1. The kingdom of heaven (the church) is to influence the world for good.
 - a. Christianity is not self-centered but rather is concerned with the doing of good to all ([Mk. 16:15-16](#); [Gal. 6:10](#)).
 - b. Loving God and loving man is the whole point of the law ([Mt. 22:34-40](#), [7:12](#); [Jm. 2:8](#); [Rm. 13:9](#)).
2. This influence is gradual and powerful.
 - a. Not accomplished through physical might ([Jn. 18:36](#); [2 Cor. 10:3-6](#)).
 - b. Not characterized by pomp or pride ([Lk. 17:20-21](#); [Mt. 6:1-8](#)).
 - c. Example is emphasized ([Mk. 3:14](#); [1 Pt. 2:21](#); [1 Cor. 11:1](#); [Php. 3:17](#), [4:9](#); [1 Pt. 5:3](#)).
 - d. The influence of Christianity was seen and felt.

III. The Application

1. Leaven is an **outside** agent.
 - a. The leaven in the parable was **put into** the meal.
 - b. The gospel is not of man's origin but of Divine origin ([Rm. 1:16-17](#)).
 - c. Paul did not get what he preached from man but from the revelation of Jesus Christ ([Gal. 1:11-12](#)).
 - d. When man's doctrine is taught then God is not pleased nor glorified ([Gal. 1:6-10](#); cf. [Mt. 15:1-9](#); [2 Jn. 9-11](#)).
2. Leaven is a **transformative** agent.
 - a. Once implanted into an honest and good heart, the gospel transforms from the inside out ([Jm. 1:21](#); [Lk. 8:15](#), [17:21](#); [Rm. 8:29](#), [12:1-2](#); cf. [2 Cor. 3:3-4](#), [18](#)).
 - b. An unclean inside with a clean outside is classified as hypocrisy ([Mt. 23:25-28](#)).
 - c. The inside must first be cleansed and then the outside will follow ([Ps. 51:10](#); [2 Cor. 4:16](#); [Eph. 4:23-24](#); [Col. 3:10](#); [1 Th. 4:3](#)).
3. Leaven is an **influential** agent.
 - a. In this parable, leaven is used positively to describe the influence the church is to have on the world ([Mt. 5:13-16](#); [Ac. 8:4](#)).
 - b. In other contexts, leaven is used as a negative influence ([Mt. 16:6](#), [11-12](#); [Mk. 8:15](#); [Lk. 12:1](#)).
4. Leaven is an **active** agent.
 - a. A little leaven leavens the whole lump ([1 Cor. 5:6](#); [Gal. 5:9](#)).
 - b. One thing leaven is not is apathetic and thus inactive ([Rev. 3:14-22](#)).