

Coffee to Go | Proper 10

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

seed, soil, Jesus, weeds, grinding, God, receive, scripture **SPEAKERS**
Karin Peter, Blake Smith

Karin Peter 00:26

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the seasons, scriptures and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter. I'm here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you on the journey. So our question each week is where is Jesus this week? And maybe it's where are we with Jesus this week? So we are still in what's called Ordinary Time. And kind of, for our purposes here at Coffee to Go, Ordinary Time is a way of ordering or numbering the Sundays in this season. And it's kind of this season of learning how to be a disciple time. That's a, I think, a good descriptive name of it. So we're traveling with Jesus as he teaches and meets people and heals the sick. And here today, the author says the author of the Gospel says Jesus went outside to go sit by the sea. But so many folks came, he was forced to climb into a boat. So imagine all the people following him all the time, waiting just outside his door to get his attention. When he first comes out. No matter where he goes. It's kind of like people sitting in a ticket line for Ticketmaster overnight to get the good seats at the concert. They're just waiting, waiting, waiting for the window to open. So get that picture in your mind, always people on the shore. So maybe you are in the boat with Jesus, maybe you're just off the shore in the shallow water or maybe you're in the crowd, straining to hear what Jesus has to say. So let's delve into our Scripture Blake.

Blake Smith 02:10

All right, well, our scripture comes from the Gospel of Matthew, the 13th chapter, the 1st through 3rd verse, and the 18th through 23rd verse. That same day, Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. 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 parable saying, "Listen, A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a 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. And yet other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. If you have ears, hear? 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 this age 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, one hundred fold in another sixty, and in another thirty.

Karin Peter 04:18

This is such an interesting scripture Blake, and I think this is the one where we checked out what the Gospels said, the book the gospel, by Sarah Ruden. And she interpreted the Gospels from Greek, trying to provide a translation that didn't have the kind of centuries of religious overtone, to just see, what does the what does the kind of bare bones Greek tell us in this. And so here's how Sarah Rudin translated that couple of verses. It's twenty to twenty-two. The person sown in rocky places is the one who hears the account, and right away takes it in with joy. Yet, he doesn't take root, but instead is merely of the moment. And when grinding hardship and hounding come, because of the account, he falls away, and the one so and among the thorny weeds, he hears the account. But the anxieties of this present life and the false appeal of wealth, strangle what he heard, and it can't bear grain.

Blake Smith 05:25

Huh? That's really interesting.

Karin Peter 05:29

There's something just really almost modern about that translation of the Greek text when you think about grinding, just overwhelming anxiety and burden and, and troubles. So, yeah.

Blake Smith 05:46

Right. That's a real clear picture of the world that many live in today that I was reading the passage. You know, I know that the passage normally and very clearly speaks of the seed being those of us who were put into or sown in different fields and where we're sown depends on where we are in our lives. But I was also thinking about this as sometimes I think, and I think you've mentioned this before, that we are the ground itself, and the seed is the Word of God. And so what catches my attention about this, in that way of thinking is that no matter where we are in our life, whether we're in that grinding situation where everything is so overwhelming, and we're torn in different directions, et cetera, et cetera, God still plants God's seed, generously, and allows that seed to do what it will. So it's not only sown on the perfect good soil, God says God's seed amongst all of us, wherever we are. And that's, that's kind of a... I liked that thought. I don't know if that's anywhere near what the writer intended. But I think as we talked about that overwhelming, grinding that that many go through.

Karin Peter 06:35

Grinding hardship. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

Blake Smith 07:18

So I do, I do appreciate these images that Jesus uses to tell his stories and it just makes it really real for us. So Sarah Ruden's piece does even more as it interprets it in that way, but it helps us as disciples to learn. And, proclaiming the coming of God's peaceable kingdom, which we have probably also said many times before is not the, "as you expect it kingdom." It is an upside down kingdom. It's completely different than what might be the norm of any society at any particular time. And the author

here, I think, is making it clear by having all of these different ways that not everyone is on board with this kind of message and receives it differently. Some folks are vaguely interested, some might be more interested, but because of life circumstances, or perhaps personality, they're not good at follow through, or they can't follow through for some reason. And then, you know, there are some that are drawn to it, but just don't have the ability to commit. And then there are others who are always authentically seeking to live the message that Jesus brings. And the other piece is that any one of us might be any one of those spots on a given day. So it's, you know, those, the fact that there again, there are so many ways in which God sows God seed and allows for us to be where we are and to receive. So we may see ourselves in this illustration, and we need to ask ourselves, what kind of seed are we? Or what kind of land are we? So what is the soil that we've landed on? If we're the seed or what kind of soil are we are we a soil that is hardened and tested and tried and can't receive? Or are we a soil that is prepared and nurtured and and ready to receive? Have we landed in an arid dry or depleted place of exhaustion? I guess the important thing would be to be able to be honest and acknowledge where we are.

Karin Peter 09:35

There are some days I feel like I'm resting in on some pretty arid and dry surfaces. Just like there are some days I'm feeling like I'm in the weeds. So

Blake Smith 09:49

That brings a lot of memories back in the weeds. That was a phrase we use in the restaurant business. Absolutely insane and yeah, there are days when I am in the weeds. Wherever you are Are these vivid analogies help us, you know, take a deeper look at what we want to be and how we want to live, and how we understand the way of Jesus at this particular point in our journey.

Karin Peter 10:14

Yeah, absolutely. So, when I think about that, acknowledge that, I can be any of those at or land at any of those places at any given time. I think the the flip side of that though, is as community as a community of believers, we are called to be the soil so that when people encounter us, they find nurturer, and they can take root. And they can find place and respite and all of those things that we talked about when we talk about reconciliation and healing. So one way to experience this this week might be to dig in the dirt, it's nice weather, depending on, well, depending where you live, it's nice weather. So plant some seeds, plant them real carefully in a row, if that's your nature, or just scatter them willy nilly all over the place and see where they fall. Or on the flip side of that, maybe pull some weeds and imagine what we might need to be pulled from within you. Maybe they're blocking the sun or taking up all the nutrients. Or maybe you don't see yourself in that analogy of the seeds at all. Maybe you feel like the soil, the dirt that receives and nurtures the seeds. I said one time in an article I wanted to be good dirt to nurture seeds. So grab some compost from your garden, or fertilize your indoor plants and do something that enriches the soil of your inner self at the same time. Read, meditate, pray, sing, rest, whatever it is that allows you to really take roots.

Blake Smith 11:52

Great well before I give us the blessing I one more question comes to mind and that is for us to consider this week what feeds my soul and helps me bear good fruit. How do I prepare the soil if you will? Our blessing is a short passage from "For Eddy, Who Still Walks on the Path of Witness" by Jan

Richardson. I long for Your presence at this table to tell you how your words bore fruit. bore witness bore hope in the decades that followed, how every little seed that settled in the throats of those struggling to speak, how every sentence became a bloom in the hands of those writing their way out of the wilderness. Thanks again for joining us here at Coffee to Go we look forward to being with you again and the next episode of Coffee to go where we will explore our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.