

## Fifth Sunday after Trinity; Matthew 13: 1–9; 19–23

The Parable of the Sower is surely one of the best known of Jesus's stories. It is a fitting story in the middle of summer when a short walk around our beautiful countryside shows us fields of ripening grain. Seeing such beauty and such plenty we should of course be giving thanks to God and praising him for the harvest that is coming.



But while giving thanks and praise to God is an excellent thing to do, this is not the main point of today's story. Jesus is speaking in parables. This is not really a story about a farmer and his crop at all. Like so many of the parables, it is a story about us and our relationship with God.

God created us. God cares for us. God wants to communicate with us, to have a relationship with us. Indeed, God's love for us is so great that he even chose to come down to our level – to become incarnate as Jesus Christ.

How often though do we allow ourselves to hear the voice of God? How often do we make time to be still, to listen? How often do we read from the Bible slowly and carefully, drinking in every word? How often do we give ourselves permission to wonder at God's glory revealed through the beauty of creation?

And yet God's Word is truly life giving. In the psalm set for today (Psalm 119, vv. 105-112) includes these words "Thy Word is a lantern to my feet, and a light unto my path." Being open to hear God's Word truly illuminates our confused and imperfect daily lives.

We may have been reading God's Word in the Bible often during lockdown. But perhaps God has been speaking to us in other ways too. What have you become more keenly aware of? The beauty of nature? The quietness of roads without traffic? The kindness of neighbours and strangers? How might God have been reaching out to you?

May God open our hearts to hear his Word – through Scripture, through stillness, through the beauty of his creation and through the love other people show us. May he draw us closer to himself every day of our lives here on earth so that when the great day comes and Jesus returns in glory we may be gathered in as part of his heavenly harvest. Amen.

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