

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

My name is Simon Peter and I was there when Jesus shared this parable. The crowd was large, so he got into a boat and pulled out a bit so he could talk to all of us who were there.

After he shared that parable about sowing, we asked him why he talked in parables. We didn't understand any better than the crowd even though we had been with him. We would hear what he said, understand the words, and either try to fit them into our own notions, or simply not understand. We didn't really begin to get it until the day of Pentecost. But I want to share about Jesus' parable of the Sower.

The seed is the Word of God, the Good News, the Gospel. Later on, friend John quoted this in his letter, but I remember when Jesus said: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him shall not perish but have eternal life." When he said it, as usual we didn't understand what he meant. But since Jesus' resurrection and ascension, well, now we know. That my friends is the seed, the seed from which springs our faith, as friend Paul has said is what makes us righteous before God.

So we sow this seed of Good News and sometimes it lands on a well-trodden path, the heart of the hearer is hardened and unreceptive, unwilling to receive the gift Jesus brings us through faith. The seed, the Word, is snatched away, maybe the listener simply knows better than to believe in myths and tales for children. For whatever reason that heart is unwilling to receive the Word.

Sometimes we sow the seed and the person who hears it receives it and wants to learn and do everything at once, including sharing it themselves. Perhaps they are received with ridicule, or with persecution in school, workplace or even family. It may even be that the person who so quickly received the seed lives where because of belief and sharing faith, life is threatened. And the person who had received the Word with such joy falls away.

Then of course there are those who hear the Word of Jesus, but the cares of the world choke the faith. Maybe the person who received the seed made a choice, or has been seduced away from the Word, or maybe he or she is overwhelmed with problems, illness, death of loved ones, loss of income. Jesus spoke about the love of money and how it can seduce one, that includes all the things that money buys, power and prestige, it even conveys a false sense of security.

But then there is good soil, receptive hearts, hearts ready to receive the Word of God and let it flourish. In such a one the seed grows, nourished by Word and Sacrament, by community by sharing and it begins to produce a hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold. It produces a lot and a person may not even know how their life, words, actions and compassion, continually plant seeds in others.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we have each of us been called by Jesus, to build up his church, starting with the first disciples, and now the task is ours to continue to build up the body, Jesus' own body here in this place, sharing the grace of God through faith, sharing this Word, this love, sharing the forgiveness of sin.

AMEN