

July 13, 2008  
 Messiah  
 Pentecost 9 – A

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23  
 Building our Lives on the Sower and His Seed

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## Introduction

1. Easy, Fast, Fun, and More...
    - a. This describes our culture today, according to Dr. David Walsh who wrote the book, "No: Why Kids of all ages need to hear it and ways parents can say it"
  2. When Jesus told this Parable of the Seed and the ground upon which it falls – it's almost like he had the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in mind...
    - a. Knowing how our Easy, Fast, Fun, and More Culture would parallel the various soils upon which the seed of God's Word Falls:
    - b. Upon the Path, on Rocky Ground, amongst the thorns, and on good soil
- I. A Sower (a person who plants seed) went out to plant his seed – AND SOME OF THE SEED FELL ALONG THE PATH**
- A. As Jesus tells the parable – the birds came and devoured the seed
    - i. no sooner did the seed fall upon the path – and the birds were right there to eat it up – it had no time sprout
  - B. We all like it EASY: Easy as Dell, So Easy a Caveman can do it
    - i. And so when God's Word falls upon our ears and our lives, so often we allow the most evil of birds to come and eat God's Word up before it even takes sprout in our lives
    - ii. Satan, and the demons – they know if God's Word germinates within our hearts and souls, that will be one less fellow companion in hell
    - iii. Satan knows we want every EASY – hardly do we invest the time and energy to wrestle with God's Word, to meditate upon it, to really examine and contemplate the sermon, to roll upon our sleeves and dive into God's Word in Bible Study
    - iv. We say, "It's too hard, who can understand the Bible!"
    - v. It is the Seed of God's Word falling upon the path of our life – and because it takes energy and thinking to be in God's Word, we dismiss it for something easier – like mindless sitcoms or no-brainer movies
  - C. The GRACE OF GOD is a paradox – it seems contradictory
    - i. On one hand – the Grace of God is very difficult
      1. To be in God's Grace is to be in His Word – to read it, mark it, learn it, and inwardly digest it
      2. To be in God's Word means getting into the meaty stuff of God's Word, to look up other passages to understand the meaning of the first, to be in God's Word is like Jacob who wrestles with God's, as we wrestle for meaning and understanding
    - ii. And yet, on the other hand – God's grace is so very easy!
      1. Christ, the Word made flesh who comes to dwell among us, died for us and rose from the dead

2. And with no sweat of our brow, we are receivers of what Christ has done – grace is easy, we are forgiven solely and completely by what Christ has done!

## II. And when the sower was planting his seed – **SOME SEED FELL ON ROCKY GROUND**

- A. As Jesus tells the parable – immediately the seeds sprang up, but because the soil had no depth, when the sun rose, the seeds were scorched
  - i. they had no root – and they soon withered away
  
- B. We all like it FAST: We want fast food, go to college on the fast track, and a speedy delivery from FedEx
  - i. And so when God’s Word falls upon our ears and our lives – we want it FAST
  - ii. But often times we hear God’s Word, and we are so joyful and elated about it, but when even the slightest complication comes into our lives, we think God’s Word did not act FAST ENOUGH, and we have to resort to some other coping mechanism
  - iii. How we will take MUCH TIME to train a hunting dog, MUCH TIME to have our hair and nails done, MUCH TIME on a Caribbean Cruise...
  - iv. But how we do not take much time to care for our faith, our reverence toward God is often shallow and rootless
  - v. When a storm comes up in life – we wonder “where is God” – but prior to that storm our worship life was sporadic, we walked out before Bible Class
  - vi. God is in His Word – that slowly grows and permeates in our hearts and souls and minds through the days, months, and years
  
- C. The Christian Faith is one of Shaping and Forming
  - i. Being in God’s Word is not like driving through the fast-food lane
  - ii. It is a steady, constant hearing and absorbing
  - iii. We cling to a God who is not always FAST, though He could be if he want to be
    1. The Psalmist says, “Return to the Lord your God, for His gracious and merciful, SLOW to anger, and abounding in steadfast love”
    2. In Galatians, Paul writes, “At just the right time – God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem those under the law” – to what seemed like thousands of years to man – was just the “right time” to God!
  - iv. Jesus is not Rocky Ground, but He is the Rock of Ages, full of wisdom and full of love
    1. VERY FAST – when we ask for forgiveness – it comes to us faster than the speed of light

2. But at other times, though we want God to act faster, His foreknowledge and His wisdom knows what is best for us, through it often tests our fallen patience, God is near

### III. And when the Sower was planting His seed – SOME FELL AMONG THE THORNS

- A. As Jesus tells the parable – the seed that fell among the thorns grew up but were then choked out by the weeds
- B. FUN: Girls just wanna have fun, Best Buy says “Thousands of possibilities: Get Yours” as though the gadgets at Best Buy will fulfill your fun, and Ebay says, “Buy it, sell it, LOVE IT” – again, the stuff you get on Ebay will be FUN!
  - i. This is perhaps the most dangerous soil of all – because it deals with the inner desires and wants of the flesh
  - ii. Like Gullum in “The Lord of the Rings” who says: “I wants it, my Precious”
  - iii. We allow and even pursue many things of this world to be “our precious” - greed consumes us, materialism intoxicates us, riches will take us over where we even forget the name of God
  - iv. how can we love God, how can we serve our neighbor – when greed, all the things at WalMart, big people’s toys – choke out our faith and the fruits of faith which we call good works –
  - v. We allow the things of the world to suffocate our faith...
  - vi. I mentioned David Walsh before – Dr. Walsh interviewed Santa Claus in a New York Department Store
    1. And Santa said, kids are no longer asking for bicycles and Barbie Dolls
    2. Now they want it all: they want Xbox, and Nintendos, they want Wii and IPods, they want computers and Cell Phones (which, by the way, have monthly charges)
    3. This Santa said he got the point of telling the children that Santa’s elves do not make these things, and maybe they should consider less expensive toys
    4. He said the parents had a look of relief to hear Santa talk this way – downplaying the desire for these FUN, EXPENSIVE “things”
    5. And this Santa then said, “why aren’t the parents downplaying these FUN, EXPENSIVE “things” and just telling their children, “no” –
    6. We are raising a generation of children of replacing God with FUN TOYS which become their “precious”
- C. Jesus is familiar with THORNS
  - i. If it hasn’t become fully apparent by now – Jesus is the SEED planted in our souls and lives

- ii. And not only does He come to a world infested with thorns and anxieties, and a people chasing after all the FUN PLEASURES of life while deserting God...
- iii. Not only does He come to a world of thorns, but HE WEARS THEM!
- iv. In our place, for our greed; As our substitute for our raw human passions – the THORNS are planted on the head of Christ, on the head of God – as He takes the punishment for our sins!
- v. He takes the thorns in our place, and we come out smelling like a rose – because He gives us the most PRECIOUS treasure of all – forgiveness and eternal life!
- vi. Repent, all of us are called to repent – to examine our lives and our greed and misuse of finances – to repent and to return to the God who gives us heaven
- vii. Where the Scriptures do not use the word FUN, but does tell us it will exceed all joy and bliss!

#### **IV. And when the Sower was planting His seed – SOME FELL ON GOOD SOIL**

- A. As Jesus tells the parable – the seed that fell on good soil produces much grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty
- B. MORE: Can't get enough of the Golden Crisp, Bet you can't eat just one → we always want MORE!
  - i. But with God's Word – this is the ONE GOOD THING we covet, which is good to want and desire MORE!
  - ii. While Christ is the Pure and Holy Seed – WE are the soil into which Christ is planted
  - iii. And as the Seed of Christ is planted in us – as it is watered with the pristine waters of Holy Baptism, and as we are fed and nourished with the most holy and precious Body and Blood of Christ –
  - iv. we desire MORE of God's Word, we hunger for it; it is sweet in our mouths like honey
  - v. it is our strength in difficult times, it is our forgiveness in our sins, it is our Rock in times of turmoil, God's Word is our refuge in times of despair, it is our comfort in times of great sorrow –
  - vi. not be eaten up by the Birds, not to wither in the hot sun, not to be choked out by the weeds; but God's Word in us grows and flourishes like seed in rich, dark North Dakota soil, which produces 80 and a 100 bushels of grain to an acre
- C. Hearing God's Word is not a crash course, it is not a mini-workshop – the Catechumen, the student of God's Word is life-long
  - i. It is not just for Martin Luther "kids"
  - ii. God's Word is not just for those waiting to be confirmed
  - iii. It is for the Mom and Dad, the husband and the wife, for the person in her 40's, the man in his 50's, the elderly, the disabled, the feeble, and the dying

- iv. The disciple of Christ is Good Soil, not of himself, but as the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God “calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies us in the one true Christian Church”

D. The power is in the WORD!

- i. The power is in the SEED – Jesus Christ
- ii. And as we hunger for MORE: Christ gives us MORE: More forgiveness, more peace, more joy than what all the world can muster up together
- iii. We want more; there is MORE: there is heaven! We will see Jesus face to face, and we will stand in the company of saints and angels, we will leave this veil of tears and enter the Holy City, the streets of God, the throne of the Lamb, the Marriage Feast of Christ and His Holy Bride...
- iv. there is nothing MORE we will need or desire – we will have it all!

**Conclusion**

1. St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome, “Faith comes from hearing the Word of God”
2. This is the how God works, creates, and sustains faith in His people – through the Word, which is Jesus Christ!
3. And so – when the mother loses her baby, when Martin Luther is down in students, when the body is recovering from illness, when we find ourselves in financial ruin, when it takes every ounce of energy to raise our children, when fuel prices are so high...
  - a. The birds cannot eat the seed in our souls
  - b. God’s Word does not wither within as on rocky soil
  - c. The thorns do not have the strength to choke faith out of us...
4. Jesus Christ has planted His Word in us
  - a. The soil He cultivates, and fertilizes, and waters
  - b. And we are neither eaten up, withered away, or choked out
  - c. We draw our life from Christ Himself – planted in us
  - d. We build our lives – on the Sower (Jesus Christ), and His Seed (His Holy Word). Amen.