

The Parable of the Sower and the Seed: A Personal Reflection
Bible Study for Sunday 12/7/20

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸"Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."



Aidan Hart with contributions from Donald Jackson and Sally Mae Joseph.

- ❖ *What were the first 'seeds' of your faith?*
- ❖ *Who planted them?*
- ❖ *What has, or does, water and nourish your faith?*
- ❖ *What have been, or are, your rockiest, driest or most barren times, when your faith feels snatched away, scorched or withered?*
- ❖ *What have been, or are, your thorniest times, when the cares or lures of the world seem to choke your faith?*
- ❖ *What has it, or would it, look like for your faith to bear fruit? Does anything about the commentary below speak to you?*

A Commentary on the Parable of the Sower and the Seed

James Gumataotao

The typical images associated with this parable are the dry and rocky soil, the soil with weeds, and the good soil; in the illumination above, the artist Aidan Hart draws our attention to the head of the sower and clothes which he wears. The clothes worn by the sower are not the clothes of a middle aged male Jew living in Nazareth, nor are they the typical contemporary outfit for a person scattering seed. The clothes are ones we can identify, maybe even wear.

Because we can identify with the sower, it is safe to assume that this illumination is calling us to take on this role. Believers have received the Word of God, and many have also partaken in the banquet of Christ's body and blood. Christ has sown his word and nourished his flock, and like the good soil they must become a place for these seeds to grow.

How to help the seeds grow? By going forth to become God's word in the dark and broken world. Going forward and being nourishment for others by becoming the hands and feet of Christ through our words and actions. All of us, believers and non-believers, can be like Christ and walk and stand on the same soil to sow the seed, standing with those for whom the soil or hard concrete has become their bed or the only source of income they receive. Christ must be our inspiration and model. Instead of thinking that helping others is stooping to their level, we can take inspiration from Christ who lived with, served, and listened to the cry of the marginalized in his society. Christ's mindset leads us to truly encounter and interact with the lives we so often neglect. The image displayed today echoes a unique call to believers in any tradition.



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