

Reflection for Trinity 6

Today's Gospel reading is the well-known 'parable of the sower'; at least, that's how it is generally known, and indeed how Jesus refers to it. And through it we can learn about the sower, who of course represents Jesus, spreading the good news about God's Kingdom. The sower scatters the seed widely, seemingly without care for where it falls. This, of course, is not good farming practice! But it is the way that we see God working – he offers his love, mercy and forgiveness to all people, even (or especially?) those who may look to us to be hopeless cases; but perhaps we looked like that to others before we came to faith!

But most of today's parable concerns types of soil, not the sower. Four different types are described, and in the end only one type comes good – but what fruit, and what a harvest it yields!

I'm sure we would all like to be 'good soil', bearing fruit a hundred-fold (or even thirty-fold). And the good news is that, with the Holy Spirit's help and power, we can change and improve the type of soil we are. By prayer, by regular reading of the bible, by fellowship with other Christians, we can make our faith have a deeper root in our lives; and we can better withstand temptations that come our way.

I don't think it's helpful to try to take a strict audit of our fruitfulness (have we borne fruit a hundred-fold or only five-fold?). And it would be wrong to 'big ourselves up' and ignore that our fruitfulness is fundamentally down to God working through us. But we can be pleased when we have been able to take part, by word or deed, in the spreading of God's Kingdom in our community.

Ian Totterdell, churchwarden



NEXT SUNDAY 19.07.26 Trinity 7

10.30am in the Church



OT Isaiah 44: 6-8

NT Romans 8: 12-25

GOSPEL Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

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St Thomas, Exeter

12th July 2026

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

500 *There is a Redeemer*

571 *You shall go out with joy*

514 *Thou, whose almighty word*

321 *Love divine, all loves excelling*

Monday 13th July

11am Vera Batchelor's funeral service at Exeter Crematorium

Tuesday 14th July

7.30pm House group at Helen's house

Wednesday 15th July

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 17th July

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny Tuckett's house

Friday 18th July

9.30am Morning Prayers

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding: pour into our hearts such love toward you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Isaiah 55: 10-13

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Romans 8: 1-11

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the

mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!' 'Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the

word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

Post Communion

God of our pilgrimage, you have led us to the living water: refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Notices

Today we welcome the Ven Andrew Beane, Archdeacon of Exeter to preach and preside at our eucharist service.

Next week we welcome back Rev Sarah Mounoury to preside and preach at our service which will include the baptism of Sophie Loren-England.

Many thanks to all those who served on our stall at the Love St Thomas Summer Festival last weekend. We took a total of £257.21 and we will also receive a sizeable donation from the festival funds.

Rev Hannah Alderson, our new Rector, will be licensed to our parish at 7.30pm on **Monday 7th September**. Please continue to pray for Hannah and her family as they prepare to move into our community.

During the current heatwave our church building is staying open until the early evening as a cool space.

