

Parables of the Seeds

June 13, 2021

Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church

Pastor Tyson Labuhn

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our gracious God opens His hand and provides abundant blessings. There are times that His blessings are recognized and people rejoice, and yet there are times when they're not recognized. Still, God provides them. He provides us the rain and the sunshine and it seems everything grows. While some might call this photosynthesis, it all comes from God, who created the earth and everything in it. The grass, the trees, the flowers, and the shrubs. And yet, there's more than meets the eye because God also blesses us with spiritual blessings. And for those of us who believe in Him, there's even more in store for us according to His Gracious gifts.

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He begins the first parable, by saying, ***"The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises, night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how."*** The sower only scatters and plants the seed, but the rest is up to God. And just like any other seed, it seems somewhat mysteriously all by itself, and when we look around creation it's

evident that it's God who gives power to the sun and brings the rain and helps the seeds to grow, and even without our help, the seeds produce fruit. The Kingdom grows by the grace and power of His Word. It works within us and does what is needed to be done, and in the end, when the Word of God has accomplished all He has intended it to do, the day will come when Jesus returns at the harvest.

We don't always recognize the power that God's Word has on us or in our world. Just like we don't always recognize the daily incremental growth of seeds that are planted in the soil. Because of that, there are times when we wonder if the Kingdom of God is growing at all. We might even fear that the Church is losing ground. But, if that's the case with you, let me remind you that the Lord still watches over His church and has promised that the gates of hell simply will not overcome it. (Matthew 16:18b) Because of the power of His Word, His church on earth has been established and His Kingdom grows whenever His Word is heard.

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Parables of the Seeds

June 13, 2021

Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church

Pastor Tyson Labuhn

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Parables of the Seeds

June 13, 2021

Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church

Pastor Tyson Labuhn

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We don't always recognize the power that God's Word has on us or in our world. Just like we don't always recognize the daily incremental growth of seeds that are planted in the soil. Because of that, there are times when we wonder if the Kingdom of God is growing at all. We might even fear that the Church is losing ground. But, if that's the case with you, let me remind you that the Lord still watches over His church and has promised that the gates of hell simply will not overcome it. (Matthew 16:18b) Because of the power of His Word, His church on earth has been established and His Kingdom grows whenever His Word is heard.

You know even Martin Luther recognized that the power of his sermon didn't come from his theological prowess or how expressive/eloquent his words might or might not have been. And even though he read and translated the Word of God from Latin, Greek, and Hebrew into the vernacular language, he knew that it was the power of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit working in a person's heart that was most important. To underscore this point about this passage, he wrote, *"After I preach my sermon on Sunday when I return home, I drink a little glass of Wittenberg beer and let the gospel run its course."* While not all pastors drink Wittenberg beer on Sunday afternoons, the power of the Word of God and the Spirit of God continues to work in our hearts to grow God's Kingdom through us all in His Church.

Now in the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus helps us to understand that even from one of the smallest of all seeds the

Kingdom of God can grow exponentially - much like a mustard seed grows to become a mustard plant – and in that part of the world – a mustard plant can reach as high as 10 to 12, or even 15 feet in height. If you remember the Kingdom of God began small with Jesus and continued to grow over time in popularity. In the beginning, it didn't seem like much, but even small, seemingly insignificant seeds can grow into something quite significant.

It shouldn't surprise us if the seeds of our witness seem to be ineffective. Nor should we be surprised when it seems like our witness gets laughed at. Instead, we ought to think of it as the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk." If you remember, Jack's mother is disgusted with the measly little beans that Jack brings home from the market. They could never live off of those! So in anger, she throws them out the window. While those beans might've seemed to her to be a non-nutritious mistake, they ended up sprouting into a beanstalk that went all the way up to the heavens.

The church began with Jesus. It grew to include 12 apostles along with followers and has grown to include millions of people. While we might complain from time to time that we could've done more or think that we might speak well enough to share the Good News or believe that we might not have enough money to be able to continue, let me remind you that God blesses us and takes care of all of our excuses. If you remember, He took care of Moses' excuses and when St. Peter told Jesus that they didn't have enough money to pay the temple tax, Jesus said to Peter to go and catch a fish, open its mouth, and take the shekel from its mouth so that the temple tax could be paid.

And yet, God is still doing great things today by the power of His Word. His Word is planted in our otherwise hearts of stone. The Word breaks up the coldness of sin so that we might have hearts of love and share His Word with others, and His Kingdom grows.

This wouldn't have happened if it weren't because of His Words of love, grace, and mercy which have come to us because of our Lord's death and resurrection. It's this Good News from His Word that has been sown freely into our hearts at our baptism. As St. Peter says, **"...born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God."** (1 Peter 1:23) And during our service this morning little Brendon Lewis was born again through simple water and His Word. 😊

From time to time we need to remember and thank God for His many blessings – those we see as well as those we don't. His Kingdom work is a matter of faith that comes to us by His Word, which He alone gives to us. His Word works just like a seed that is planted in the ground and pushes its way through the soil. First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain of the ear. It grows from a small grain of mustard seed into a faith that is larger than most plants, stretching out its branches to produce fruit, so much so that even the birds in the air can make their nests in the shade of the branches.

And while we don't always see it by the numbers, God knows our hearts and the faith that grows within them. And He is the one who is building His Kingdom. A St. Paul once said to the Romans, **"...Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."** (Romans 10:17) He works His blessings, the blessings of His Word come to us with every new day. And we are blessed that He works in and through us, beginning at our baptism, and these blessings continue into eternal life. For that, we give Him thanks both now and always.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Parables of the Seeds

June 13, 2021

Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church

Pastor Tyson Labuhn

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our gracious God opens His hand and provides abundant blessings. There are times that His blessings are recognized and people rejoice, and yet there are times when they're not recognized. Still, God provides them. He provides us the rain and the sunshine and it seems everything grows. While some might call this photosynthesis, it all comes from God, who created the earth and everything in it. The grass, the trees, the flowers, and the shrubs. And yet, there's more than meets the eye because God also blesses us with spiritual blessings. And for those of us who believe in Him, there's even more in store for us according to His Gracious gifts.

In our Gospel reading for today, Jesus talks about the Kingdom of God using two parables – the parable of the growing seed and the parable of the mustard seed. In doing so, He helps us to understand how the Kingdom of God works. And yet, when Jesus first shared these parables those who heard them were looking for Him to restore God's "glorious" kingdoms of King David and King Solomon. But of course, He had something else to share with them, and with us...

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