The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven  
Matt. 13:31-33

Introduction:
A. Jesus illustrates growth of Kingdom.
   1. It has a small beginning.
      a. Jesus and small band of followers.
      b. In small and weak country.
   2. It eventually covered whole world. (cf. Col. 1:13-23)
B. Jesus' kingdom grew and spread because of 3 significant factors.

Discussion:
I. Preaching
   A. Preaching is Lord's way of spreading kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:21).
      2. Preaching spread the kingdom to world. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15,16; Lk. 24:47; Acts)
   B. Preaching is primary work of the church.

II. Persecution
   A. Persecution is designed to hinder the church.
   B. Persecution added to the growth of the church.
      2. Paul's persecution (Phil. 1:12-14)
   C. Persecution is not to be desired, not is to be avoided.
      1. We do not seek such trials as persecution.
      2. We do not accept deliverance. (Heb. 11:35)
      3. We see as a plus rather than minus.

III. Providence
   A. Providence was important in rapid spread of kingdom of God.
      1. O. T. events leading to N. T. age.
         a. Jewish training
         b. Greek language and influence
         c. Roman Empire
      3. Providence seen in many recorded events.
         a. Day of Pentecost
         b. Gospel to Samaria
         c. Gospel to Gentiles
      4. Providence provided background for rapid development.
         a. Jews on Pentecost had background of teaching.
         b. Elders could be appointed quickly with O. T. background.

Conclusion:
A. Kingdom of God grew in short time from tiny seed to large tree.
B. Kingdom of God spread from small area to whole lump - world.
C. Kingdom of God continues to grow and spread until this day.
D. Kingdom of God spreads and grows by preaching and teaching - but let us not forget that God's providence and overruling of persecution also play a large role in its spread (cf. 1 Cor. 3:5-9).