

Sermon: “The Seed That Finds Good Soil”
Scripture: Matthew 13.1–9, 18–23; Romans 8.1–11

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May I speak in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There is something remarkable about seeds. Some seeds can remain dormant for years, even decades, waiting for the right conditions before they begin to grow. To the eye, they may look lifeless. They may appear as though nothing is happening. Yet hidden within that tiny seed is the potential for new life.

It is a little like a child who plants a sunflower seed at school. Each morning they might rush outside to see whether the sunflower has appeared. After several days of seeing nothing, they might begin to wonder, “Is my seed broken?”

But the seed is not broken. Something is happening, just beneath the surface where it cannot yet be seen. Roots are beginning to form. The seed is quietly becoming something new.

And that is often how God works in our lives. We might look at ourselves or our circumstances and think, “Nothing is happening. Nothing is changing,” but God may already be at work beneath the surface, preparing something new.

In today’s Gospel reading, Jesus tells us the parable of the sower. A farmer goes out to sow seed, and the seed falls in different places. Some falls on the path, some on rocky ground, some among thorns, and some on good soil where it grows and produces a harvest.

Jesus tells us that the seed is the word of God, the message of God’s kingdom. The different soils represent the different ways that we receive God’s word.

But this parable is not only about other people, it is about us. It invites us to ask: what kind of soil is my heart becoming because our hearts can be different kinds of soil at different times in our lives.

Sometimes we can be like the path, hard and closed. Life can leave its marks on us. Disappointment, grief, fear, or uncertainty can make it difficult to hear God’s voice.

But the good news is that God does not give up on us. The God who created all things can soften even the hardest heart. God can bring life where we thought nothing could grow.

Sometimes we can be like the rocky ground, we receive God's word with joy, but when difficulties come, our faith struggles to take root. Jesus never promised that following him would mean a life without challenges but he did promise that we would never face those challenges alone.

This is where our reading from Romans brings such encouragement. St Paul writes:

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Those words remind us that in Christ, we are forgiven, loved, and welcomed. The Christian life begins not with us trying to earn God's love, but with discovering that God already loves us, and allowing that love to transform us. Paul reminds us that the Spirit of God lives within us. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us. We are not trapped by our past, and we are not limited by our present circumstances. God is always bringing the possibility of growth and renewal.

Jesus also speaks about the seed that falls among thorns. These are the things that crowd God out, the worries of life, the pressures we carry, and the distractions that fill our days. Many of us know how easy it is to become busy and overwhelmed. We may not turn away from God, but we can become so occupied that we forget to make space for him.

Sometimes the greatest danger to our faith is not rejecting God, but becoming too distracted to notice him. For example, it's so easy to be distracted by endless scrolling.

Jesus invites us to open our hearts again, to allow his word to take root and to remember that our deepest identity is found not in what we achieve or possess, but in being loved children of God.

And then there is the good soil.

The seed takes root, grows, and produces a harvest. Jesus says it produces thirty, sixty, even a hundredfold. This is the hope at the heart of the parable. God is not looking for perfect people. God is looking for open hearts.

A seed does not become a harvest overnight. Growth takes time. Roots develop quietly before anything can be seen above the ground. The same is true of faith. There are times when we may wonder whether God is doing anything in our lives. We pray, we worship, we try to follow Christ, but we do not always see the results straight away.

Yet God is often working in ways we cannot see.

A word of encouragement.
A prayer offered in a difficult moment.
A decision to forgive.
A small act of kindness.

These may seem like small seeds, but in God's hands they can become something much greater.

So today, Jesus invites us to ask:

Where does God need to soften my heart?
Where do I need deeper roots?
What worries or distractions do I need to place into his hands?
Where is God bringing new growth?

The wonderful news is that we do not have to do this alone. God's Spirit is at work within us. The same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead is bringing life and hope into our hearts.

So let us ask God to make us good soil, with Hearts that are open to his word, ready to receive his grace, and prepared to bear fruit. Because the story of the sower does not end with the seed that failed.

It ends with the harvest!

May the seed of God's kingdom take root in us, so that through our lives others may discover the love, mercy, and hope of Jesus Christ.

Amen.