

If we faithfully sow the seed, God will bring forth from it-- some of it in accordance with His will, 30 fold, 60 fold, maybe even 100 fold! That is the central thought certainly of the parable.

But I believe we are justified in getting a good deal more from this parable than that. I believe that there are three factors in this parable that are important, and that we should think about. These three are the sower (or farmer as the later versions call him) the seed, and the ground. While the emphasis is on the ground, the others are very important.

Who is the sower? It is important that we realize that that Jesus Christ is the sower. That God is the One who provides the soil. That God is the One who provides the seed. That God is the One who directs in the results of it. That He is the Sower. But even as He is the Great Shepherd, there are the undershepherds. Each of us who know the Lord are His undershepherds. Each of us-- every Christian who knows the Lord--has the obligation to be a sower. We have the obligation to sow the seed where ever we have opportunity. We never know what results God may bring from it.

The Sower is important in it, and vital to keep us from discouragement. To teach us we should always be on the job, that we should be making every day count to reach individuals with the message of salvation. We have the task of spreading the Word. God provides what the results are going to be, and often they are affected by circumstances entirely beyond our control.

So the Sower is the Lord. The seed is only incidentally mentioned. While the parable is not primarily about the seed-- it is about the soil--the seed is the most vital factor, in it. Many a successful minister, particularly in this century when so many have turned away from the Word of God, has spent his life teaching sociology, history, ethics, and maybe has seemed to have great effect upon the people with whom he dealt. But the results of his work are simply wood, hay, and stubble. Nothing has been accomplished that will stand or last because he had not been sowing the proper seed.

The Seed is the Word, and the Word is the Word of God. The Word of God is primarily the message of how we may be saved. The message of what Jesus Christ did in order to make it possible that we could be saved. The message is His giving His life on the cross for our sins. That is primary in the seed. That is tremendously vital, and without it we are certainly not doing God's will.

I have sometimes said that no matter how fine a sermon may be an exposition of some part of the Word of God, no matter how interesting it may be and how much truth it may contain, I question if it is really a Christian sermon if there is not somewhere in the course of the message made clear the way of salvation. You never know if you are preaching to ~~any~~ any sizeable group of people, you never know who may be there who does not know Jesus Christ as Saviour. If you do not have as your primary purpose even if not the immediate direct purpose of the particular sermon, even if you do not have as your primary purpose showing the way of