



*That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear." (Matthew 13:1-9)*

When we are followers of Jesus it's likely that sometimes we will feel like sowers. We scatter the seed of the Gospel but we don't always know the quality of the soil in which the seeds are being planted, nor do we often get to see the fruits of our labor. That can be a cause of frustration unless we understand our role in God's great plan.

The late Oscar Romero, the archbishop of El Salvador, who was killed for his commitment to bettering the lives of the poor in his country, said this: *"We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders, ministers not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own."* In other words, our job is to do our job, and then let God do God's job.

That can be liberating, especially for those (myself included) who have a need to see things to their completion. The good news is that God uses us, as imperfect as we are, to bring about God's vision for the creation, but the ultimate result is not our responsibility. That belongs to God alone. Whatever God has called us to do is always empowered by the Holy Spirit, and God will use it to his glory.

In the early first century church in Corinth, Christians were bickering over "who they belonged to," that is, which of the apostles brought them to Christ. In response to that, Paul wrote:

*“What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.” (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)*

It’s not good use of our time and energy to wonder how our small actions might fit into God’s greater plan. The best we can do is check ourselves again and again, and keep asking if our actions take the shape of God’s love for the world. And if that is so, we are part of a greater whole. And that means the outcome is not dependent upon us at all.

I mentioned last week that I’ve been reading through Bishop Curry’s new book *Love is the Way*. Not to be redundant, but here’s another quote worth sharing:

*“It’s impossible to know, in the moment, how a small act of goodness will reverberate through time. The notion is empowering and it is frightening - because it means that we’re all capable of changing the world, and responsible for finding those opportunities to protect, feed, grow, and guide love. We can all plant seeds, though only some of us may be so lucky as to sit in their shade.”*

Know that your seed planting this week will be blessed. All of the seed you scatter may not land on soil conducive enough to promote growth. But some indeed will. Relax, step back, and let God do the work of bringing your seed planting to blossom.

Pastor Chuck

Let us pray. Lord God, you call us to be seed planters. Empower our work so the Gospel may be spread far and wide. And then help us to step away, trusting that you will be busy doing what you do best, loving the world and loving us. Amen