

salvation, showing people the great mercy of God in providing an atonement (for sin) that Jesus has provided, if we do not have that central in preaching, it is a question whether it is a Christian sermon.

Yet while that was primary, that of course was not all. We are told to desire the sincere milk of the Word. We are to feed upon that which is primary, but also we are to get the strong meat by which to grow. We are to get further truth out of the Word.

So the seed is not just the message of salvation. There are many fine churches in this country where the evangelistic message is given over and over. Given in power and God uses it. But where there is very little to teach Christians to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. While this is absolutely primary, it is only a part of God's message. It is the foundation, but God does not desire that His people remain babes all their lives. He desires that they also receive that which will enable them to grow.

God has given us in His Word the answers to the problems of life, the answer to those problems which are universal among people. Those problems that all of us encounter, and the answer to particular new problems that come up from year to year and from time to time. God has given a preparation, He has prepared the answer to the problems in His Word. So the whole Word of God from Genesis to Revelation, is God's seed that He wishes His people to sow. It is His seed on which He wishes His people to feed. It is the milk by which we grow as babes, but also it is the strong meat that He desires us to have as we grow in the Christian life.

So we cannot stress too much how important the Word is not only as the means of our salvation, but the means of our growth, the means of our handling the problems we are to face, the means of our going on in the life which God wants us to.

So there are these two elements which are touched upon in the parable which are important, without which there would be little meaning to the parable. There are these two elements. But that of course which is primary in the direct impression of the parable is the matter of the different kinds of ground. The different kinds of soil. This is not an analogy. We have to imagine the conditions of ancient farming in order to have the effect of it. Today we have big machines which handle most of these enterprises, most of these aspects. It is done in quite a different way.

But if we think of the way in which farming was done in the time of Christ, the sower going out and scattering the seed, and it gives an analogy for the parable. In the parable--I think we should think of it again from two aspects. The parable shows the effect of our sowing, and God wants everyone to be sowing the seed. That is first. But I think we must remember that not only