

The Seed We Sow

By Everett Hardin

Jesus taught many profound lessons by means of parables. In so doing, He took the commonplace and used it to convey great lessons of spiritual truth. One such parable was that of the man who sowed seed in four types of ground, Mark 4:1-8. In explaining the parable He taught that the soils represented different kinds of human hearts. *“The seed is the word of God,”* Luke 8:11. As in the physical world, so is the spiritual, if one expects a harvest, he must have the proper seed to plant.

God’s Word is the Seed

A seed is alive and the word of God is that *“which liveth and abideth for ever,”* I Peter 1:23. Seed has great power residing within. Most of us have seen a pavement buckled when tiny seed pushed forth into budding life. A building can suffer structural damage from a sprouting seed. So also the word of God has great power to change lives, customs, even civilizations for good. The gospel *“is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek,”* Rom. 1:16.

Great evils such as murder, slavery, and abuse of women and children have fallen before the influence of the gospel. A man dead in sin can be made a new creature through the implanted word of God, James 1:21. There is power, limitless, inexhaustible power, in the word; and this power is released when received into a good and honest heart. It is able to save the soul.

From a single mustard seed can come a tree for birds to lodge in. Jesus said, *“The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which when a man took and sowed in his field; Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof,”* Matt. 13:31-32. From a single Bible can come a whole community of converts; a church of Christ which is far reaching in influence and power.

Seed Can Be Spoiled and Ruined

Pollenization by inferior plants will produce an undesirable product. Dampness or insects can ruin seed. Likewise, false doctrine can corrupt God’s message. Misinterpretation and misapplication can spoil the success of the word. Paul charges us, *“study to shew thyself approved of God...rightly dividing the word of truth,”* 2 Tim. 2:15. God warned Jeremiah, *“The prophet that hath a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully,”* Jer. 23:28. In every generation there are some who *“handle the word of God deceitfully,”* 2 Cor. 4:2. Such conduct will adversely affect the harvest produced.

Seed is of Little Value If Left Shut Up in the Package

Seed can do its job only when properly planted in the soil. Similarly, a closed Bible is powerless to save. We must *“search the scriptures”* in order to benefit from them, Acts 17:11. James says, *“We must receive with meekness the engrafted word”* before it can save our souls,

James 1:21.

There Must Be Adequate Preparation Before the Seed Will Produce a Harvest

The ground must be cultivated. The seed must be planted, watered, and nourished. Young plants must be carefully cultivated and cared for lest they be choked out. The same is true of the human heart and the gospel seed. Few are won to Christ without the lengthy preparation of teaching and influence. We plant and water, God gives "*the increase*," I Cor. 3:6. "*The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful*," Matt. 13:22. Such weeds must be kept out of our lives if we would be fruitful.

Much Seed Must be Sown To Produce a Crop

Agriculturally, or spiritually, "*he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly*," 2 Cor. 9:6. We must never be discouraged by the number who do not respond to the gospel. Rather we should rejoice over the few that do. Jesus tells us that "*many are called, but few are chosen*," Matt. 22:14. If only one of twenty receive the word favorably, then we must increase the number of our failures to win in order to win more.

Our Harvest Will Depend Upon The Quality of the Seed Sown

"*Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*," Gal. 6:7. Poor quality seed or seed sown in a sloppy manner will reveal itself in the harvest reaped. No successful farmer wastes his time and money on old seed with a low germination count. So we must make the best effort to see that we preach "*the whole counsel of God*," Acts 20:27. We must neither add to or diminish from His word, Rev. 22:18-19. Human opinions, creeds, and customs have no place when sowing the gospel.

There Is An Appropriate Time to Plant Seed

Solomon wrote there is "*a time to plant*," Eccl. 3:2. There is a relatively brief time in the year for a particular seed to be planted if it is to produce at its best. There are times in every life when the heart and conscience are especially tender and receptive. A person's heart is most likely to be touched with the gospel in his youth, or in times of great sorrow, trouble or serious illness. We must be ready to seize the appropriate moment.

Even Premium Seed Cannot Produce In Poor Soil

Many a farmer has labored in vain to make a living on poor ground that lacked top soil or nutrients. Jesus showed us that some hearts are like hard beaten soil of the pathway. The seed cannot penetrate it and the birds devour it.

Other hearts are like thin rocky soil that cannot root deeply and wither before the hot sun. Shallow faith fails in time of temptation and persecution.

Some hearts are like the thorny ground. "*They are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection*." "*But that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience*," Luke 8:11-15.

Seed Take a Certain Amount of Time to

Germinate and Still Make a Crop

“Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain,” Jas. 5:7. We must never grow impatient with those we teach. God’s word will accomplish its intended purpose, Isa. 55:11.

Our job is to sow the seed of the Kingdom and God will give *“the increase,”* I Cor. 3:6. When we preach the gospel to a soul, we have done our duty. He has been evangelized. His response is between him and God.

There is a Reward to the Faithful Sower

“Blessed are ye that sow beside the waters,” Isa. 32:20. *“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy,”* Psa. 126:5-6. *“He that soweth to the spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting,”* Gal. 6:7. *“He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal,”* John 4:36.

A growing church is a sowing church. We have the divine seed, we have the fields before us. We have the heavenly charge to be about our Father’s business. The hymn says, *“Are you sowing the seed of the Kingdom brother?”* If not, begin today to scatter precious seed.

2 Timothy 2:2: *“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

Mark 16:15: *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*