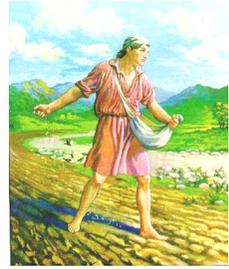


Sunday 16th July 2017

Trinity 5

Proper 10 **Green**



Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified: hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry they may serve you in holiness and truth to the glory of your name; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Romans 8:1-11 English Standard Version (ESV)

Life in the Spirit

8¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.^[a] 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you^[b] free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 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 for sin,^[c] he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 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. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus^[d] from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Footnotes: a. Some manuscripts add *who walk not according to the flesh (but according to the Spirit)*. b. Some manuscripts *me*. c. Or *and as a sin offering*. d. Some manuscripts lack *Jesus*.

COMMENT: Complex as it is, its essential message of this passage remains clear: the Spirit gives life. Paul gave explicit detail of how this came about: God sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world as an ordinary human being. Jesus' God-given mission was to deal with human sin and the alienation from God which sin causes. He did this by living our human life and meeting every requirement of the law. The Spirit of God which was in Jesus now dwells in us so that we too may live as he lived in fellowship with God. The power of God that raised Jesus from the dead now gives us spiritual life. Mortal though we still are, the Spirit will ultimately deliver us from spiritual death.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 English Standard Version (ESV)

The Parable of the Sower

13 ¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, ⁶ but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears,^[a] let him hear."

The Parable of the Sower Explained

¹⁸ "Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ 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.^[b] ²² 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. ²³ 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."

Footnotes: a. Some manuscripts add here *to hear*. b. or *stumbles*.

COMMENT: The familiar parable of the sower and the seed described varying types of spiritual growth and failure to grow. The second part of the reading presented a typical allegorical explanation of it. This way of explaining how scripture should be interpreted was popular in the later part of the 1st century and in the 2nd century. It may have been added to the original parable. It gives a clear explanation, that not every seed falls on good ground. This can yield a clue to what we can do in mission – prepare the ground - prayer – get rid of the rocks and thorns – remove the things that can get in the way.

Psalm 65 *Te decet hymnus*

℟ **To you our praise is due in Zion, O God.**

¹ *For the Choirmaster. A Psalm of David. A Song.*

² To you our praise is due
in Zion, O God.

To you we pay our vows,

³ you who hear our prayer. **℟**

To you all flesh will come

⁴ with its burden of sin.

Too heavy for us, our offenses,
but you wipe them away. **℟**

⁵ Blessed is he whom you choose and call
to dwell in your courts.

We are filled with the blessings of your house,
of your holy temple. **℟**

⁶ You keep your pledge with wonders,
O God our saviour,
the hope of all the earth
and of far distant isles. **℟**

⁷ You uphold the mountains with your strength,
you are girded with power.

⁸ You still the roaring of the seas,
(the roaring of their waves,)
and the tumult of the peoples. **℟**

⁹ The ends of the earth stand in awe
at the sight of your wonders.
The lands of sunrise and sunset
you fill with your joy. **℟**

¹⁰ You care for the earth, give it water,
you fill it with riches.
Your river in heaven brims over
to provide its grain.

℟ To you our praise is due in Zion, O God.

And thus you provide for the earth;
¹¹ you drench its furrows;
you level it, soften it with showers;
you bless its growth. **℟**

¹² You crown the year with your goodness.

Abundance flows in your steps,
¹³ in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. **℟**

The hills are girded with joy,
¹⁴ the meadows covered with flocks,
the valleys are decked with wheat.
They shout for joy, yes they sing. **℟**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: This hymn of praise presented many images of peace and prosperity attributed to the gracious interventions of the Lord. At its best Israel's religious tradition included a firm belief in the Lord's sovereignty over the natural world and its productive capacities as well as over historical events. The recognition of this providential sovereignty formed the basis for worshipful rejoicing in a number of psalms. As verses. 2-5 state, even the privilege of worshiping the Lord in the temple offered a sign of divine sovereignty. The rest of this liturgy of thanksgiving was commentary.

Post Communion

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by your governance, that your Church may joyfully serve you in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing

Christ, who has nourished us with himself the living bread, make you one in praise and love, and raise you up at the last day; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**