

The Rev. Jay Lawlor Sermon for 8th Sunday After Pentecost, Proper 12, Year A – July 30, 2017

The Rev. Jay Lawlor concluded his month as supply priest at St. David's Episcopal Church with the message "we are saints of God."

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, February 22, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) concluded the month of July as visiting priest to St. David's Episcopal Church in Bean Blossom, Indiana with a [sermon](#) on allowing God to work through us. The Rev. Lawlor stated the following in preaching to the people of St. David's:



We are saints of God. God, through God's Spirit, is always at work in and through us. Even interceding on our behalf in moments when we feel we cannot offer anything on our own."

The Rev. Jay Lawlor

This week, like last, our lectionary offers us a sample of how Jesus taught people in his day. He offered them stories they could relate to based on their culture and experiences. Farmers, fisherman, merchants. Women baking bread to help feed their families. And with each parable, Jesus does something interesting – he speaks of how the kingdom of heaven as something that is to be found or discovered. Jesus

doesn't say the kingdom of heaven is like this big shiny object flashing before us like a neon sign. Perhaps this is why our increasingly secular world often misses it. We tend to go for the latest shiny object. And we want it now, maybe even yesterday. We are in perpetual motion toward the next, newest, shiniest.

We're all guilty of this is one way or another. And don't get me wrong, I marvel at technological advancements and nifty new devices as much as anyone. Have you ever tried on a pair of Oculus Prime or other virtual reality goggles? Pretty amazing stuff. The list could go on. In, and of themselves, these things are not bad. In fact, they are marvels of human ingenuity. But, if we are not careful, they can be distractions to dizzying effect. Before we know it, we are so distracted from most everything else that we lose sight on focusing on those things which matter most.

Distractions to take us away and entertain are fine things. They can add to the human experience. So they are not bad things. Most things have a place. But Jesus wants us to know that the kingdom of heaven – the reign of our creating, loving, redeeming God is not a shiny object. If it were, it would probably lose its meaning. It would cease to be special – it could get lost among the glare of all the other shiny objects.

God doesn't want us reaching for it because it is so big and bright that we are only attracted to its glow. God invites us to experience the kingdom of heaven for all of its depth and breadth. A depth and breadth that is Loving, Liberating, and Life-giving.

And this is good news. Jesus tells us that from even from something as small as a

mustard seed, the kingdom of heaven grows. As Jesus said: [...] it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

So the kingdom of heaven is both ever present and waiting on us. And it takes time to cultivate. It is a journey and a process. It is what Jesus is inviting us to participate in as his followers, disciples, and apostles. It doesn't require faith as high as a mountain. No, faith as small as a mustard seed will suffice. And it is not linear, either.

Faith can ebb and flow. There are times our faith is strong and other times where it may seem rather weak. Times when we feel insufficient to the task. Times where even offering a simple prayer is an effort. But recall Paul's words to the Church in Rome:

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:26-27a)

We are saints of God. God, through God's Spirit, is always at work in and through us. Even interceding on our behalf in moments when we feel we cannot offer anything on our own. We have an awesome God, my friends. [...]

The complete text of the Rev. Jay Lawlor's sermon is available at <https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/rev-jay-lawlor-sermon-8-sun-pentecost-year-july-30-2017/>

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