

2026-07-26 ... 10am Communion Sermon ... Revd Bev Jameson
Romans 8: 26-39, Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

PRAYER

Father may these spoken words be faithful to the written word and lead us into the living word, Jesus Christ our Lord - Amen

SERMON

Our gospel reading this morning contains a well-known parables, which are specifically about the kingdom of God. The mustard seed is extremely small, like a speck of dust but it grows into an enormous plant, so large a bird can nest in its branches. So the kingdom will grow from insignificant beginnings.

Jesus then tells a second parable – that of the yeast, making a similar point – the yeast the woman uses is no ordinary yeast, its super yeast which she is confident will make its way without being mixed into the huge lump of dough (so big a lump of dough it would make enough bread to feed about 150 people). The presence of the Kingdom of God in the ministry of Jesus has a potency that belies its small scale operation.

In some respects the two parables have a similar concept. From small things mighty things grow. This must have been some comfort to the early church. Only a few people had heard Jesus and accepted him and many of those who followed his teachings in Corinth, Rome, Galatia, Ephesus were persecuted. But 2000 years later Christianity is still here across the globe. **But** this can also be personal growth too. A small beginning, a speck of faith in Christ can grow into a mighty witness to the lord. When did that spec, Christ's mustard seed enter your lives?

I can tell you when it entered mine - Sues's wedding

Once it is there, how do we grow and nurture Christ's mustard seed in our personal lives? How does Christ's yeast bubble and influence our lives? It is a question Christians over the millennia have pondered. How does that parable apply to us **personally**? Well – perhaps in four ways :

- 1) Perhaps by the **support of other Christians**, helping and guiding, influencing us by the way they live their lives, following Jesus teaching and values as Christians. Many people have support me and helped me on my faith journey, perhaps people have supported you.
- 2) For me and perhaps for you, **scripture** is an important way to learn more of Christ and his teachings to help nurture that mustard seed within us. Our New Testament reading is a powerful passage towards the end of one of the most powerful of Paul's letters. Perhaps Paul sensed he was risking his life going to Jerusalem, so it was vital that he set out the main Christian message for his brothers and sisters in Christ in Rome to help them in their current situation and understand more about his teaching and to grow in Christ. Those teachings have inspired thousands of people, great men like Augustine, Luther, Bunyan, Wesley, but also small, ordinary, insignificant people, *like me and perhaps you*, who simply wander through life following Christ the best they can through good times and bad. We all have bad times, yet Paul gives us hope

and a promise in verse 28 ***And we know that in all things work together for good for those who love God, who have been called according to his purpose.*** Paul doesn't promise that only good, or pleasurable, things will come to the Christian. What he does say is that even the difficult experiences he describes ***hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*** Will not separate us from the love of God. He is constantly working in all things for the good of those who love him. ***For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*** That is how Christ's mustard seed grows in us. For me and perhaps for you, scripture can guide and help us. The bible helps nurture Christ's mustard seed.

- 3) Thirdly to be close to God, to help the mustard seed grow is **prayer**, our personal communication with God. It is prayer which helps us through the bad times and the good, but sometimes it is hard to pray. Sometimes we don't know what to pray. Sometimes we pray for things, which are unsuitable, selfish or even harmful. Sometimes we are in such pain and agony within our lives we simply cannot find the words, but Paul has an answer for this in verse 26 ***In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.*** Sometimes all we can do is groan and the Spirit groans with us.
- 4) And that is perhaps a fourth way of nurturing Christ's mustard seed – **the Holy Spirit**. One of the many things the Holy Spirit does for us is to help us pray. The Holy Spirit helps us face the things we cannot face, walk into a future that scares and alarms us.

So how does our mustard seed of faith grow?

- by the help and support of other believers, by the way they live their lives in Christ
- by reading scripture, applying what it teaches to our own lives and trusting in the promise scripture gives.
- By Prayer
- by the Holy Spirit which helps us face the things we cannot face To coin a phrase, we never walk alone.

I pray for **all** our mustards seeds of belief in Jesus, whether they are small specs of faith or enormous plants, so large a bird can nest in its branches. I pray they continue to grow and mature. I pray we support one another in that growth; we turn to our bibles for guidance, we pray even we when cannot find the words and we seek the Holy Spirit to help us through the good times and the bad, all of which helps bring Jesus into our lives this day and every day

AMEN

Reverend Beverley Jameson