Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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October 24, 2022
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“What is the Kingdom of God like?” (Luke 13:18).

Eph 5:21-33; *Luke 13:18-21*

The Gospel begins with the ability to see. God’s presence in the world is as mysterious as it is ubiquitous. Jesus’ many parables were invitations to recognize what God was always doing right under our noses. Once we see we can participate, our small energies and efforts joined to the divine purpose at work in the world.

A common theme in many of the parables is that something great is produced by something small: The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, the smallest of seeds, yet when planted, produces a bush large enough to give shelter to the birds of heaven. The Kingdom of God is like a small amount of yeast a woman mixes into three measures of wheat flour, producing enough bread to feed a village.

Another theme is that of surprise. Seemingly weak people, like the widow who goes up against an unjust judge and prevails. Children understand God better than theologians; sinners enter the Kingdom ahead of the righteous; blessed are the poor and the meek, those who mourn, who are persecuted or pushed aside, for God

stands with them. God’s love is at work in history like water on rock, slowly but surely transforming everything. Martyrs and servants, not warriors and kings, will change hearts where power alone alienates and divides.

We can find each day in the news media a litany of woes brought on by untrammeled economic and political stratagems that appeal to fear and selfishness and wars. We see the clash of cultures and religions, resistance to racial and ethnic inclusion, to realistic and compassionate migration policy, universal human rights for all to education, healthcare, meaningful work, self-determination, freedom from fear and exploitation.

A different world is possible. A different world is necessary. But first we must see its potential and share in the holy work that will realize the common good as the dream of history. Parables are all around us, invisible to the eye but perceived by the heart in every human face, in every relationship and impulse toward goodness. The Kingdom of God is among us, here and now.

