

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23, with reference to Isaiah 55:10-13 and Romans 8:12-17

A sower goes to sow seeds confident that it will sprout and grow and bear fruit. But here comes the surprise. He throws the seed all over the place. It looks like he does not know what he is doing. He is more haphazard and reckless having no thought to where he is sowing. He might as well be blindfolded.

Sounds like a foolish way to farm with precious seed. We like our seeds to be precisely planted. Many of us do not plant until the ground is good and ready.

Not so with this sower. Off he goes, in season and out of season, over hill and over dale, into all nations throwing seed on the road, into the rocky land where the soil is thin, into the thorns and briars and weeds, in places where one would not even have any hope of getting a crop in a million years. With this method some seed will become food for the birds, some will sprout and grow but get scorched by the hot sun and wither and die; some will plants grow but will be have the life choked out of them. Then some of that seed land in the rich fertile ground and produce an abundant crop.

Puzzling, is it not? Especially if you are an accomplished farmer or even if you like to grow a garden in your backyard. Does he not care about wasting good and precious seed? Some will sprout and produce a crop. And that is good enough. So, he scatters everywhere.

Jesus tells His disciples after they ask Him that good Lutheran question, "What does this mean?" The seed is the Word of God. This parable shows us how far and wide our Lord has and will have His Word scattered.

This Word was sown in Abel, but it was choked by Cain.

In the time of the flood, seed was sown but found only rich soil in Noah and his family. The rest was snatched away in the flood.

Much later, the seed of God's Word was sown in the evil and large city of Nineveh, the most unlikely of places, and 120,000 took root and sprouted and grew.

Seed took root in Moses, Joshua, Caleb, and Rehab and grew. There were others where it was sown whose hearts were soft as concrete and they complained and grumbled and bowed their knee to the golden calf.

Seed was sown in Jerusalem at Herod's palace at the Word of a savior. Foreign wise men rejoice, king Herod plots murder.

In Galilee and Judea, the seed sown of God's Kingdom is come in Jesus the Chris. Pharisees trample it. Yet prostitutes, tax collectors, and a various array of sinners become disciples. He continues to sow and sow up to this day and he does not stop.

How generous this sower is! Even if some is snatched by the devil, or withers because of trials and hardship or choked out by the cares and riches of the world, He does not stop. This Word of God's love shown for sinners must and will go forward. There will be abundant fruit. And He sows and sows and sows

And because He does, His seed, His Word has been sown into your hearts as well. So, what will happen there? Will take root and remain and grow and bear the fruit of a strong and abiding faith? We would like to think so. We like think our hearts are good rich and fertile soil for God's Word. Well if that perfect type soil, at least we not like a hard road where it gets snatched or rocky where it is received with enthusiasm but later withers and dies or thorny where the Word is overcome with the riches and concerns of the world. Or at least our hearts are not like the hearts of those hardcore sinners over there.

How is it with the Word of God and your heart? I know you want it to grow into good fruit bearing life. Or maybe part of you feels that way. The new creation in Christ most certainly desires to be the rich fertile soil, but then the old Adam in us has that has big feet ready and willing to stomp it out, choke it off, or point out the rocky soil, saying this good for my life as long as it is convenient, and the hardships of discipleship stay away from my front door. You want to do good, follow Jesus, but for every desire like that there is rock, or thorns or a trampled path ready to snatch and choke it all away.

What can I do? Go out pull up the weeds? How does that work in your garden? They come right back. Dig up the rocks? Let us face it some of the rocks are immovable and if you can move them there enough to keep you busy for a lifetime. Yes, there are some sins that are easy to cast away, but then again, the original sin is always present like bedrock. Has anyone tried to chase the hungry Satanic birds away, they just keep coming back?

And so, it is. But the Sower keeps on sowing. Do see that as the good news for today? I certainly do! What seemed so foolish in the beginning is in fact the good news for us now. Today! So, He sows and sows and sows and yes some of it lands on good soil. IT grows and produces hundred, sixty, thirty-fold. As Isaiah proclaims, God's Word does not return empty.

This seed, the Word of God is more than a history book, a book of information, a guide to good living, it so much more than that. It is the Word of God's Promise. It is the same promise that God give to Eve that the seed of hope sown in her is the seed sown in Abraham, the seed sown in David, and the same seed sown in the Virgin Mary through the Word of the Angel Gabriel when the Son of God was made man. When God's own begotten Son came into this hard, rocky thorny world of sin. When he became flesh and bone and dwelt among us. Yes, the Seed sown and sown is Jesus Christ Himself.

That Word that came down from Heaven does not return empty. It returns to God accomplishing all that it proposes to do. Atoning for the sins of the World. Jesus had no hardness of heart, or weeds or rocks or thorns but was perfect in every way. Jesus, that seed like any seed must die before it produces fruit, so God's Word in Flesh in Jesus took your death

and sins to the cross to die for you. And from that death and that burial would sprout into His resurrection and grow into your eternal life.

By grace through faith God has made you right and saved you. You are His children and can cry to your Father in heaven like Jesus, "ABBA Father." What Christ has done for each of us is to take our hearts where nothing should grow and transformed them into beautiful gardens producing an abundance of fruit: Love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, kindness, and self-control, all for the sake for our neighbor.

He who has ears let him hear. These are ears that the Holy Spirit opens. Ears of faith that receive this word not because it came from man, but that it came from Christ Himself. Then Christ says, "I forgive you and you are My Child." This faith born in us dies and rises to a new life with Christ. It is a life that is led by the Spirit,

That is why the Sower sows this seed constantly. Not because of good science or even because of each of us are good candidates for goodness. He sows because of His love for you so faith may grow. Graciously and abundantly He sows this Word that came own from heaven accomplishing its purpose. Forgiving sins, bringing the hope of eternal life and that each of us continue to grow in His likeness.