

There are two things that I am sitting with so far this week, and, as always, the continued sermon prep may take me in all sorts of directions yet, but here are the two ideas for you to ponder the next couple of days until Sunday. Maybe they will lead you to other thoughts and ponderings. The gospel text is Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23. While I am not picking up on it this week most likely in my sermon. You will notice that there is a section missing again this week so you can read through those missing verses if you like and I am also sure that will push you all into some interesting ideas.

The first thought for me is to notice that Jesus was leaving the house. Why bring this up in the narrative at all. I am presuming he was trying get away for some relaxation and sabbath time and it did not end up working out that way for him. He had to get into a boat to get away from the crowds gathering. Maybe they were already there just waiting for him to come out. He and his little band of disciples were probably getting a reputation of healers etc. and so the crowds were coming. There are a bunch of ways a person could go with this. Here is one. Have you ever had something planned and it ended up going in a different direction? Jesus was looking for Sabbath along the shore and ended up sitting in a boat and teaching using parables. My words to you all out there are – please take the sabbath time when you get the chance and it presents itself to you because there are moments when you end up with a changed itinerary and you will be ready for those changes when they happen if you have been taking care of yourself up to that point.

The second thought I have is how many times we plant the seeds of the grace of God in Jesus and then we forget to duck and get our own egos out of the way and let the word do its work. The seed is the seed, and the ground that it falls on is the ground that it falls on, and we do not have any control over that part of it. The only control we exercise is that of scattering the grace of God all over the place and then letting the word do its thing. I think this is where allegorizing parables sometimes falls down – even though Jesus did allegorize this one in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. But sometimes, even in rocky soil, a seed survives and becomes a beautiful flower. I have seen some of the most beautiful displays of creation in the cracks of a boulder. God sows the word of grace through us and then we let the Spirit do its work and then transformation just might happen.

I hope these thoughts help stimulate your thinking as you all live with this parable in your life and may they take you down some paths of grace yet unknown.

Peace,  
Pastor Jeff