October 18, 2026
CDC Sunday
"Sowing Faith"

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Jesus was a sower. In this passage he speaks to a crowd of people gathered by the Sea of Galilee. They were all kinds of people. Some where there because they wanted to catch him saying something they could use the legitimize their skepticism. Some listened to what Jesus said, but didn't think about it much or act on it and when things got tough, they forgot. Others were there because somebody made them come, but they would really rather be somewhere else. However, some listened and took what Jesus said to heart and it changed their lives!

Jesus spread the word of God's love and grace in parables. Some like the disciples believed, but even some of them doubted at times. Tax collectors, collaborators with the occupying Roman forces, gave up their lucrative businesses and followed. A Roman Centurion believed in Jesus! Some whet home pondering, only to have the truth dawn on them at a later date. Some didn't think twice about it.

But Jesus sowed the seeds anyway. He loved people and healed and taught. He spoke to a Samaritan Woman with a reputation at the town well. He forgave a woman caught in the act of adultery. He ate dinner with an altitude challenged tax collector. He had a late-night heart-to-heart conversation with a pharisee. He even prayed for the forgiveness of the people crucifying him.

Jesus talked about a sower, while the was sowing. Who is the sower in the parable? Is the Sower God, who sows grace and love and joy and hope? The Bible tells the story of how our Creator has constantly been reaching out to the whole human race. God has sent the word through prophets and angels and wise women and men. God chose to dwell in the midst of Israel so that they could be a light to the nations. Then God sent the Son, Jesus Christ, to be God come in the flesh. After Jesus died for our sins and rose again, he sent the Holy Spirit to be God's living presence in us and in our midst, sowing God's forgiveness and wisdom and love.

Yet, there is another way to look at this parable. Perhaps we are meant to think of ourselves as the sowers. We have the Good News of God's grace and forgiveness and love. We have hope and peace that are beyond comprehension. Maybe we are called to sow the seeds of that love and hope and joy in the world. When we do sow it, we are to do so without regard to the people we are sharing those things with. Ignoring color and status, or ethnic background or education or gender or even creed. Loving everyone equally just like Jesus did. Offering them hope and peace. Forgiving each other for the harms we have done.

Why can't it be both: God is the sower and we are the sowers? That's the wonderful thing about parables; they are often true on many different levels. Through Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and Church, God has shared the seeds of love, joy, peace, patience, … etc. with us. God didn't consider that we might not be ready to receive the seeds. We have all been hard-hearted like the well beaten path. We have all lacked depth in our spiritual lives at times, like the rocky soil. We have all been like the soil filled with weeds and worried about other things. There are also times when we have all been receptive to received that seed of God's blessings. God simply showered them upon us no matter what state we were in at the time. So, what do we do with all those blessings? We spread them for others so that those

things can grow in their lives. God sows the seeds in our lives, and we spread these seeds to others.

There is another part of the Bible it speaks about this process. In Galatians 5:22-23 it talks of the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. An apple tree grows apples. A grape vine grows grapes. A blueberry bush grows blueberries. You won't find an apple growing on a grape vine, or a grape on blueberry bush.

In the same way as people of God, the Holy Spirit blesses us with the Fruit of the Spirit. Because we follow Jesus, love, joy, peace and all those other good things grows in our hearts. They are the fruit that grows from living in the Spirit of God.

One day I cut into a tomato that had been sitting in the fruit bowl for quite a while. It had not gone bad yet, but I could tell it would soon. When I cut it open, I noticed little sprouts from the seeds in the middle. Plants produce fruit so that their seeds can be spread and make more plants and more fruit.

God graciously blesses our lives with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Those things grow in us and make our lives better. Additionally, they also produce an abundance that we can sow in other people's lives as well. So, we are all both soil and sower of God's spiritual blessings.

So, why am I peaching about sowing the seeds of the Spirit on the Sunday that we are celebrating the St. Mark Child Development Center? I am preaching on it because, on a spiritual level, that's what is happening here every day! Every day we are sowing love and joy and peace and patience and all those other blessings in the hearts of these Children. Some days they come to class ready to learn those things. Some days maybe they don't feel well, or maybe the dog barked at them, and they aren't ready to receive the love, joy, peace, patience etc. Yet, the CDC staff still loves on them and offers them joy and peace and sometimes a lot of patience. It doesn't matter what state their soil is in that day. Sometimes the state of their soil changes from minuet to minuet – but isn't that true of all of us, if we are honest with ourselves?

So, every day the CDC staff sows the seeds of God's spirit in their lives, and sometimes it grows in their hearts and makes their lives better. They experience the love, peace, patience, and joy of the Spirit.

These things grow in their lives. As they go forth and grow, they can then share those things with others. They become the sowers.

God is at work in your lives sowing the blessings of the Spirit. Be ready to receive those blessings. Be ready to grow the seeds of love and grace and forgiveness that God is showering on you. Then share those seeds with others.

Be aware of the Fruit of the Spirit growing in your children's lives. Help cultivate and nurture it to fruition. Then they can know the joy of sharing that love with others.

We thank God for sowing those seeds in us. We can all think of people who helped to sow those things in our lives. We thank God for those teachers and parents and friends, and the role they played in help us grow. So, we celebrate the St. Mark CDC and all the ways teachers and staff shower the children with love and grace and patience and kindness. Remember "seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty!"