

Sexagesima

“To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’”

Many different can be done to the seed—all of it is bad.

Only what the seed does itself is good.

-In one case, the birds—messengers of the devil—come and snatch the word away so that it does not germinate and grow.

Your heart is a hard path when you treat God’s Word like any other word.

It may be interesting to hear but it sits atop your hearing and your life without really changing anything.

It becomes an object of your interest but not a subject that moves you.

When was the last time you went home from a sermon determined to repent and change because of the Word which you heard there?

More to the point, how will your repentance be manifest today?

You must allow the Word to penetrate your heart, to poke holes, to sink roots.

In science, this is called bioturbation because growing things stir up the soil.

Maybe we should call it, Christo-turbation because Jesus is the thing growing.

-In another case, the seed sprouts and grows—it has an immediate effect—but the rocks in the soil prevent it from sinking roots.

Although the Gospel comes as good news and makes these hearts happy, these hearts want only the joy of the Gospel and do not want to have the Tiller of the soil root out their deep seated sins and hard places.

In fact, the prideful and hard heart which is hidden under the surface, will only let the Christo-turbation proceed so far and no further.

Even though there is obvious change on the surface, deeper down, in the even more important hidden things of the heart, Christ is shut out.

The result is that your life may look Christian on the surface.

You don’t kill, steal or commit adultery; but in your heart you still think that you have the strength to live life on your own.

Thus Christ is rejected and you are set up for a fall when the trials come.

As the tests on your faith increase, the faith you thought was plenty strong enough was really like a vapor that suddenly disappears.

-In a third case, the Word of God falls on soil that does not have either of these first two problems. These are not hypocrites that we are talking about.

For this reason, it sprouts and grows wonderfully even having deep roots.

However, the lusts of the flesh are not rooted out or resisted.

Instead, they are allowed to grow along side of the seed.

Striving for more money, a better house, more toys, popularity, pleasures and all kinds of feel-good type things.

None of these are evil in themselves, but all are in danger of abuse.

God gives pleasure as a blessed by product of faithfulness to His Word.

When you eat as you ought to eat, it is pleasant and good.

When you rest as you ought to rest, it is comfortable and nice.

But when that pleasure sensation becomes the controlling factor.

When you do things for the sake of the sensation instead of for the sake of Christ, these things become noxious weeds that choke out Christ.

What was originally neutral now is in direct competition with Christ.

And so sleep, play and work, become more important than Church and Christ.

-Yes, there are many things that you can do in relation to the Word which Christ preaches to us—all are bad. Only what the seed does is good.

Therefore, when you look at your life and notice that you are not bearing fruit in abundance, don’t look to yourself as the answer.

"If only I believe harder--work harder--pray harder..."

The soil is the problem--only Christ is the solution. Surrender to Him.

Faith which produces good works in abundance is brought about only by the power of the Seed.

If the Word does not take root, it is because you have ignored it.

If faith withers in trial, it is because your heart has obstructed it.

If faith is choked out, it is because you have let your lusts and desires grow unchecked.—Only what the seed itself does is good.

But here, today, to Sower is again Sowing the Seed.

And thanks be to God, He is a reckless sower. and not stingy with His Seed.

He doesn't confine His sowing to only good soil.

Be He casts His seed upon every type and variety: hard, rocky, and weedy.

That means: no matter what state you are in, Christ speaks to you.

Here today, Christ is tilling the soil—breaking up the hard path—pulling out rocks and rooting out weeds. He is doing this by Preaching of His Word.

This Seed has what it takes to grow up and produce fruit in abundance.

And it is being graciously sown in your hearts again today.

Do not harden your heart to it. Do not shut it out. Do not let it stand mixed with a pursuit of pleasure.

For you have been given ears to hear it. *“To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God.”*

This is a gift beyond all telling—not to be squandered.

Today is the day of salvation!—Not tomorrow or the next.

And the Word which you hear today is powerful and strong.

The devil cannot snatch it from you.

There is no deep-seated sin or vice that cannot be removed by it.

There is no fleshly lust which cannot be rooted out by it.

And there is no end to the joyous fruits of eternal life which it yields.

There are no limits to the faith which is created by this very Word which you hear today.

For to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

You have the privilege of having God’s Word sown in your heart today.

For you, it is given to see and commune with Christ Himself.

Today, you come in personal contact with the One who is the true seed — who was planted in the ground to rise again and produce fruit.

And by coming into the presence of the Son of Man, you, yourself are made a part of His abundant yield — a grain like unto himself.

All because—and only because—you have been given ears to hear. Amen.