

The Kingdom Grows Because God's Love Never Gives Up

Matthew 13:31–33, 44–52 and Romans 8:26–39

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26th July 2026, Christ Church West Wimbledon

May I speak in the name of the father and of the son and of the holy Spirit Amen.
Let me begin by asking you a question.

What are you looking for?

If someone stopped you after this service and asked, "What are you really searching for in life?" what would you say?

Peace?
Purpose?
Security?
Hope? Love?
Joy?
A little less fear or less anxiety?
A little more certainty?

Perhaps a miracle?

Whether we realise it or not, many of us are searching for something.

We live in a world that promises instant answers. We have instant coffee, next-day delivery, and if a website takes more than a few seconds to load, we start refreshing the screen wondering when the page we are looking for is going to load. If we send an email or message to someone and they don't reply in good time, we may begin to wonder, have I upset that person, are they ignoring me? are they okay? did they receive the message?

This because we have become accustomed to quick results.

But the deepest things in life are rarely instant.

Love grows.

Trust grows.

Character grows.

Faith grows.

And so does the Kingdom of God. In describing it, Jesus tells us these beautiful parables of;

A tiny seed that disappears beneath the soil before it becomes a flourishing tree.

Yeast that disappears into the dough before it transforms the whole loaf.

Treasure which remains hidden before it is discovered.

These seem like ordinary images, but Jesus uses ordinary things to reveal extraordinary truths.

In the passages of scripture that we had read to us, Jesus is revealing to us that;

The Kingdom of God often begins small, grows quietly, and becomes more beautiful than we could ever imagine.

So much of God's work happens before we can see the evidence.

And that is where Romans 8 speaks so powerfully into our lives.

St Paul says, "We do not know how to pray as we ought."

What an honest statement.

There are moments when words fail us.

Moments when life can seem confusing.

Moments when our prayers become silent or a little more than groans or sighs.

But the Apostle Paul reminds us that even in those moments, God has not stepped away.

The Holy Spirit is praying within us and for us.

While we are searching for God...

God has already found us, he knows us and exactly where we are at.

While we wonder if anything is happening...

God is already at work.

The seed is growing.

The yeast is working.

The Spirit is praying.

Paul then gives us one of Scripture's greatest promises: that

"..All things work together for good for those who love God..."

Paul does not say everything that happens is good.

The Bible is honest about suffering.

There is pain and grief and at times, seasons when we struggle with the challenges we are facing.

But Paul tells us that God is bigger than our circumstances.

God can bring beauty from brokenness.

Hope from despair.

Strength from weakness.

New life from what seems finished, done, dusted, buried.

Because God is always working.

Then Jesus speaks about the fishing net.

The net is cast into the sea and gathers every kind of fish.

What a wonderful picture of the generosity of God's Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Heaven is not a private club for the perfect.

It is not reserved for only the powerful wealthy, educated, or those who have everything figured out.

The net is wide.

The invitation to us is wide.

The love of God is wide.

The Kingdom is for the rich and the poor.

For the young and the old. Educated and uneducated,
every nation and every culture.

For those who feel close to God and those who are still searching.

For those who arrive with great faith and those who come carrying questions.

Jesus casts the net of grace into the whole world.

And no person is invisible to God.

No life is insignificant.

No story is beyond redemption.

Romans 8 reminds us that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Not our background, or past, mistakes, struggles or our differences, because God's love is so much bigger than we can comprehend.

And the greatest treasure is that we have found Christ and Christ has found us.

Before we knew His name, He knew ours.

That is the hope that we share.

We are held by a love that will not let us go.

So, whatever season of life you are in...

If your faith feels like a tiny mustard seed...

If your prayers feel like silent sighs or that you are groaning..

If you wonder whether God is working...

If you feel hidden, overlooked, or forgotten...

Hear this good news:

The seed is growing.

The yeast is working.

The net is wide.

The Spirit is praying.

Christ is holding you.

And nothing, not hardship, fear, failure, or anxiety, not even death, can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.