

Matt 13:1-9, 18-23
The Seed, the Soil and the Outcome

No other image gives greater clarity to the meaning and power of the Word of God—the gospel of Jesus Christ—than the image of a seed. I asked last Sunday had any of us wrestled with the question, why people do not believe the glorious gospel of Jesus the Christ? Why would someone reject such wonderful truth, such an astounding love? I wrestle with this question all the time. Considering that scripture explicitly states, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”, and “how are they to hear without someone preaching?” (**Rom 10**) For years I have asked myself why I don't see more people responding to the gospel considering the gospel is powerful. It tears down strongholds. It opens the eyes of those who are spiritually blind. It unstops the ears of those who are spiritually deaf. It softens even the hardest of hearts. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, it brings spiritually dead sinners to new life in Jesus the Christ. So, why hasn't this been my overarching experience in ministry? Have I misunderstood my calling? Have I been called by Jesus or did I call myself? Have I failed to preach the word of God faithfully and so the anointing power of the Holy spirit is absent from what I say? Or has Jesus simply called me to sow among hearts, broadly speaking, that will not receive His Word? I have wrestled with each of these possibilities and others. But one conclusion has become increasingly clear. The problem is never the seed. The seed being the Word, the Gospel of Jesus the Christ. Jesus says, “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds.” This morning, in hope of growing our understanding of the nature of the Kingdom of God, the work of Jesus the Christ, and, ultimately, deepening and strengthening our

faithfulness as disciples of Jesus, I want to share three truths regarding seeds that tie directly to the Word of God, the Gospel of our Savior and Lord, Jesus the Christ.

First, seeds are miraculous things with great potential. On the outside they appear to be dead and in size, insignificant. But on the inside, they contain all that's needed for life. Thus, when planted give birth to miraculous things. Take the acorn you were given this morning. No bigger than a mere quarter and weighing only a few grams, but when planted gives birth to an oak tree that can live upwards of 600 years, grow as tall at 200 feet (depending on the species), and produce millions of acorns during its lifetime. On top of all that, it provides shelter for all sorts of wildlife. All this from one little acorn. This seemingly small insignificant thing. Does not this image faithfully describe the life-giving power of God's word when planted in the hearts of sinners? Does not this image faithfully describe the work of our Lord Jesus who was despised, who was counted as insignificant, but whose life, teaching, death and resurrection changed the course of human history? Jesu says, "Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds." Never discount what God can accomplish in and through anyone by the implanting of His word, the gospel of Jesus the Christ.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires." **NLT**

John 6 :63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." **ESV**

Matt 13:55-57 "⁵⁴ He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said,

“Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?” ⁵⁵ Then they scoffed, “He’s just the carpenter’s son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. ⁵⁶ All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?” ⁵⁷ And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family.”

NLT

Second, a seed left in the hand is no good to anyone. Notice Jesus’ words again. “A farmer went out to plant some seeds.” Church, seeds must be planted. Only then can its potential be realized. In order for the seed to bring forth new life it must die. The old must give way to the new. When a seed is buried, it germinates, resulting in the outer shell splitting, releasing the potential it holds inside. The old state of that seed is forever lost, giving birth to a new state of life-giving power. And given the proper conditions the new state will grow and produce, in some cases, millions of new seed to be planted, multiplying its efforts over time. This is the Kingdom principle, and this is the work of the gospel of Jesus the Christ, in short! Disciples don’t die; we multiply. And hear me, every disciple, every sheepfold plays a part in the work of multiplication. Healthy seed reproduces, and I’m not simply talking about larger crowds, either. I’m talking about disciples making disciples. Parents raising children that love Jesus. A disciple leading a nonbelieving friend or colleague to Jesus. Investing time in a young disciple who, by God’s grace, goes on to impact hundreds or even thousands for the Lord Jesus. Healthy seed reproduces. Is there any evidence of this truth in our lives? If not, we must ask the Lord why!?

John 12:24 “²³ And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”

ESV

Matt 13:31-32 “³¹ Here is another illustration Jesus used: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed planted in a field. ³² It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a tree, and birds come and make nests in its branches.”

NLT

Mark 4:26-29 “²⁶ Jesus also said, “The Kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, while he’s asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens. ²⁸ The earth produces the crops on its own. First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens. ²⁹ And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come.”

NLT

Finally, one seed can change the entire landscape. Jesus himself is the Seed sent by God into the world. Through his life, his death upon the cross, and his glorious resurrection, he has forever changed the landscape of human history. And you don’t have to look far for the evidence. Just look at yourself. Every follower of Jesus possesses evidence, if not a mountain of evidence, that the gospel changes everything, starting with him or her. How has the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ changed the landscape of your life? Or has it?

Gal 3:13-16 “¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree”), ¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. ¹⁵ Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. ¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ.” **NKJV**

“A farmer went out to plant some seeds.” Sisters and Brothers, the seed is never the problem. The opportunity is always the soil. More on that in part 2. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**