

Sunday 12th July

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

The Parable of the Sower

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

The Parable of the Sower Explained

'Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

How many seeds in an apple? How many apples in a seed?

Anita has spent a lot of the last 4 months in the garden, getting to know it and getting things to grow in it. We have had some fresh produce from it including fresh peas, from the pod to the pan without spending time in a freezer.

You do have to open a fair few pods to get enough peas for a decent portion but when you think back to what went into the ground what has happened?

One pea was planted into the soil, a plant has grown; roots, stems, leaves, and flowers and then pods and peas have grown and the soil is still there. Where did all the growth come from? Part of the mystery of this amazing world! Ok scientists and gardeners can give an explanation but sometimes ignorance is fun.

Within the Church we have heard this parable Jesus told on many occasions. We call it the parable of the sower but some will call it that parable of the soil. The sower scatters the seed and how it grows depends on where the seed falls more than the sower.

We could suggest that the sower could be more careful in where he scatters the seeds. More time could be spent improving the ground. The economist might decide to do an exercise in marginal utility theory – you can look that one up if you want to know more.

Jesus did not tell the story from the perspective of being an efficient farmer. The story is about a generous God who wishes for as many people as possible to hear the message of God's love and have an opportunity for growth.

Whilst saying this is not about efficient farming is there a challenge for us to improve the ground on which the seed is sown?

Why did the pea grow into a pea bearing plant? Because Anita had fed the soil with goodness and added water when the natural downward supply was a bit lacking before and after the pea was planted.

Can we prepare the soil in our neighbours' life by the way we live that when the seed of the Gospel falls upon them it will grow?