

Thursday, 2/9

The kingdom of heaven has come, yet we still struggle so much. How can that be? We need to properly understand Jesus' true authority and power.

Read Matthew 14:1-21.

Discuss how Jesus meets all our needs. How does the kingdom increase?

Sing the song "Here I Am, Lord."

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?

Chorus
*Here I am, Lord. Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide,
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Pray for those in our city who lack the most basic necessities of food and clothing. Pray that God would use us to care for them.

Friday, 2/10

Join folks from CTR for Friday morning prayer starting at 7:00 am each Friday morning. It is held at Payson Park Evangelical Church on Ocean Ave.

Read Matthew 14:22-36.

Meditate on Peter's confession to Jesus, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Pray for those society has thrown away. Ask the Lord how He might use us in ministering to them and defending them.

Saturday, 2/11

Prepare for worship tomorrow by not only reviewing the following devotional materials, but also by preparing what you can today to avoid rushing tomorrow.

Read Matthew 15:1-39 and Psalm 68:21-23.

Meditate on the woman's cry, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me."

Pray for our worship to be in Spirit and Truth. Pray that we would not simply honor Christ with our lips, but that He would conform the whole of our lives to His righteousness. Pray for God to continue to build His Church and to faithfully complete His promise to perfect us and gather us together with Jesus to be radiant and without blemish.



THE SOWER'S SURE REWARD

Matthew 13:1-23

Sermon notes from 2/5/06

Rev. Douglas D. Warren

Text

The text for the sermon this morning is found on **page 678** of the blue Bibles on the seats. Please give your careful attention to the reading of God's Word.

Context

This passage is part of the third couplet in the Gospel of Matthew where we are given descriptions of what Jesus was doing (narrative) paired with what Jesus was saying (discourse).

The Credentials of the King—Who is Jesus?

Chapters 1-3

The King's Deeds & Words—What He did and said to show that He is King.

1 Kingdom Beginnings

4:12-25 Narrative—The King begins to set up His Kingdom

5:1-7:29 Discourse—The King declares the law for His Kingdom

2 Kingdom Order

8:1-9:38 Narrative—Jesus' authority in healing the broken and calling His disciples

10:1-42 Discourse—Jesus authorizes His disciples to proclaim His Kingdom

3 Kingdom Mysteries

11:1-12:50 Narrative—Jesus addresses difficulties of Kingdom faithfulness in this age

13:1-58 Discourse—Jesus teaches parables exploring these difficulties

Message

Jesus teaches us about the kingdom of heaven through the parable of the Sower.

I. There is mixed response to the gospel.

II. The Sower's harvest will be bountiful.

III. The Lord is sovereign over His harvest.

Application

Please consider the following, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you:

1. What is the Lord's harvest?
2. Why are we confident that the harvest will be bountiful?
3. What confidence does that give you to participate in the harvest?

Taking Gathered Worship Home—Family and Individual Devotions

How do we as a community of faith live out the gospel truths we hear from God's word each Sunday morning in gathered worship? One of the means God uses to apply His word in our daily lives is the regular devotional reading and studying of His word as families and individuals. CTR wants to encourage you to dig into the gospel of Matthew throughout the week. Here is a guide for how you might do that.

Sunday, 2/5

Sunday is uniquely "the Lord's Day" as we celebrate His resurrection each week. We encourage you to use the bulk of this Sunday immersing yourself in God's Word.

Read the context for this morning's sermon: Matthew 11:1-13:58.

Discuss the sermon. What comfort is there for you in the Sower's reward? How do you wrestle with the difficulties of God's sovereignty and human responsibility?

Sing one of the songs from the worship service today.

Pray for our understanding of the gospel as a congregation. Pray that these doctrines of grace would make us gracious to others as we have received so freely from the Lord.

Monday, 2/6

As we go through our week let us rest in the certainty of Christ's reward. Let us also step out in faith to be about the business of His harvest.

Read again the passage from yesterday's sermon: Matthew 13:1-23.

Meditate on the bounty of God's harvest, "*He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.*"

Pray: "Lord of the Harvest, You alone can bring the dead to life and we acknowledge that that is what You do when You draw men and women to Yourself in Your great harvest. It is supernatural when sinful people turn from their sin and trust in You. Give eyes to see and ears to hear. Make us grateful that we may extend Your great grace to others we pray in Christ's name. Amen."

Tuesday, 2/7

Jesus is trust-worthy as our King. He knows what He is doing in our lives and in the administration of His kingdom. Let us look to Him in faith.

Read Matthew 13:24-43 and Psalm 72.

Discuss how the kingdom of heaven is like a field of wheat and weeds.

Sing the song "Come Just As You Are."

Come just as you are.

Hear the Spirit call.

Come just as you are.

Come and see, come receive,

Come and live forever. *Repeat*

Life everlasting.

And strength for today.

Taste the Living Water,

And never thirst again. *Repeat*

Pray for those would sow weeds in the Lord's field. Pray for their hearts to be captured and turned from stone into flesh. Pray for the success of the Lord's harvest and for specific individuals who you long to be brought into His kingdom.

Wednesday, 2/8

The gospel is given to us freely, yet following Christ costs us everything that we have. Let us look to Him as we seek to follow Him faithfully.

Read Matthew 13:44-58 and Isaiah 55:1-13.

Meditate on the gospel economy where both "*Come you who have no money, come, buy and eat!*" and "*When a man found a treasure hidden in a field with joy went and sold all he had and bought that field,*" show us what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Pray: "Holy Father, we confess that we have nothing with which to win Your favor, but that in Your mercy, You have given us all that is in Christ. Allow us to give freely as we have been freely given, to sacrifice greatly for others as Christ has sacrificed so for us."

Quote of the Week

"Now the most significant truth about the kingdom was the place of Jesus in it. It was precisely because they had accepted the revelation that Jesus was the Messiah who would bring in the kingdom that the disciples were able to understand and respond to the teaching in the parables. And it was because people like the Pharisees had not accepted it that they did not understand." —Leon Morris