







the kingdom is for all—those who get it and those who don't. Let anyone with ears, listen, Jesus says. Discipleship is the journey of being shaped and transformed by the seed of faith that is planted in us through the grace of God. Growing as a disciple happens as we pray that the kingdom comes to us. The seed takes root and grows in us and through us for the sake of the world.

If you find yourself trying to follow the instructions correctly in an effort to construct the most accurate understanding of what God is up to, these parables from Jesus invite you to be released from that pressure. Understanding God's kingdom is less like following a manual of instructions, and more like listening to stories or looking through a kaleidoscope. Each time you listen, you hear something new. Each time you turn the kaleidoscope, you see something different. So, this week, pick up this story of the sower who generously scatters seed without being preoccupied with the result, and look at it again. Turn it to the left and to the right to rearrange the pieces a bit, and see what new thing emerges. Shake it up a bit and look again. That's where growth and life happens. The sower will keep sowing seeds. The kingdom will come, whether or not we pray for it to. In this, we pray that it takes root and grows in us.

Amen.