

Lent Day 5
Monday February 15, 2016

Reading: Mark 4:26-29

He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

Reflection

There’s a tension here, isn’t there? On the one hand there is work to be done. A farmer who doesn’t plant cannot expect any produce. But on the other hand there is a process beyond what the farmer does. This plant grows and produces apart from the efforts of the farmer - he or she doesn’t have control of growth, or non-growth.

This certainly has application to our life as the church. We do our best, but ultimately the success of the kingdom is not a result of our efforts. This is also true for our lives! For years I felt frustrated and defeated because I couldn’t ‘get it right.’ What I have discovered 20 years later is that while I have been called to action - I need to consciously let certain things go and take certain things up - the work of transformation is the Spirit’s.

So many texts of Scripture use the passive voice, which indicates that the work of transformation belongs to God, not us. Our responsibility is to submit ourselves to the work of the Spirit. This can be a long term project - see day 4. This is truly good news for us because it takes the weight off, doesn’t it? I don’t have to fix myself, in fact, I can’t. Rather, God has promised to give me a transformed heart. Thanks be to God!

Prayer

Lord of the harvest, would you produce the harvest of the kingdom in us and in and through our church? Pour out your Spirit on us and make us to stand firm in you. Amen.