

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, June 22, 2021
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“POWER IN THE SEED”

READING: Mark 4:26-29 – He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain – first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

My garden has really taken off. A couple of weeks ago, things were growing slowly, what with the cool weather and dry conditions we had then. But when the rains fell and the sun came up and warmed the earth, I could literally see my garden growing day by day. It must be the old farmer in me because I have a hankering to get my hands into the dirt come spring, and I love to watch things grow.

Seeds are a fascinating subject. Have you ever noticed how little the seeds resemble the plants they produce? Beet seeds are tiny little curlicues that in no way resemble a beet, yet when I broadcast those seeds in a corner of my garden, I believe every single one of them sprouted. I’ve had to thin them and then thin them again. Sunflower seeds are fairly large, yet they in no way resemble the long stalk and massive blossom that they will produce. And to think that the entire design of the plant is contained inside that one odd little seed! It’s amazing.

In our text today Jesus indicates much the same truth regarding the kingdom of God and the Church that came to fruition after Pentecost. The Gospel, he says, is much like my garden in that the seed that was scattered in the mission fields by Paul and Peter, John and Barnabas, and by hundreds, then thousands of Christians as they traveled or fled persecution, didn’t look or sound very powerful. It was just the story of a man lived, taught, died on a cross, and rose again three days later. That doesn’t sound like a threat to the establishment or much of a hope to his followers, yet that simple story, augmented by the theology of his virgin birth, his multiple miracles, his divinity, and his substitutionary sacrifice, changed the world and brought hope to a hundred or more generations to this very day.

The elders, teachers of the law, Pharisees, Caiaphas, Annas, and all his other enemies could never have guessed, would never have believed that this itinerant rabbi from Galilee would establish a kingdom that would reach to the very ends of the earth, encompass the Roman Empire, and bring salvation to all who believed in his name. Jesus planted the seed and the Holy Spirit weeded, watered, and watched over it as it sprouted, took root, grew, and blossomed. Even now he continues to gather into his garner the harvest of souls saved by the Good News of Jesus the Christ.

I was out in the countryside around Lanesville last week and was delighted to see the wheat fields turning. I’m thinking the harvest will start the end of this week or next week for certain. What a happy time that always was on the farm. Wheat was the first cash crop to be gathered in, and my dad, Grandpa, and Uncle Earl were usually in a good mood as the wheat poured into the combine’s hopper. It was a return on their investment and on their labor of the fall before when they planted the seeds in the ground. Whether they slept or got up, the seed had sprouted, grown, survived the winter snows, and now they were gathering it up.

Imagine the joy of God’s angels on that Last Day when the Master sends them out to gather up all his faithful in that final harvest. They will rejoice at the Master’s grace and marvel at his glory as the whole Church stands before the Throne and sings his praises. And to think that it will all have started with the

seed of the Gospel sown in the little land of Palestine all those years ago. The power was in the seed – and the seed brought forth a harvest of righteousness and a heaven filled with the children of God: you and me! Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENT(S):

- 1) VBS will run from this Sunday through Wednesday. No regular meetings during those days.
- 2) Remember to mark your calendars for Pastor Woods' 25th Anniversary of Ordination celebration on Sunday, August 22, in the late service and the dinner to follow.