

Grace Lutheran Community, 16 July 2023:

Seventh Sunday After Pentecost

The sermon text for today is based on the text

Matthew Chapter 13 verses 1 -9, 18-23

In today's reading Jesus gives us a beautiful image of generosity, of grace, of abundance and of love.

If we put on our corporate hats for a moment we could read this story and laugh at the sower. What a wasteful person to cast seed over all the land, not just on the good soil. Perhaps there is a better way? It would be in order to save time and money surely if the sower were to sow with greater purpose only selecting the good soil. Not to just liberally throw the seed to every last centimetre of land. Then at the board room meeting the sower could report on the efficiency of the seeding for that year and how much money was saved so some would have more in their pockets.

Imagine if Jesus operated from a corporate mindset? Only sharing His word with those who have are in good soil or those who are sure to receive the word and follow.

But Jesus doesn't work this way. This is love, this is mercy, this is grace that Jesus died for all people. Yes even those who continue to reject Him and His gift of forgiveness, life and salvation.

In our world out there, how many people do you think might be interested in hearing about Jesus? Have a listen to this.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore.

Such large crowds – not only followers of Jesus but crowds of everyday people who wanted to hear the word of Jesus. To hear what Jesus had to say. Just like today many people are interested in hearing about Jesus but better still if they experience Jesus love in and through you.

Then Jesus told them many things in parables, saying: ‘A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop – a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.’

Yet the sower Heavenly Father sows broadly without discrimination to all. To all people in every generation. Even though He knows that many will not follow. As we follow Jesus then, let us sow boldly and broadly and with love and enthusiasm, knowing that as we live Jesus in the world, many will hear and fall away, or live by the flesh and worry instead of trusting Jesus. Many will not understand or follow their own understanding of the bible too but this does not stop us from following Jesus in our own life and being generous, gracious, bold and loving as we sow the word in Jesus name in the world.

‘Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: when anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.’

In our world now how many people want to hear? How will they hear if no one speaks Jesus into their place and space? And when they do hear – how can you and I walk with them so that the word is not choked out or the worries of the world take away that very word that offers hope, Jesus Christ? How can you and I in the mission of the body of Christ as disciples of Jesus explain in the power of the Holy Spirit the word that people have heard so the devil cannot snatch it away before people have had time to hear and begin to understand?

Are we in our thinking like the corporate world of care only for self and the institution and not the people that Jesus sends our way or are we like the sower – Jesus Christ who casts into all places the word of Jesus by our actions and way we live bringing God’s love to those around?

Yet as we walk in the way of the Lord Jesus and serve Him by serving others around us we know that there will be a harvest of plenty from

the seed God has sown in the world through you and me. There will be fruit for those who hear the word of the Lord and understand it. Take heart and know that Jesus is the sower who sows His word through our lives into the world so that all may hear His word and come to understand it. Let us never get tired of doing good as we walk with and in our Lord Jesus each and every day. God sows the word out of love for all people so that all may hear and understand and know that Jesus is the saviour of the world.

Amen