

Sexagesima
St. Luke 8:4-15
February 12th, 2023
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Sower Went Forth to Sow His Seed

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

And when a great multitude came together, and they of every city resorted unto him, he spake by a parable: "The sower went forth to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden under foot, and the birds of the heaven devoured it. And other fell on the rock; and as soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other fell amidst the thorns; and the thorns grew with it, and choked it. And other fell into the good ground, and grew, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold." As he said these things, he cried, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty God, merciful Father, we give Thee most hearty thanks for Thy divine Word, which Thou art pleased to sow as a heavenly seed among us, and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst by Thy Word and Spirit make our hearts a good ground, guard us against the dangers arising from cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and keep our faith from being uprooted by the blasts of affliction, that in an honest and good heart we may bring forth abundant fruit; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Lord + Jesus is a Sower Who goes out diligently and persistently to sow the seed of the Word of God. He does this through the Holy Ghost Who uses the means of grace: the preaching of the pure Gospel, and the administration of the Blessed Sacraments to send the seed of the Word of God out into the world. These means are used by the ministers of the Word to preach the good news into the ears of all those who would hear. These unworthy ministers who possess unclean lips do it solely in service to the Christ. They do not do it for glory or the praise of men. They do it simply to follow the example of the Lord + Jesus Who persistently goes out into the world to spread the seed of the Word of God. The ministers of the Lord do the same thing. They diligently and persistently go forth to sow the Seed of the Word of God. They go forth to preach the Gospel to all those who would hear.

We are told by the Evangelist St. Luke that a great multitude had come to the Lord + Jesus. They came to hear Him preach. They came to learn something from Him. Then our Lord + Jesus tells them a parable which describes how all of them will hear. He gives a detailed list of four types of soil: some fell by the way side, some fell on the rock, some fell amongst the thorns, and other seed of the Word of God fell into the good ground. This great multitude would hear the Word of God from the mouth of the Messiah, the Savior of the world, in one of these four ways. We should not be surprised that even

today people hear the Word of God, the preaching of the pure Gospel in a similar fashion to these four ways.

There are always going to be those who are like the seed that is preached and falls by the way side. Those seeds that fall on the way side are marked by the coming of the devil and his angels, who come and take the Word of God away before it can even take any root in the ground. This is depicted in the parable by the seed which gets trodden under foot and is picked away from mankind by the birds of the heaven coming and devouring the seed. These are those who hear and continue to obstinately remain unbelievers. They mock and ridicule the Word and the preachers of the Word of God. Indeed, there were many in the time of our Lord who came to hear Him preach who secretly reviled Him, and disregarded His Word. These would eventually cease to secretly mock and revile Him, and openly do it so that He would suffer and be crucified on the tree of the holy cross.

There remains today those who still revile the cross; who make a mockery of Christianity. They continue to resist the preaching of the Law which seeks to call them into repentance. They cling obstinately to their sins, believing falsely that they are doing no wrong when they commit the horrible sinful acts they continue to do. They need no repentance in their own minds for they do not believe that they are evil, or bad, people. The world in its lies bolster them in this sad delusion, as well. Praising them continuously for their evil deeds. The devil and his angels, who use the world and mankind's own sinfulness, devours the Seed of the Word God from out of their midst so that they have no hope of hearing and believing. They therefore, sadly, will not be saved.

Still others are like seed that fell on the rock. They gladly hear and believe—for a time. However, when times of temptation come, they return to their own vomit. They return to their former sinful lives, for the Word of God is choked out by temptation. They desire to satisfy their baser desires; to do what seems pleasing to them, and not what is the will of the Lord God. What little Word of God they hear gets dried up by the allurements of this sinful world. The temptation to be pleasing to the world is too great.

Not only do their own sinful desires call them back into unbelief and call the back into the ways of this sinful and evil world, but they also are led astray by the persecutions of this life. They have no root, the Word of God has not been able to be firmly planted in their hearts to produce a faith which clings unceasingly to the Lord God and His promises. Therefore, when they endure the same persecutions that the Lord + Jesus endured, they cannot remain faithful. They cannot endure the mockery, shame, ridicule and insults that the world hurls at them and the Church on Earth. Instead of boldly facing such persecution and temptation with the knowledge that the Lord + Jesus is the One, needful treasure of this life, they shrink away from the Church, first pretending not be associated with it and eventually the pretending stops. They are like a person desiring to be popular, who when that popularity is challenged by being the person they truly are, forget their true person and do the things that will gain them popularity again.

Other preaching of the Word of God goes into hearts that are represented by the seed that fell among the thorns. The Word of God these ones hear is choked away by the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life and world. These ones fall away because they do not learn that there is an eternal heavenly realm waiting all of the faithful ones. They instead live for this world. They seek after the pleasures of this world. They do not realize that all of these things that the world offers will be taken away from them. They will not carry them into the grave. There will be no money or fame in death. They will hear no praise in the grave. Those who cling to the cares, riches and pleasures of this life, will only find weeping and gnashing of teeth for all eternity. They will have sadly replaced the eternal joys of Heaven with the temporary pleasures of this fading world.

This is why we turn our hearts away from this world; from the cares, riches and pleasures of this

life, for they will come and go. They will not endure. But the joys of Heaven will last for all eternity. This is a promise that cannot be taken away or denied to the faithful; to those who cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus as the One and Only Savior of mankind. Those who die in the faith will be rewarded with eternal pleasures and joys. They will join with all of the saints who have gone before them. They will join with the angels of Heaven. They will be united to the One in Whom they trusted to supply all of their earthly needs and desires, with the Lord + Jesus, the Christ; the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. In Heaven, we will be granted the joy of being a part of that great multitude Who gathers around the throne of the Lamb and hears Him proclaim to us for all eternity that we have salvation in Him. There we will joy our voices with all of our loved ones who have gone before us, and sing the eternal Liturgy of the Lamb in His Kingdom. For the Lamb of God is truly worthy to receive from our lips, and the lips of all those who have gone before us in the faith, the praise that proclaims that He has won salvation for all those who believe on Him.

All those who believe on Him are the ones who have heard the Word of God, the preaching of the Sower of the Seed, which was preached through the working of the Holy Ghost, by the ministers of the Word into our ears and hearts. This preaching of the pure Gospel, and this reception of the Blessed Sacraments was received in good and honest hearts by us and all those who cling to the promises of the Lord + Jesus in faith. We, and all those who cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus, resisted the lies of the devil and his angels, the lies of the world and our own flesh. We resisted the persecutions and temptations, the sufferings of this life that would seek to destroy our faith. And we resisted the cares, riches, and pleasures of this world, forsaking a temporal crown for an eternal crown in Heaven. We remain steadfast to the Word of God. We cling steadfastly to the promises found in the preaching of the Gospel which is preached into our ears diligently week after week, day after day by the Sower of the Seed of the Word of God.

We keep this promise of salvation in our hearts in spite of all the allurements and pulls of the world. For the Sower of the Seed is not lax in His sowing. He continues to go forth to sow His seed. Our Lord continues to come to us at all times, both in joy and in sorrow, to plant His seed of the promise of salvation into our hearts. This seed produces a hundredfold; a complete one hundred percent giving of faith in our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ. For the Sower of the Seed desires all men to hear and be saved. This is why our Lord + Jesus cries out after the telling of the parable, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." For He desires that we would always hear Him and His promises.

For the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh are constantly planting their own seeds into this world. They are filling this world with its lies. That life is meaningless. That one can remain in their sinfulness and be considered a "good" person. That the one who dies with the most toys wins. These lies will always be preached by the world and all those who pretend to be from the Lord God, but are truly agents of the devil. For the Sower of the Seed points only to Himself and the promises of an eternal life in Heaven. My dear friends, let us hear the Word of God with joy, and cling in faith to the One and true Savior of this world. For in Him is life and salvation. In Him is joy and comfort in times of sorrow. In Him is a life in Heaven for all eternity with all of the saints and angels in Heaven. May the Sower of the Seed continue to go forth to sow His seed into our hearts, so that we may remain faithful unto death, and receive from our Lord and Savior the crown of eternal life. Grant this Lord unto us all. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth

and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!