

*For the week of The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
July 16th, through July 22nd, 2023*

Notes for the Week — The Parable of the Sower, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Matthew 13 is a turning point. Jesus gathered disciples, taught about the kingdom, performed miracles, and sent his disciples out to do the same. Now crowds gather and Jesus begins teaching in parables. The first is this “Parable of the Sower.” Immediately following the telling, skipped in our reading, the disciples ask, “Why are you speaking to them in parables?”

Jesus’ response is odd. “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.” Two distinct groups are emerging in response to Jesus: those who receive Him and His word and those who don’t. This exchange comes between the telling of the parable and explaining it to serve as a hinge, a turning point in the Gospel account.

Jesus makes clear those who receive Him—believe in and follow Him—only do so through the power of the Father. He has given them to know the mysteries unfolding in Jesus as He brings the reign of heaven. We confess with Luther, “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gift, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.”

This gift of knowledge about the mysteries can increase our knowledge and fruitfulness for the sake of Christ. This is that last soil in the parable, the soil which receives the seed and produces a harvest. Notice, the soil is passive. It only received the seed. God planted, nourished, and grew.

How does this answer the question? We could read Jesus’ reply to say God only wants some saved. Jesus speaks in parables so those meant to “get it” do. But even when Jesus speaks plainly people only “get” it because the Father gives it to them. Many who follow Jesus heard and still don’t “get” Him. But parables reveal who “gets” Jesus and who doesn’t. It sifts the groups in judgement. Jesus speaks the Word to all who listen, but some stubbornly refuse to hear. Parables reveal those who are “outside” the kingdom.

Yet speaking indirectly has the power to subvert direct opposition and unbelief. King David committed adultery and murder. The prophet Nathan came with a parable about a rich man with many flocks who takes a poor man’s only ewe and slaughters it for food. David’s anger kindled, Nathan revealed, “You are the man!” In the Parable of the Sower, you can think of parables as a tiller, a rock crusher, or weed killer.

Jesus teaches in parables to reveal that not everyone receives the Kingdom. God alone saves, but many hard-heartedly refuse salvation. Yet the parables also serve to break opposition to and defiance of His Word and work in Jesus. So let the Lord cast His Word where He may. May we speak His Word so the world may know we are His children, but also that they may hear and turn to believe. Amen.

The Order of Meditation and Prayer

*Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate.
Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.*

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

APOSTLES’ CREED

VERSE: ISAIAH 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

PSALM 65 or the appointed daily psalms

Prayer on the Psalm

Father of mercy, by Your gracious Spirit guide and govern us that we may use Your spiritual and temporal gifts aright. Preserve the estates You have instituted both for the eternal salvation and the temporal welfare of mankind, and by Your mighty arm hinder and destroy that revolutionary spirit of anarchy that would subvert Your order, and keep us in Your Word. **Amen.**

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	129, 130, 131	134, 135	137, 138	140, 141	144	146	148	1, 2
Evening	132, 133	136	139	142, 143	145	147	149, 150	3, 4

BIBLE READINGS

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	
Monday	Who Is the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven—Matthew 18:1-14	Micah 7:1-20
Tuesday	If Your Brother Sins—Matthew 18:15-22	Nahum 1:1-15
Wednesday	The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant—Matthew 18:21-35	Nahum 2:1-13
Thursday	Jesus Teaches on Marriage and Divorce—Matthew 19:1-12	Nahum 3:1-19
Friday	Jesus Blesses the Children—Matthew 19:13-15	Habakkuk 1:1-17
Saturday	Isaiah 44:6-8	Romans 8:18-27

CATECHISM — Ten Commandments Review

1. You shall have no other gods.

2. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

3. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

4. Honor your father and mother.

5. You shall not murder.

6. You shall not commit adultery.

7. You shall not steal.

8. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What does God say about all of these commandments?

He says, "I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My

DEVOTION OR MEDITATION

DAILY PRAYER

Select from among the following prayers as time and circumstances allow:

Collect of the Week

Blessed Lord, since You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Daily Themes for Prayer

- Sunday: For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacrament.*
- Monday: For faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*
- Tuesday: For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with sin.*
- Wednesday: For marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*
- Thursday: For the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood.*
- Friday: For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*
- Saturday: For faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.*

In Our Prayers this Week

Our Congregation: John Deterding; Kermit & Cheryl Deterding; Brandon Dewey, Hunter; Christal Dewey-Forsberg; Dillon Dewey, Remi, Chasidy, Ruger, Laykn, Finnley

Baptismal Birthdays: Bennett Desormeaux; John Ingram; Kelsey Johnson; Noah King

Wedding Anniversaries: Jim & Joyce Johns

Members of the Congregation: Jan Bryan; Barb Kohlmeyer; Alan Barraza

Friends of our Congregation: Jan Gorton;

Other:

Our Circuit:

Trinity Lutheran Church, Garnett; Vacant

Zion Lutheran Church, Vassar; Vacant

Our District Staff and President, Rev. Justin Panzer.

Heather Williams, Business Manager

Shannon Fender, Administrative Assistant

Our Synod and President, Rev. Matthew Harrison

Our Community: City of Wellsville; USD 289

Our State and Governor, Laura Kelly

Our Nation and President, Joseph Biden

LORD'S PRAYER

MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER FROM THE CATECHISM

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

—or—

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

HYMN OF THE WEEK

“Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast”

577

1 Almighty God, Your Word is cast
Like seed into the ground;
Now let the dew of heav'n descend
And righteous fruits abound.

2 Let not the sly satanic foe
This holy seed remove,
But give it root in ev'ry heart
To bring forth fruits of love.

3 Let not the world's deceitful cares
The rising plant destroy,
But let it yield a hundredfold
The fruits of peace and joy.

4 So when the precious seed is sown,
Life-giving grace bestow
That all whose souls the truth receive
Its saving pow'r may know.

Text: John Cawood, 1775–1852, alt. Text: Public domain

Looking Forward to “The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost”

July 23, 2023

Readings: Isaiah 44:6–8 | Romans 8:18–2 | Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

The good Seed, which is “the Son of Man,” Jesus Himself (Matt. 13:37), brings forth a harvest of faith and bears good fruits in “the sons of the kingdom” (Matt. 13:38). Whatever is sown apart from His Word is of the devil, who plants the weeds of unbelief and sin, even among the people of God. Thankfully, the Lord is patient and He does not uproot the weeds, lest the plants also be destroyed. He lets “both grow together until the harvest” (Matt. 13:30), while He continues to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins. Thus, He preserves His Church in righteousness, because He alone is “the King of Israel and his Redeemer” (Is. 44:6). Since all things are in His gracious care and keeping, “fear not, nor be afraid” (Is. 44:8). For “the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God” (Rom. 8:19), and in this hope we also wait with patience. Though we do not yet see it, “the Spirit helps us in our weakness” (Rom. 8:26) and, in truth, “the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom. 8:18).

