

The Kingdom of God

SPRINGLINE PARISH – TRINITY 3 2018

READING: MARK 4. 26-34

(Other Lectionary Readings of the day - Ezekiel 17. 22-end,
Psalm 92. 1-4, 12-end (Or 92.1-8) 2 Corinthians 5. 6-10 (11-13) 14-17)

The Key Verse

The key verse in the gospel today: “*The Kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how.*”

The Kingdom of God

Jesus began his public life of ministry preaching and proclaiming the Kingdom of God: “*The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.*” (Mark 1.14)

It is important to note that Jesus preached the kingdom of God and not a political Kingdom or a Messiah/Saviour who merely established a new social/political rule.

Having been under the oppression/occupation of the Romans, the Jews thought of the Messiah/Saviour as one who would deliver them from a political occupation.

Instead Jesus proclaims the Kingdom of God : “*My Kingdom is not from this world. If my Kingdom was from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my Kingdom is not from here.*” (John 18.36)

Jesus, in fact, uses Kingdom parables – the treasure hidden in the field that a man finds and then goes and sells all he has and buys the field, a net thrown into the sea and catches all types of fish, the sower who goes out to sow...etc..)

The Seed

Today Jesus compares the Kingdom to a seed ... sown that sprouts ..grows...puts forth leaves...plants...birds come, sit on the branches...fruit...

There is something mysterious about a ‘seed’. It is said that in the process of archaeological excavations of the pyramids in Egypt, in one of the pyramids deep in the inside, seeds were found, 3000 years old. Someone took one of those seeds and planted it in soil. And lo and behold! After about 3000 years, the seed sprout!

Jesus says: “*Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a simple seed. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.*” (John 12.24)

The Seed of the Word of God

It is the same with us. The Word of God in the Bible, spoken in a sermon or at home, is like a seed.

Unless we allow the Word to act and grow within us, we'll remain just as we are. No spiritual growth!

Jesus says: “*The Kingdom of God is within you.*” (Luke)

- Are we conscious/aware of the seed of the Word of God sown in the soil of our hearts?
- We hear the Word of God so often. Does it change us?
- Do we allow the Word to grow in us and make us new?
- Are we citizens of the Kingdom of God?

Jesus assures us: “*Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be yours as well.*” (Luke 11. 31, Mt. 6.33)

The new life in the Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Jesus. It is the Kingdom of New Life, the Kingdom of Hope and Healing. Jesus invites us to embrace this Kingdom by our moving forth from our past life into a new life with him! As we heard in the second reading of today: “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain!”

May we be nourished by the Word of God we have heard today and the Bread of Life that we partake of in this Holy Communion. May we be citizens of the Kingdom of God.

Let us permit the seed of God's Word to sprout and grow silently within us and in our lives and may people see where we belong and whom we follow, that we are primarily citizens of Heaven as we are citizens of this earth!

[ST Mattapally]