



Sunday 26th July 2026

The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Gospel Reading

Matthew 13.31-33,44-52

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

The Parable of the Yeast

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

Three Parables

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Treasures New and Old

'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

Other Readings: Genesis 29.15-28

Psalms 105.1-11,45b or Psalm 128

Romans 8.26-39

Homily

500-750 words

Today's Gospel includes a number of the Parables Jesus used to describe the workings of the Kingdom of God, framed in familiar scenes from work and domestic life. They illustrate the most important truths the Lord wanted his disciples to understand and teach to the new faith community and beyond.

The Scribes of his day were the Bible Scholars - those charged with faithfully teaching and interpreting the Scriptures to the people. The Church has inherited this calling and responsibility - to share Kingdom truths to our generation. Those who, in our age, interpret and share God's message must call upon a range of teachings and metaphors, (old and new), to inform and encourage living faith in themselves and others. These familiar Parables can challenge a society which is now less focussed on God, yet which still seeks ways to live a spiritual life, making them vitally relevant.

The Mustard seed illustrates massive growth potential from a tiny beginning. From one seed, Jesus, to a huge branching shrub or tree, the Church, supporting many occupants - the Kingdom of God welcomes many to its branches. A small amount of yeast has the power to influence and transform the whole, in this case, the dough; and this power is transferable to other batches too. So also, the Gospel message has the power to multiply within society to heal and transform. Christians are to be profound change-agents that influence and enrich the lives of those around them. The amazing growth potential lies in the seed and yeast – in Jesus – and in those who speak in His name.

The parables of buried treasure and priceless pearl illustrate the surpassing value of the Kingdom of God – worth everything we are and have. What God offers us in Jesus is of greater worth than the world can ever give. When we have come to recognise its true value to us, it will change our lives for ever; we will surrender everything we are and have to Jesus as Lord of our lives. Walking with Jesus surpasses anything this failing world can offer.

The parable of the fishing net, like the wheat and tares, is a challenge to the belief that humankind is in charge of its destiny. God created us to be in relationship with Him, and to serve his good purposes on earth. But, as we read in Genesis, Adam and Eve went 'rogue' and followed their own sense of right and wrong. Jesus' teaching is clear - at some point, this age will come to an end at which point we become accountable for our lives in the face of divine justice – always remembering that we have an advocate in Jesus and the unmerited gift of God's grace. God's ultimate plan for us is, and has always been, that we flourish and thrive in his love, living in the way of Christ, serving our sisters and brothers, neighbours and strangers. When we stray from his teaching, his path, we should not be surprised by the chaos that ensues - humanity cannot save itself - but God has a plan, and as we work to understand and share the wisdom of scripture, we can and should also seek new revelations through the Holy Spirit.

Truth is not negotiable – and one significant truth which Christians believe is that God is sovereign over all humanity. To a believer, denying God's existence is like the folly of denying gravity, the passage of time or the logic of arithmetic. We are called to participate in the building of God's Kingdom, and to share the Truth which sets people free by reflecting the justice, mercy, and love of our Lord Jesus, better to encourage others to listen to His life changing message.

Conversation Questions

1. Jesus is our Lord and Saviour. What resources might you seek out to inform your understanding of his life and his teaching?

You can use our Learn, Grow, Share Digital Learning Platform [Home - Diocese of Lincoln](#) Its aim is to help everyone to take their next step in the journey of faith, helping to support Christians in mission, ministry and discipleship.

2. In the light of the parables of the pearl and buried treasure, how can we encourage one-another to value whole-hearted discipleship?
3. In moments when we fall short, how can we find comfort in knowing that Jesus stands as our advocate before God's judgment, (1 John 2:1), and how does this truth deepen our understanding of His grace?
4. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you? What is it?
5. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

Collect of the day

*Almighty Lord and everlasting God,
we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern
both our hearts and bodies
in the ways of your laws
and the works of your commandments;
that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever,
we may be preserved in body and soul;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

(or)

*Lord God,
your Son left the riches of heaven
and became poor for our sake:
when we prosper save us from pride,
when we are needy save us from despair,
that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

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