

THE UPPPER ALDE BENEFICE

Fifteenth Sunday of the Year (Trinity 5)



The parables of Jesus, those memorable stories which he told, were drawn from the everyday experience of the people who listened to them. Someone baking bread, a woman searching for a precious coin which had been lost, a fisherman casting his nets hoping to secure a catch. A large number of them have an agricultural background such as a farmer planting wheat only to find at the harvest that weeds have grown as well or a shepherd looking for a lost sheep. The parable which we read this morning is, perhaps, one of the most well-known of all.

“A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they had not much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched; and since they had no root they withered away. Other seeds fell upon thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear.”

The thing which strikes me first of all is that this is a story about growth. There may be a number of setbacks but, nevertheless, the seed grows and bears a fruit. Inevitably, this story, in common with all of the other stories of our Lord, presents us with a challenge. How are we growing as Christians in terms of our love for God, the depth of our spiritual lives and the opportunities we have for service of others? What are the things which are holding us back from Christian maturity?

The farmer of the parable confidently seeds his fields knowing that, although some seed will be lost to the footpaths, rocks and thorns, a harvest will come. God’s word of love and healing will go forth and be fruitful. We must not be discouraged or intimidated from what is right and good because it might be misinterpreted, misunderstood or rejected. Sometime we may never realize what good will come from the smallest ‘seed’ of kindness which we plant. Christ invites us, his followers. To embrace the faith of the sower: to trust and believe that our simple acts of kindness and forgiveness, our humblest offer of help and affirmation to those in need, our giving of only a few minutes to listen to the plight of another soul may be the seeds that fall on ‘good soil’ and yield an abundant harvest.

Thought for the week

God loves you so much that he’ll accept you just the way you are – but he loves you too much to leave you that way.