



The Call of the Kingdom; the Testimony of John Mark from his Gospel

“Cultivating Soils, Ears and Hearts”

“The parable is an oblique way of coming at the truth, especially useful in getting past the defense of those who are so familiar with it that they feel superior to it... the first parable is the Four Soils, a parable about hearing. This is the entrance parable, standing guard over everything else that Jesus will say. This parable denies us the option of reducing the word of God to a book; the primary target of the parable is the ear. Jesus is speaking the seed words of God into our ears: pavement ears in which no seed can germinate, rocky ears in which no roots can sink roots, weedy ears in which no ears can mature, and good-soil ears in which all seed bears fruit. The greatest thing going on in this history, in this earth is that God is speaking.”
— Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles*

“Oh deepen me where I am thin and shallow,
Uproot in me the thistle and the thorn,
Keep far from me that swiftly snatching shadow
That seizes on your seed to mock and scorn.
Oh break me open, Jesus, set me free,
Then find and keep your own good ground in me.”
— Malcolm Guite, *The Sower in Parable and Paradox*

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”
— Mark 4:9

order of worship

prelude

Leader: The Lord be with you
People: and also with you

call to worship from Psalm 97:1-6

Leader:
The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!
Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
Fire goes before him
and burns up his adversaries all around.
His lightnings light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.
The mountains melt like wax before the Lord,
before the Lord of all the earth.
The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
and all the peoples see his glory.

song of praise

Holy, Holy, Holy
Holy holy holy
Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning
Our song shall rise to Thee
Holy holy holy
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

Holy holy holy
All the saints adore Thee
Casting down their golden crowns
Around the glassy sea
Cherubim and seraphim
Falling down before Thee
Which wert and art
And evermore shalt be

Holy holy holy
Though the darkness hide Thee
Though the eye of sinful man
Thy glory may not see
Only Thou art holy
There is none beside Thee
Perfect in power
In love and purity

Holy holy holy
Lord God Almighty
All Thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth and sky and sea

Holy holy holy
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

welcome & update

prayer for the world, the church & the city

confession

Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being, whose face is hidden from us by our sins, and whose mercy we forget in the blindness of our hearts: cleanse us from all our offenses, and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires, that with reverent and humble hearts we may draw near to you, confessing our faults, confiding in your grace, and finding in you our refuge and strength; through Jesus Christ your Son.

private confession

assurance of pardon: Luke 18:14

As I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

song of assurance

Nothing but the Blood

What can wash away my sin
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

How precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow
No other fount I know
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

For my pardon this I see
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
For my cleansing this my plea
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Nothing can for sin atone
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
Naught of good that I have done
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

tithes and offerings

doxology

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

scripture reading : Mark 4:1-25

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

God's Word Today Jon Fung

Sermon: "Cultivating Soils, Ears and Hearts"

sermon outline:

1. The sudden shift to stories/parables
2. The parable of all parables... the parable *within* the parable
3. Eyes but cannot see; ears but cannot hear
4. Cultivating listening ears and tender hearts

song of thanksgiving

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

O soul are you weary and troubled
No light in the darkness you see
There's light for a look at the Savior
And life more abundant and free

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth
Will grow strangely (dim) clear
In the light of His glory and grace

Through death into life everlasting
He passed and we follow Him there
Over us sin no more hath dominion
For more than conquerors we are

His Word shall not fail you He promised
Believe Him and all will be well
Then go to a world that is dying
His perfect salvation to tell

Benediction: Philippians 4:7

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon, and remain with you always. Amen.

Peace

Minister: The Peace of the Lord be with you all

People: **And also with you**

Tithes up to January 29, 2021

Yearly Budget	\$tba
Budget Year to Date	\$tba
Actual Giving Year to Date	\$26,520
Actual Giving Last Week	\$3,840

(CC and other options such as e transfers are available via mail@gracevancouver.com)

ministry & contacts

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GRACE VANCOUVER CHURCH

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lead pastor mike hsu |

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music permission by

CCLI#1823266

GRACE VANCOUVER CHURCH



Upward

'A worshipping people' - **Upward**

Worship: we come together corporately to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ

The Word: we submit ourselves to the Bible as our rule for faith and life

Generosity: having received from divine generosity, we overflow with generosity to the world



Inward

'transformed by the peace of God in Christ,' - **Inward**

Sacramental Life: our participation in the sacraments of bread and wine flow into our everyday lives

The Holy Spirit: living by the Spirit, we use His gifts to build the church and bless Vancouver

Prayerful Presence: we intercede for our homes, neighbourhoods and networks, for God to do His work



Outward

'seeking to be faithful stewards of the Kingdom.' - **Outward**

Covenantal Commitments: we covenant with one another to uphold, support and love one another.

Priestly Work: we see all of life as calling (as "vocatio")

Proclamation: we proclaim the Cross of Christ as the accomplishment of God's Kingdom for the world