



Connect Discussion Guide

01.23.22 Message | David Beuttel | Matthew 13:1-23

Key Scriptures:

*And though a tenth remain in it,
it will be burned again,
like a terebinth or an oak,
whose stump remains
when it is felled.”
The holy seed is its stump.*

- Isaiah 6:13

For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

“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 has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along 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 he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he 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 deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

- Matthew 13:17-23

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

- Ephesians 2:4-5

Message Highlights:

- Listening to parables can feel like you're in a maze or labyrinth; they are earthly stories with heavenly meanings that Jesus speaks in code-like words.
- Today is all about magnetic direction; the problem is we think we know our way out of the metaphorical “labyrinth” and we go after false norths. We don't want to hear and understand because we think we know how to get out of the maze on our own.

- We point back to true north using the map God provides us in his Word.
- Isaiah relates God's kingdom to the growth of a tree; people wait years to see a tree fully grown, similar to how Jesus invites you and I into Kingdom work that has been happening/growing for centuries.

Conversation Starter:

Think about a time you found yourself to be very lost, whether that be locationally, relationally, spiritually, etc. How did God use that time of uncertainty to strengthen your relationship with him? Share with your group.

Discuss the Message:

1. Why does Jesus speak in parables? Refer to Matthew 13:10-11 for guidance. What do you make of Jesus' response to the disciples?
2. Oftentimes, we think of Matthew 13:12 in terms of finances, but what else could Jesus be referring to here? Which areas of your life would you consider yourself to be blessed abundantly? Brainstorm with your group.
3. Isaiah relates God's kingdom to the growth of a tree. Brainstorm with your group some of the ways that this analogy holds true. How has your own spiritual growth looked similar to the growth of a tree?
4. One of Jesus' intentions with parable stories was to leave people asking questions; why do you think this is? What do you do with your questions for the Lord? Who or what has helped you explore these questions in a healthy way?
5. David explained that we aren't just invited to join the work of the kingdom, but invited to join in the praise of God like King David (Psalm 146). Is this the desire of your heart, and if so, have you been living out this worshipful life? Take note of your heart's posture toward worship right now, and assess how the "soil" you find yourself planted in right now is affecting your posture.

Pray:

Father in Heaven, thank you for the way in which you so generously sow the seeds of your truth in our lives! We pray that you will help us, by your Holy Spirit, to keep our hearts and our minds pointed to our "true north," your Son, Jesus our Christ. May we be good soil for the seed of your gospel, may we grow deep roots in our life with you so that we can bear much fruit as you expand your kingdom through our lives. Amen.