

Divine Worship

Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43
“The Likeness of Christ (5): Sowers”

Preparation: Psalm 126.5, 6

Those who sow in tears
Shall reap in joy.
He who continually goes forth weeping,
Bearing seed for sowing,
Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,
Bringing his sheaves with him.

Silent Meditation

Call to Worship

Matthew 11.28, 29 (adapted)

Leader:

Come to Jesus, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him...and you will find rest for your souls. For His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

Hymn of Praise

Psalm 110.1-4

(Aurelia: *The Church's One Foundation*)

“Sit by Me at My right hand,” the Lord says to my Lord,
“Until I make Your foot stand on all who hate Your Word.”
From in His Church the Savior rules all His enemies;
While those who know His favor go forth the Lord to please.

Filled with the Spirit's power, in holy robes of love,
from early morning's hour they serve their Lord above.
Christ reigns a priest forever, the King of Righteousness
and King of Peace who ever His chosen ones will bless.

Invocation and Call to Confession

Leader:

Lord Jesus, we come before you today, among the first-fruits of Your harvest, as those in whom the seed of the Kingdom has taken root, and is growing and bearing fruit for Your glory. We come to worship, our great High Priest and King, and to be renewed in Your mercy and grace for the work we've been given to do. We come, Lord, in need of cleansing and renewal, and so we ask that, as we come, You would search and know us, show us our sins, and lead us to confess and repent, as we turn our hearts to You now. **Hear our silent confessions, Lord.**

Silent Confession

All

Word of Assurance

Psalm 110.5, 6; Romans 8.1 (adapted)

Leader:

Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus is at Your right hand;
In that coming day, He shall judge among the nations.

And yet because we know there is no condemnation
to those who are in Christ Jesus,
who do not walk according to the flesh,
but according to the Spirit, therefore
we shall drink of the river of Your delights,
of the brook by the wayside;
and Jesus shall lift up our heads.

People:
Thanks be to God!

Hymn of Assurance

“I Am Thine, O Lord” stanzas 1, 2 by Fanny J. Crosby

I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice, and it told thy love to me;
but I long to rise in the arms of faith and be closer drawn to thee.

Refrain:

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to the cross where thou hast died.
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to thy precious, bleeding side.

Consecrate me now to thy service, Lord, by the power of grace divine;
let my soul look up with a steadfast hope, and my will be lost in thine.

Refrain

Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving

All

All may offer prayers of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. **The Leader shall close by leading into the chorus of thanksgiving:**

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to the cross where thou hast died.
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to thy precious, bleeding side.

Offerings to the Lord

Leader:

Let us now bring our offerings to honor the Lord and edify one another by His Word: a passage of Scripture which has been particularly helpful; a brief word of praise for some grace of God bestowed; an observation from creation which revealed the glory of the Lord; a word of appreciation for some aspect of the beauty, goodness, or truth of the Lord. When all have shared, the **Leader shall pray:**

We give You thanks and praise, O Lord, and offer our confession of faith together (**all together, saying the Apostles' Creed**);

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Doxology

All

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!
Praise Him, all creatures, here below!
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts!
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!
Amen!

Prayers of the People

All may offer prayers of intercession or supplication, seeking mercy and grace to help in our time of need. **At the end, let the Leader lead the people in praying the Lord's Prayer.**

The Ministry of the Word

Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43

The Leader will read the passage for today, or ask another to read it.

Leader:

In these studies on "The Likeness of Jesus", we have seen Jesus fulfilling four roles – seeker, servant, steward, and shepherd. Since Jesus has sent us into the world in the same way He was sent, we do well to understand and embrace these roles, that Jesus may be more perfectly formed in us.

Our passage for today gives us one final role for us to consider, that of sower. Jesus is He Who sows the good seed of the Kingdom into the world. He sowed this seed throughout His ministry, from the very beginning in Matthew 4.17, to just before His ascension to the Father's right hand, in Acts 1.1-3.

1. What is the Kingdom of God?
2. How did Jesus "sow" the good seed of the Kingdom of God?

Jesus sends us into the world as He was sent, to sow the good seed of the Kingdom of God. As we seek the Kingdom, and the Kingdom increases in us, we become sowers of the good seed of the Kingdom to all the people in our Personal Mission Field.

3. Who needs to have the good seed of the Kingdom sown into their souls?
4. What can we do to become more consistent in sowing the good seed of the Kingdom?

Sowing the good seed is a work that defines us as followers of Jesus. We need to prepare well, pray diligently, encourage one another, and resist everything that would keep us from sowing the good seed of the Kingdom.

5. What are some obstacles we need to overcome in pursuing this part of our calling in the Lord?

6. How can believers help and encourage one another in the work of sowing?

Pray that the Holy Spirit, Who is at work within us, willing and doing of God's good pleasure (Phil. 2.13), would shape us more into the likeness of Jesus, by helping us to grow as seekers, servants, stewards, shepherds, and sowers of the good seed of the Kingdom.

Hymn of Commitment

“Here Am I, Send Me, Send Me” by Daniel March

Hark, the voice of Jesus crying, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvests waiting; Who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calls us, rich reward He offers free;
who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?

If you cannot cross the ocean, and the distant lands explore,
you can find the lost around you, you can help them at your door.
If you cannot give your thousands, you can give the widow's mite;
what you truly give for Jesus, will be precious in His sight.

If you cannot be the watchman standing high on Zion's wall,
pointing out the path to heaven, off'ring life and peace to all,
with your pray'rs and with your bounties you can do what heav'n demands;
you can be like faithful Aaron holding up the prophet's hands.

Let none hear you idly saying, “There is nothing I can do,”
while the lost of earth are dying, and the Master calls for you:
take the task He gives you gladly; let His work your pleasure be;
answer quickly when He calls you, “Here am I, send me, send me.”

Benediction

Matthew 28.18-20 (adapted)

Leader:

Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, and He sends us to sow the good seed of the Kingdom and make disciples in every nation. May He give us grace to observe all that He has commanded us, and may we know assuredly that He is with us always, even to the end of the age.

All:

Amen.

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