

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

Isaiah 55:10-13

Psalm 65:1-13

*Your paths overflow with plenty. (v11)*

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, & grow in faith & hope & love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

<sup>1</sup>That same day Jesus went out of the house & sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat & sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, & the birds came & ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, & they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched; & since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, & the thorns grew up & choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil & brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears listen! <sup>18</sup>Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom & does not understand it, the evil one comes & snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word & immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, & when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup>As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world & the lure of wealth choke the word, & it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word & understands it, who indeed bears fruit & yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, & in another thirty."

## LISTENING TO . . .

**GOD-** *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. Review vv10-17. Why does Jesus teach in parables, symbolic teaching stories? By the way, parables are not mere imaginative illustrations but rather very real revelations of divine grace & condemnations. See *Isaiah 6:8-11; Matthew 11:27, 13:34*
2. What do each of the other readings this week add to your understanding of the Gospel? How does the Prayer of the Day frame them all together? *Hint: look for themes, parallel ideas, inversions, reversals, similarities, extensions, metaphors, actions, vocabulary, grammar, etc.*

**EACH OTHER-** *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. What is unsettling & uncomfortable about this parable? See *Matthew 3:10, 7:19, 23:1-39, 25: 31-46; John 5:24, 37-47, 8:31-47*
4. When have you been each of the 4 soils? What else was going on in your life at that time? What brought you to repentance so that you could bear fruit again? See *Matthew 4:17; Galatians 5:16-26*

**NEIGHBORS-** *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Building on #3, 4, who in your everyday life is in danger of being one of the bad soils? Who hasn't yet had the seed of the God's word sown by you in their life? How can you help lead others to have their own experiences of repentance that lead to bearing fruit?
6. This parable is typical of the Bible's "evangelism" stories. (Note well: it's the Holy Spirit ultimately who works faithfulness in whomever he wills; cf. *John 3:7-8, 15:16; Romans 8:26-30, 9:16; Philippians 2:13*) How does your congregation make God's Word widely available? How does your congregation nurture the growth of that Word so it may bear fruit?

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Second Sunday after Pentecost

07.16.23

Series: Whose Kingdom Is It?

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Kingdom's Seeds

*You just never know where you'll find good soil,  
so the King wants to plant far & wide*

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: Other seeds fell on good soil & brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (v8)

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-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

The word is very near to you; it is in your mouth & in your heart.  
(Deuteronomy 30:14)

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