

## Chapter 8. THE SEED IS THE WORD.

*"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." – Luke 8:11*

I think it may be confidently said that in all nature there is no illustration of what the Word of God is, so true, so full of meaning, as that of a seed. To have a full spiritual insight into it is a wonderful means of grace.

The points it resembles are easy to state. There is the apparent insignificance of a seed – a little thing as compared with the tree that springs from it. There is the life, enclosed and dormant within a husk. There is the need of suitable soil, without which growth is impossible. There is the slow growth with its length of time calling for long patience of the farmer. And there is the fruit, in which the seed reproduces and multiplies itself. In all these respects, the seed teaches us most precious lessons as to our use of God's Word.

There is the **first lesson of faith**. Faith does not look at appearances. As we can judge, it looks more improbable that a Word of God should give life in the soul, should work in us the very grace of which it speaks, should transform our whole character, should fill us with strength. And yet so it is. When once we have learned to believe that the Word can work effectually the very truth it expresses; we have found one of the chief secrets of our Bible study. We shall then receive each Word as the pledge and the power of a Divine working.

Then there is **the lesson of labour**. The seeds need to be gathered, and kept, and put into prepared soil. And so, the mind must gather Scripture and understand and pass it on to the heart, as the only soil on which this heavenly seed can grow, the Words which meet our need. We cannot give the life or the growth. Nor do we need to: it is there. But what we can do is to hide the Word in our heart, and keep it there, waiting for the sunshine that comes from above.

And the seed teaches **the lesson of patience**. The effect of the Word on the heart is in most cases not immediate. It needs time to strike root and grow up. Christ's words must abide in us. We must not only day by day increase our store of Bible knowledge – this is only like gathering the grain in a barn – but watch over those words of command or promise that we have specially taken and allow them room in

our heart to spread both root and branches. We need to know what seed we have put in, and to cultivate a watchful but patient expectancy. In due time we shall reap if we don't faint and lose faith.

And lastly comes **the lesson of fruitfulness**. However insignificant that little seed of a Word of God appears, however feeble its life may seem, however deep hidden the very thought of what it speaks may be, and however trying the slowness of its growth may be to our patience – be sure the fruit will come. The very truth and life and power of God, of which the Word contained the thought, will grow, and ripen within you. And just as a seed bears fruit, containing the same seed for new reproduction, so the Word will not only bring you the fruit it promised, but that fruit will each time become a seed which you carry to others to give life and blessing.

Not only the Word, but "*the kingdom of heaven is like a seed.*" (**Matt.13:31**). And all the grace of it comes in no other way than as a hidden seed in the heart of those who are born-again. Christ is a seed. The Holy Spirit is a seed. The love of God shed abroad in the heart is a seed. The exceeding greatness of the power that works in us is a seed. The hidden life is there in the heart, but not at once or always felt in its power. The Divine glory is there, but often without form or beauty, to be known only by faith, to be counted and acted upon when not felt, to be waited for in its springing forth and its growth.

As this central truth each time is firmly grasped and held as the law of all the heavenly life on earth, the study of God's Word becomes an act of faith and surrender and dependence upon the living God. I believe humbly, almost tremblingly, in the Divine seed that there is in the Word, and the power of God's Spirit to make it true in my life and experience. I yield my heart hungrily and wholly to receive this Divine seed. And I wait on God in absolute dependence and confidence to give the increase in a power above what we can ask or think.

*Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, teach me these lessons of the seed, the lessons of faith, labour, patience, and fruitfulness. As I humbly gather the seeds from your Word these next 17 weeks, help me to surrender to it, to transfer it from my head to my heart, to keep, to watch over it, to wait for its growth in faith, to believe that your Spirit will make it true in my life and experience. I tremble at your Word, in awe of who You are, the Sower of the heavenly seed. Amen.*