

THE LIVING
WORD
OF
PENTECOST

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

July 9 - July 15



DAY OF PENTECOST

Matthew 13 is a parable about God as a sower of seeds. At my home, summer is in full bloom. I see the evidence all around my yard of seeds that fell onto fertile ground. There is, of course, no evidence left of the seeds that were eaten by birds, or choked by weeds, or any of the other unfortunate outcomes described in Jesus' parable.

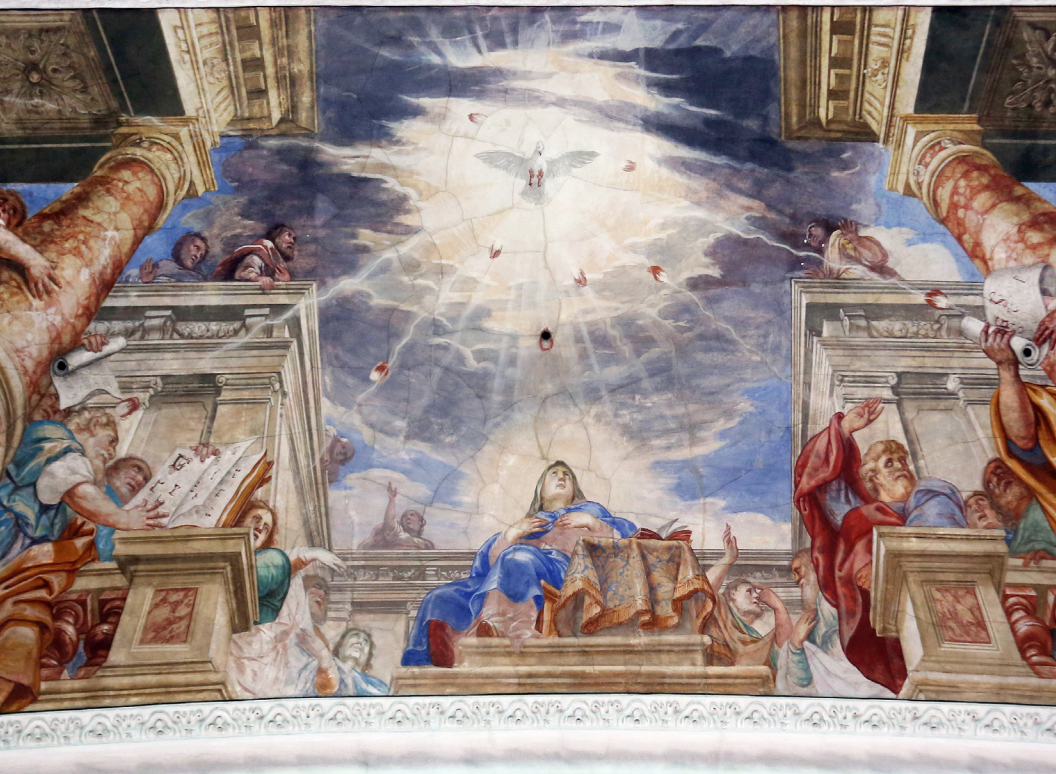
Matthew 13:10 is a tricky passage about the purpose of Jesus speaking in parables. He does this, he tells his disciples, to help them understand the mysteries of heaven, but to conceal those mysteries from those who hear without understanding.

The Book of Psalms contains two meditations that remind us of the importance of staying on the right path when we follow God. Like those seeds in the parable, we are also prone to wandering. God's word acts as a light for us, guiding us in the path we should walk and protecting us from snares.

The Old Testament readings remind us of God's work in creating a people. Collectively, they tell us the story of Israel, but also of a good God who is working in ways we may not see. This is an especially important reminder when we think about the unknown work of sowing seeds.

We can join with God in the important work of sowing goodness and righteousness but we won't always see the end result. We sow important work only to watch it wither. We tend relationships that are later overcome by weeds. We tell of Jesus' goodness to people who might not always seem responsive.

But the earth is God's. Our creator, God, is the ultimate gardener, the One who fills the earth with good things, the One who answers prayers and comes to all people. We get to partner with him in planting, but he alone is the God of the harvest.



FOR reflection

Where do you need to trust God in your life as the One who sows the seeds?

Are there seeds that you need to sow?

How can you take a step of obedience?





SCRIPTURE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Thursday	Psalm 119:105-112; Exodus 3:1-6; Romans 2:12-16
Friday	Psalm 119:105-112; Deuteronomy 32:1-10; Romans 15:14-21
Saturday	Psalm 119:105-112; Isaiah 2:1-4; John 12:44-50
Sunday	Psalm 119:105-112; Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 65:1-13; Isaiah 55:10-13; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Monday	Psalm 142; Micah 1:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
Tuesday	Psalm 142; Jeremiah 49:7-11; Ephesians 4:17-5:2
Wednesday	Psalm 142; Obadiah 15-21; Matthew 13:10-17

Why do the daily readings begin on Thursday?

The daily readings for each week begin on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. The Thursday through Saturday readings prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead. The Monday through Wednesday readings reflect on what was presented on Sunday.

The Morning Liturgy

Opening Scripture

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:2

Opening Prayer *(based on Psalm 51)*

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. *Amen.*

Scripture Reading *(read Psalm and Gospel text here)*

Period of Silence

Confessing Our Faith *(Apostles' Creed)*

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect *(Proper 10)*

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

A Midday Prayer

Blessed Savior, at this hour you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms. Grant that all the peoples of the earth may look to you and be saved; for your mercies' sake. *Amen.*

An Early Evening Prayer

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

A Bedtime Confession and Prayer

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. *Amen.*

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.





Image: The Baptism of The Holy Spirit | Artist: Rebecca Brogan | www.jtbarts.com