

The Power of Seed
Sermon July 16, 2017

As a child, I was raised on a farm where I learned that, without hard work, there is no result. From early spring, after school, I spent my time around my grandparents farming. In early spring, as my grandfather was ploughing the field, he asked me to be close to him and to pick the stones into a pot to prepare the ground properly for the seeds.

When the cornfield was prepared, my grandmother put an apron in front of me, and she poured wheat in it. As I was walking next to my grandparents, I was taking out handful after handful of seed, flinging it across the ground. I was sowing the seeds with joy, knowing that, in a few months, we will harvest what we sow.

As the birds discovered the seeds, they tried to get some. My grandfather asked me to chase the birds away. My grandmother asked him to calm down, saying: “Steve, leave them alone. They don’t have anything in their lunch bag”.

As I was sowing at the margins of the field, I noticed that right at the end of the field, there were quite a lot of stones and weeds. Some of the seeds I sowed were falling on or under the stones and rocks, some on weedy ground, or some on the nearby hard-packed pathway. But most of them did fall on fertile ground where soon the seeds took root and gave a bountiful crop.

In this parable, Jesus is telling us that the sower is God, the seed is His word. The field is our human heart, which can be covered by rocks and weeds. Our hearts can look like a hard-packed pathway, because of plenty of bad experiences and hardships we suffered in the past.

Today, God sows His gift of words into our hearts equally. He is a giving God. He is not concerned about which soil even gets to receive this gift. We all receive these gift equally, but you and I, we have to know what kind of heart field we offer for God’s words.

In this congregation, even today, God is scattering His seed over all hearts, trusting that the seed would bear fruit in you and in me. Our Lord is still gracious and He scatters the seeds all over our hearts.

About 2,000 years ago, in the crowds who were listening to Jesus, there were people whose bodies were there but their minds were wandering somewhere else. There were people who were there just to criticize what Jesus said. There were in the audience some who wanted to find something wrong in Jesus’ speech to accuse Him to the High Priests. Some of those people were rocks; some of them were weeds or birds, killing the seeds. Jesus described these people when He was quoting Isaiah: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would

heal them. But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.” Matthew 13:14-16

Jesus knew that there were people out there who really did not want to understand what God was trying to say. He struggled to explain to those folks the message, but they did not really care to understand. The reality is that it is impossible for unspiritual people to fully understand spiritual truths.

I want you to know that I feel very happy to have you here this Sunday morning worshipping with you. But as your minister, my responsibility is to ask you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, a few challenging questions: Which one are you today as you are listening the word of God? Are you a rock, a weed or a bird? What kind of heart are you offering to God today as He is sowing His message? What kind of field is your heart? Is your heart covered with rocks, weeds, looks like a hard-packed pathway or is like a carefully prepared soil?

Let’s try to define together: “What are the rocks and weeds in our human hearts?” (Question to the congregation).

We agree that rocks, stones and weeds are sins such as murder, adultery, stealing, pride, selfishness, gossip, ignorance or presumption. The problem is that we can see these in other people’s lives but we have a hard time to see them in our own hearts. This is why King David prayed: “How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep your servant from deliberate sins!” (Psalm 19:12–13)

In 2 Corinthians, Paul prays: “Let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

The seeds, His WORDS, His MESSAGES have power to take root in the harshest ground. Once His word takes root, it can bear fruit. How deeply has the seed taken root in your souls so far and, at the end of your earthly life, what kind of harvest will you present in this way to Jesus? When God, the Judge, will call you to report about your life, how rich or how poor a harvest will you be able to present to Him? Only from the best soil can there be a harvest 100 times more than what was sown.

Are you working on your heart to be a good soil for the seeds of God? The sower God is constantly still sowing seed! Are you doing everything to be good soil? Depending of you, you can be blessed 30, 60 or a 100 times. Which number do you hear? God is ready to pour out a blessing into your life 30, 60 or a 100 times, depending on how prepared your heart is for His words. He has more than enough resources to make it happen. Offer to Him your rocks, your weeds and your hard heart, and He will create in you a new heart as new soil which can get 100 times more blessings than you can imagine.

Another major question for you and me today is: “What are you doing with the seeds God gives you here at Calvin, or when you read the Bible?” You and I, we are responsible for the rocks we have in

our hearts and our responsibility is to get rid of those rocks. We have to pull out the weeds we discover in our hearts. Otherwise, they will kill God's seeds.

What are your rocks and weeds? I want each of you to take time now and this afternoon after lunch to think it over, and make up your own mind to find out what your rocks and weeds are which can be seen in your personality, is affecting your way of thinking, or shows up in your behaviour. God will delight in giving Him your rocks. As a result, God will pour on you His blessings.

Your biggest enemy, the devil, can make our hearts like hard-packed pathway. The devil and the temptations are the birds who want to steal the seeds which could fall into your heart. It is your responsibility if you allow the temptation to win. It is your responsibility, also, for how you prepare your heart and how you maintain the soil for the words of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit can make you capable to get rid of your own rocks, weeds, and birds, and the Lord can help you to prepare a pure soil for His words.

Please don't be lazy and indifferent about the status of your heart. God believes in you. He trusts that you will be smart and faithful to care about your own heart and about your own future. Amen