

Reflection – July 26, 2020

Today, I am in the kitchen.

We do not know if Jesus knew how to cook, or bake, but he certainly knew how to eat.

And, eating with someone was blessing.

Today's stories can easily find a home here.

A mustard seed that becomes a tree of faith, is also a flavour that enhances other things. The biblical mustard tree has leaves that were eaten. We likely know a different plant – one that grows in fields of yellow bringing the prairies to glorious colour. The flavouring ideas is the same though. Mustard is used with something to bring something else a greater fullness. Mustard in a salad dressing. Mustard on a sandwich. Mustard on something roasting in the oven.

Yeast, mixed with flour and water, adds the leaven that makes the bread. Bread is flat without yeast. The yeast needs the flour and the water to come to life. And once it is alive, it grows and grows and changes all that it touches. Once the yeast is mixed in, it is everywhere. Anyone who has accidentally added the incorrect amount of a leaven like yeast, or baking powder knows that once it is in, it cannot be taken out!

The other parables are about worth. Treasure hidden in a field. A pearl of great value.

I wonder why Jesus added those? Jesus rarely spoke of things of monetary value as if they had worth. Jesus was all about the people. He was all about God. He was all about justice. He was all about love. He was all about faith.

Perhaps it was an invitation for us to reflect on what is of real value in our lives. Do we value what we have more than we value those around us? Is it the other way around?

Do you remember the joke about the rich person who begged St. Peter to be allowed to bring treasure to heaven? St. Peter eventually agreed, and the person arrived at the pearly gates with a suitcase. St. Peter opened the suitcase and saw it was completely full of gold bars – bricks of gold. To which St. Peter said – 'paving stones? You brought paving stones?'

Perhaps these four stories come together in an invitation to think about God. God's love is here and now and adds flavour and value to everything we know.

But God's love also needs us to share our love. In God's Dream Desmond Tutu wrote, 'Each of us carries a piece of God's heart within us. And when we love one another the pieces of God's heart are made whole.'

We are reminded that the realm of heaven – the kingdom, the kindom – whatever word you use – is about God's grace and love that is so pervasive, and so expansive that nothing will ever separate us from that love or that grace.

May these stories enable us to live and to share the kingdom of heaven where justice flows like a river and righteousness like an everflowing stream, where Black Lives Matter, where we remember our place as Treaty people, where no one hungers or thirsts, where we can do what the Prophet Micah says is required of us, where we do justice and love kindness and walk humbly with our God.

Amen.