Sermon: based on Matthew 13 – the Parable of the Sower

Jesus is not telling farmers how to sow, or what is likely to happen to seeds sown in difficult places, but about how different people react to the message he came to bring – the Kingdom of Heaven is near!

We could spend some time looking at these reactions, matching them to our experience:

* Some folk just do not ‘get’ it
* Some folk do get it but persecution/opposition drives it out
* Some folk do get it but worries and love for riches overcome it
* Some folk do get it and respond well

I want to look at two other aspects which are often missed and are not even mentioned by Jesus.

[1] Who is the sower?

Jesus? He offers the message that we have been thinking of in the last few weeks.

The Church? We carry on Jesus message.

But ultimately it is God. The message tells us about the presence of God and his Kingdom now.

Boris Johnson is coming to NZ in July. He represents UK. Similarly we and Jesus represent God.

[2] The wasteful generosity of God

If God is the sower, he is wasteful. Seeds are sown abundantly all over, even when little chance of response.

Seen in creation – if all apple seeds became apple trees the world would be covered!

Seen in Jesus – death on the cross is for the world, even though many reject this.

Why bother with those who do not get it, those too weak to hold on, or those easily distracted? Why not focus only on those who are likely to respond positively? That is what we tend to do. We think in terms of numbers, efficiency, using natural connections and relationships.

Our reaction to God’s generosity is often not to copy it, but there is some truth in what theologian Tom Long wrote: “*The church is called to ‘waste itself,’ to throw grace around like there is no tomorrow, pre­cisely because there is a tomorrow, and it belongs to God*”.

I have to rethink having Quiet Days when so few come. Is it more Godlike to carry on even though few respond? This is not easy. May God help us find more and deeper ways to be generous like him in our mission together as God’s people.