

Service for Week 6th -12th July 2026 By Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, just as others have introduced us to you, so help us in turn to introduce you to others: not preaching at them, not trying to argue with them or to convince them of the claims of the gospel, but simply pointing at who and what you are. Help us to speak of all that you mean to us so others may come to meet you and know you for themselves, through your love. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen

Bible Reading Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore.

Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times

what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear."

The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

From Verse 18

Jesus said -"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

The other day I found myself saying something to my son and afterwards thinking -that's exactly what my father said to me years ago. Has that

happened to you? When you find yourself saying things that your parents or the people that brought you up said to you years ago. We tend to underestimate the influence of words that were said to us when we were children growing up. The quote 'Give me the child for seven years and I will give you the man' is thought to have been from the founder of the Roman Catholic Jesuit order, Ignatius of Loyola. It emphasized the importance of what is said to young children and how they are brought up, in forming their character as adults.

But what we say to adults to our family, our friends and those we meet and how we say it is also important as it can have an influence both on their way of thinking and on their lives. The story Jesus told of the farmer sowing seed in the fields is probably the most well-known of Jesus' parables, which were stories with a message.

When the disciples ask Jesus what this parable means and what was its message for them Jesus says if you are talking to people about God's love and forgiveness and how he wants us to live and they do not understand it, then it is because evil thoughts are preventing them from realizing the truth. Jesus goes on using the example of the seed sower to say how words can be accepted or rejected. The influence of your words can also be short lived if they have not

accepted God's love in their hearts. This is because when they go through difficult times in their lives, they will forget what you have told them and the comfort you have offered.

What you say about God's love can also be rejected if they are too worried about life or if they think that money is the answer to everything and they have enough not to bother with anything else. However, be encouraged that most of our words are heard and understood and will provide help and strength to those we speak to.

The parable was Jesus's teaching for the disciples as they were about to go out and tell people about Jesus, but it is also a message for us today in how we share our faith with others. Words that remain in our memories and because of their truth and the benefit we have gained from them are words we will want to pass on to children – to our families, friends or to anyone we may meet. Words that say God loves you, and cares for you.

Amen

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you have called me to be your witness. Teach me to look beyond appearances and to recognize that, though I may not always see it, the seed that I sow often bears fruit in unexpected ways and places.

Amen

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett