



Second Sunday After Epiphany

Mark 4:1-34

Summary

This passage recounts Jesus teaching in parables, including the well-known parable of the sower. Jesus uses everyday things people would know in an attempt to teach people about God and the kingdom.

He emphasises the importance of hearing and understanding the Word. The passage also includes the parables of the lamp and the growing seed. Jesus uses these stories to convey spiritual truths and the kingdom of God's growth. Overall, the passage highlights the significance of receptive hearts to receive and apply God's teachings..

Prayer

Teaching Christ,
Guide us by your wisdom, and plant within us the seeds of truth and hope. Nurture us by your word so that we might grow as faithful followers of you and bearers of your light to the world. We offer this and all our prayers in your strong name. AMEN

The Story Behind the Words

- ❖ What is a parable?
 - Why would Jesus use parables to teach people?
 - What is he using parables to teach the people about?
- ❖ How do the parables differ?
 - Why do you think Jesus is using different parables in his teaching?
- ❖ Are these parables universal, meaning can they be used no matter when they are told?
 - How might we struggle to grasp what Jesus is trying to say with these particular parables?

The Characters

- ❖ Who is Jesus talking to in this reading?
- ❖ Who are the characters in each of the parables?
 - Who do you think they are meant to represent?
 - Can one character have more than one meaning that we are meant to understand?
- ❖ Where do you see yourself in this reading?
 - Are you in the crowd?
 - Do you see yourself in any or all of the parables? If so which one and how?

What is the Word saying to us?

- ❖ What are the recurring themes in these parables?
- ❖ How does the symbolism of the seed, soil, and harvest contribute to the overall message of the passage?
 - How can we apply these symbols to our spiritual lives today?
- ❖ What are the various responses portrayed in the parables?
 - How do these responses challenge us to examine our own receptivity to God's message?

Where do we go from here?

- ❖ How can we cultivate a "good soil" heart that receives and nurtures God's Word?
- ❖ How can our faith community collectively contribute to creating an environment where the Word of God can take root and flourish?
- ❖ How can we share the light of the Gospel and contribute to the growth of God's kingdom in our wider community?
 - What does this look like in service to the community?
- ❖ What steps can we take individually and collectively to apply what we have learned and actively participate in the work that God is already doing in our communities?