

The Kingdom Grows in Hidden Places

This week's readings

Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52

Romans 8.26-39

Jesus describes the kingdom of God through a series of small pictures:

- a mustard seed
- yeast hidden in flour
- treasure buried in a field
- a pearl of great value
- a net cast into the sea
- treasures both new and old

The kingdom does not always look impressive at first. A seed is small. Yeast disappears into the dough. Treasure may remain hidden underground.

Yet small does not mean insignificant, and hidden does not mean inactive.

The mustard seeds we planted are often used as green manure. They are grown to enrich the soil and prepare the ground for what will be planted later. In the same way, some of the things God asks us to do may not produce immediate or visible results.

A prayer offered.

A kindness shown.

A welcome given.

A child encouraged.

A burden shared.

A small act of courage or forgiveness.

We may never see the whole outcome, but God can use small acts of faithfulness to prepare the ground for future growth.

Romans 8 reminds us that even when we do not know how to pray, the Holy Spirit is at work within us. Christ intercedes for us, and nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God.

A verse to carry through the week

“The Spirit helps us in our weakness.”

Romans 8.26

Questions for reflection

1. Where might God be working quietly or beneath the surface in your life?
2. Is there a prayer you have almost given up praying?
3. What small act of faithfulness might God be inviting you to offer this week?
4. Are you waiting to see results before trusting that God is at work?
5. What does it mean to you that nothing can separate you from the love of God?
6. What treasures, both old and new, has God given to the Church?

Practising the way of Jesus

Pray without needing perfect words

Set aside five quiet minutes. Sit with God and do not worry about finding the right words.

You might simply pray:

Holy Spirit, pray within me.

Bring to God the people and situations that are on your heart. Trust that the Spirit is at work even in silence.

Plant one small seed

Choose one simple act of faithfulness:

- encourage someone
- make a phone call
- offer practical help
- pray for a neighbour
- forgive a small hurt
- welcome someone who may feel overlooked
- give time to listen

Do it without needing recognition or immediate results.

Notice hidden growth

At the end of each day, ask:

Where did I notice even the smallest sign of God's kingdom today?

It may have been a moment of kindness, courage, peace, patience, beauty or hope.

Hold on to the treasure

Read Romans 8.31-39 slowly.

Notice every difficulty Paul names, and then hear the promise beneath them all:

Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A prayer for the week

God of seed and soil,
help me not to despise small beginnings.

Give me patience when growth is hidden
and faith when I cannot see the outcome.

Teach me to pray,
to plant small seeds of love,
and to trust you with the growing.

Thank you that your Spirit helps me,
Christ intercedes for me,
and nothing can separate me from your love.

Amen.

A final thought

Some seeds become the harvest.
Some prepare the ground.
Nothing offered to God in faith is wasted.

We plant in faith. God gives the growth.