

Parables: The Truth with Love
Matthew 13:10-17
Sunday, July 12, 2020
6th Sunday of Kingdomtide
Service of Holy Communion

How many of you have been thinking lately that Christ's return could be sooner rather than later?

How many of you have been thinking that this nation is in dire need of a spiritual awakening?

If you think these are possibilities, are you quiet about your beliefs or do you share them at least with your closest friends or family?

Do you feel foolish for thinking about such things? If you feel foolish, are you able to search out God's truth or does that feeling of being "foolish" hinder you from searching out God's truth? How does one even go about searching out the truth about such events? If you heard about a possible revival meeting someplace would you attend?

Well, as your pastor, if you've been thinking about such things, I'm here to tell you that this is good news. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to expect Christ's return and to make distinctions between worldly values and ways of living and kingdom values and ways of living. You are not foolish. You are actually wise in the faith.

In our gospel lesson today, the disciples ask Jesus a very important question: *"Why do you speak to the people in parables?" (Matthew 13:10)*

With Jesus' response, we hear a common lesson from him. Jesus speaks the truth with love. The parables are expressions of God's ultimate truths, spoken with love.

Jesus told the disciples, *"...the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken away from them."* (Matthew 13:11-12)

What's the ultimate truth that Jesus is teaching here? There are secrets of the kingdom of heaven and some people gain understanding about them and some don't. This is a hard truth that many dismiss. They don't believe in ultimate or absolute truths. One absolute truth is a heaven and a hell and we will end up in one of those two places when this life ends.

Jesus told his lessons and conveyed the absolute truths about the faith in parables to draw people into the faith. The parables are interesting or intriguing ways for him to keep his disciples curious and following him and obeying him.

The hard truth about Jesus' parables is that there are those who understand and believe them are rewarded with greater understanding, godly wisdom and faith. Those who dismiss the lessons, or don't bother to live them out will lose any godly wisdom and faith they may have.

Every person in this country has an opportunity to hear, see, learn about our Christian faith. Yet so many people ignore Christ and his church, that they are choosing to believe in worldly values and live worldly lives.

Disciples of Christ seek God's ways and values. They are skeptical of worldly values and worldly ways of living at the very least. The more mature they are in the faith, the more they are loving God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength and their neighbors as themselves. The more mature they are in the faith, the more they are willing to seek the kingdom of heaven, ignoring those feelings of foolishness.

What kind of people does God reveal these absolute truths to? What kind of people does God reveal these secrets of the kingdom to?

Rich and poor educated and undereducated introverts and extroverts
Young and old any color, race, or ethnic background healthy and unhealthy
People who live in the country, town, suburbia or a city creative people or organized people
Skilled workers or college educated workers Republicans and Democrats
Men and Women Married and single Those with children and without children
Vegetarians and meat eaters athletes and disabled people
People with short hair and long hair early rises and late nighters....
You get the picture

God created all of us and invites all of us to understand the secrets of his kingdom. But not everyone wants to know or live into them. We are living in a time where more people are ignoring Christ's lessons and certainly aren't obeying or living them out. This is why there is a need for a spiritual awakening in our nation. If you are curious about attending a revival meeting, come and talk with me. I won't see you as someone foolish.

Over the next several weeks we will be talking about the kingdom of heaven and Christ's parables about this place. For those who believe, I pray that your belief is affirmed and strengthened in some new ways. For those who are seeking to understand...so glad you are joining us on this journey. May God bless you with greater insight and understanding and a passion to know more and more in the weeks to come.

It is my prayer that this message sustains and nurtures your faith in our living God.