

WEEKLY SERMON

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The things of the Kingdom

MARK 4. v26-34

What does it mean when we talk about the Kingdom of God to people these days?

There are not so many kings in the world as there were; that said, we do have the example of our Queen as a Christian monarch.

This Sunday we will be given the opportunity to reflect upon this image which is central to Jesus' teaching. So, what does it mean to us today and how would we describe it to others?

Well, it seems to me that one of the core parts of what Jesus is saying is that it is not like any other monarchy. However, the beauty of the imagery of the Kingdom of God is that we see that Kingdom in unexpected places as well as expected ones.

Jesus uses quite a few images of growth and progression when he talks about the Kingdom. He wants people to understand that the Kingdom is both all around us and yet needs spotting as well.

I can think of several instances in my life where I have seen something beautiful or a graceful action and thought ... 'Yes, that is the Kingdom for you'.

A stranger who stops to help someone in need. A child mesmerised by the beauty of creation as they see something, be it animal, vegetable or mineral. It could be the way in which we see one of our churches coming alive in a new way to the reality of God's plan and what His purpose is for them.

Therefore, the Kingdom is a thing of growth. The Kingdom is something of progression. When Jesus speaks of it, he is clearly talking about something beyond our usual experience and yes, he always uses images from experience.

This, then, is the beautiful paradox when we consider this image. How will we both spot the things of the Kingdom and point others to them? That must be a core question for the Christian. To put it differently, how do we see God at work, engage with God is doing and show others the beauty of it?

This was a core part of Jesus' teaching and so must be important for us. But it does mean that each and every one of us are called to be, if you will, 'Kingdom spotters' - seeing the things of God in our midst and showing them to others.

Archdeacon David Picken

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