

Week 3 Land and Plants

Opening Music

Anthem Lights, *How Great Thou Art*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48i4l1715uc>

Reading

Genesis 1:9-13

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

Reflection

The Bible shows us that the earth is sacred, a creation of our creator God. It has value because God has made it and declared it is good – not merely useful, adequate or necessary to humanity, but good.

The diversity and abundance of life on earth reflect the generous heart of a God who loves to bless, who delights in growth and richness and wants us to share his delight in – and care for – the world around us.

'And then the Lord showed me more, a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, on the palm of my hand, round like a ball. I looked at it thoughtfully and wondered, 'What is this?' And the answer came, 'It is all that is made.' I marvelled that it continued to exist and did not suddenly disintegrate; it was so small. And again my mind supplied the answer, 'It exists, both now and forever, because God loves it.' In short, everything owes its existence to the love of God. In this 'little thing' I saw three truths. The first is that God made it; the second is that God loves it; and the third is that God sustains it.'

Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

How might it feel to be part of the vine?
Not just to see the vineyard from afar
Or even pluck the clusters, press the wine,
But to be grafted in, to feel the stir
Of inward sap that rises from our root,
Himself deep planted in the ground of Love,
To feel a leaf unfold a tender shoot,
As tendrils curled unfurl, as branches give
A little to the swelling of the grape,
In gradual perfection, round and full,
To bear within oneself the joy and hope
Of God's good vintage, till it's ripe and whole.
What might it mean to bide and to abide
In such rich love as makes the poor heart glad?

Malcolm Guite

<https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2016/04/11/i-am-the-vine-a-sonnet/>

'God's Grandeur'

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men not now then reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
All is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and ah! bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Music

Libera, *Gaelic Blessing (Deep Peace)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qvMFIL62XA>

Prayer

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marvelled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
To reflect God's glory in creation.

Amen

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Closing Music

Graham Kendrick, *God of the Poor (Beauty for Brokenness)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08utbDFP9AE>