

Luke 8:5-15

"A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. "Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. "But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?" And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.' "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. "Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. "But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. "Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

The Seed of the Gospel

Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again. Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land. (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2). In Bible lands there is a unique way of sowing seed. The farmer floods a small field then scatters his seed on the water, as the soil absorbs the water, the seed settles into the soil awaiting the sun and time to germinate. For the poor, the grain in the home used for making bread is the very source of seed for the field. The farmer literally takes the bread (grain for bread) from the table and by faith sows it on the water in hope of an abundant harvest.

There are two ways of treating the seed. The botanist splits it up and discourses on its curious characteristics. The simple farmer eats and sows, sows and eats. Similarly there are two ways of treating the gospel. A critic dissects it, raises a mountain of debate about the structure of the whole, and relation of its parts, and when he is done with his argument, he is done. To him the letter is dead. He neither lives on it himself, nor spreads it for the good of his neighbours; he neither eats nor sows. The disciple of Jesus, hungering for righteousness, takes the seed whole; it is bread for today's hunger, and seed for tomorrow's supply.

Both the sowing of the seed of the gospel (the message of free salvation through the death, burial and resurrection of God's perfect sacrifice - His own Son) and the receiving of the seed of the gospel, is a matter of faith. For those privileged to experience new birth by faith in Christ, the sowing is a matter of duty as the salt and light of the earth (Matt. 5), and a matter of joy because God has promised an increase; "He that goes forth with weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psalm 126:6). For those receiving the seed is a matter of wonder and joy in new found life, hope and purpose: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17).

God's passion in this great work of sowing and reaping was clearly stated by Jesus: "Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2). It's almost impossible to see a rainbow and not point it out to someone else. It's the kind of thing that just must be shared. You see one and you want to tell someone about it. If you are by yourself and see one, it's frustrating. The gospel is such a beautiful expression of God's love that it just must be shared.

What is my response:
