

## 6th Sunday after Pentecost, July 16, 2017

5th Sunday after Trinity, Proper 10(15)

LUTHERAN

# LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.  
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the  
rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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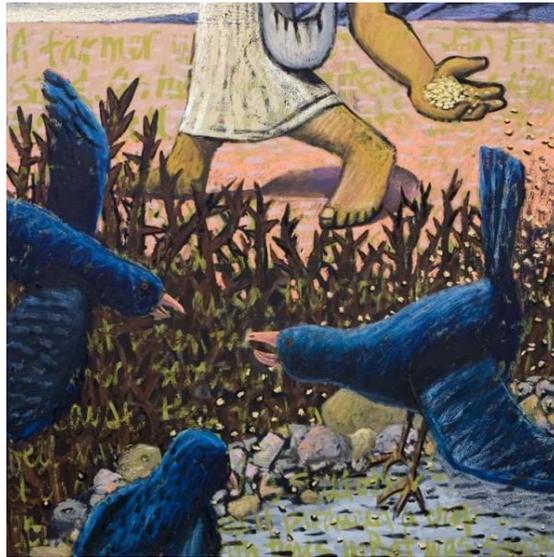
**through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,  
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

July 13, 2017 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44130

*Presented as a part of the bible study/worship weekday service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church  
setting, bi-weekly at an assisted living site and used by Lutherans in Africa.*

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### Hymn of the Day

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 577    The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 49**

**“Almighty God, Your (Thy) Word is cast”**

“...Written about 1815, and first published in Cotterill's *Selection*, 8th ed. 1819, No. 268, in 5 stanzas of 4 lines, and given for use "After a Sermon" [S. MSS.]. It was reprinted in Montgomery's *Christian Psalmist*, 1825, No. 252. From that date it grew in importance as a congregational hymn, until its use has become extensive in all English-speaking countries, in some cases with the omission of one or more stanzas, and in others, with the addition of a doxology. Two texts, purporting to be the original, are extant. The first is that of *Cotterill* as above, from which the hymn has been taken in a more or less correct form until 1862, when the second was given from the original manuscript in Lord Selborne's *Book of Praise*, 1862, p. 470, and *Lyra Britannica* 1867, p. 131. One of the best arrangements of the hymn is a slightly altered form of the latter in Taring's *Collection*, 1882, No. 151.

-- John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (1907)”

[http://hymnary.org/text/almighty\\_god\\_thy\\_word\\_is\\_cast](http://hymnary.org/text/almighty_god_thy_word_is_cast)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1c2mjT5schA> Not the best recording, but if you don't have a hymnal you can sing along with the posted words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7OSJ04ew14> An orchestral version.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

**Isaiah 55:10-13; RCL, Genesis 25:19-34 or Psalm 119:105-112 (Next Week: Isaiah 44:6-8; RCL, Genesis 28:10-19a and Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24)**

“The job description of the prophet contains among other less than coveted tasks the ability to speak a life-giving word of hope when all the events seem to point to the contrary.

In Isaiah 55:10-13 one sees the prophet performing this task particularly well when in but a few short verses, the prophet is able to conjure up a world where the impossible seems possible again. Ever since chapter 40, the prophet has been seeking to provide his fellow exiles with much-needed perspective, helping the survivors to look at their broken world with new eyes...”

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=993](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=993) [Juliana Claassens](#) Professor of Old Testament, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, South Africa

<sup>10</sup>“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven  
and do not return there but water the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

<sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

<sup>12</sup>“For you shall go out in joy  
and be led forth in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you

shall break forth into singing,  
 and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
<sup>13</sup> Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;  
 instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;  
 and it shall make a name for the LORD,  
 an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

“These last few verses of Isaiah 55 offer an image of new creation with the natural world serving as a metaphor for the life-giving movement and effectiveness of the word of the Lord.

This passage is a foundation for understanding God’s relationship to Christian proclamation.

In the interest of the integrity of the text, reconsider the boundaries of this particular pericope. Insofar as the lectionary serves the church and not *vice versa*, consider including verses 6-9, which sets the stage what follows.

Consider the comments from Martin Luther (1483-1546) on Isaiah 55.10:

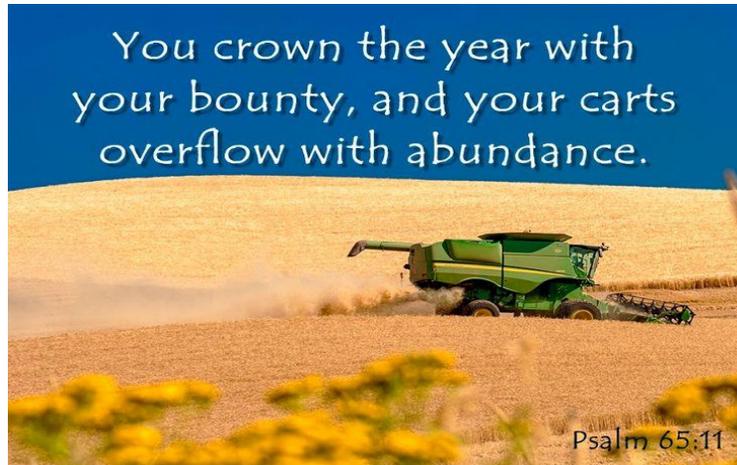
*This paragraph is spoken in part for the confutation of the stubborn, in part for the consolation of the weak. For consolation, because the Word seems so weak and foolish that there appears to be no strength in it. How can it be believed that all the power, victory, and triumph of God are in the word of a feeble human mouth? And so He comes to meet this scandal of the weak and the stubborn. For all the enemies say, ‘Do you really think that everything depends on the Word? We must act, work, and think.’ Here the text confounds their thoughts. He does not say, ‘Our works and our thoughts do this,’ but, ‘My Word.’ It is therefore a consolation for the purpose of listing up the weak, lest they be offended at the lowliness of God, who has every victory in His Word.*

*At the same time He provides an illustration: As they come down. Rain and snow are not useless, but they water the earth, giving seed to the sower. The rain can achieve everything for the earth. ‘So also My Word accomplishes everything.’ The effect is the same. For neither one is understood. Reason says, ‘The strength belongs not to the rain and snow but to the earth.’ But when we experience the absence of rain, we see what the earth produces. So He takes away the glory of the earth and shows that it is not the earth that does it but that it is accomplished by the rain. So our building and promotion of the church is not the result of our works but of the Word of God which we preach... Here you see that everything is produced by the Word.<sup>3</sup>*

The Word (now deliberately capitalized within the horizon of Christian proclamation) of God accomplishes what God purposes -- repentance, faith, and salvation. Christian proclamation participates in this work of God. We don’t add to this work or validate it or accomplish it. This is God’s work done by way of God’s Word proclaimed...”

<sup>3</sup> Martin Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (Luther’s Works, 17; Saint Louis: Concordia, 1972) 257-258.

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2110](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2110) **Samuel Giere**  
 Associate Professor of Homiletics and Biblical Interpretation, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/52832860021262281/>

**Psalm 65: (1-8), 9-13; RCL, the Isaiah reading or the same Psalm (Psalm 119:57-64; RCL, Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 or Isaiah 44:6-8 and Psalm 86:11-17)**

*When one surveys Psalm 65 as a whole, what is most striking is the breadth of the psalm's subject matter...*

*Psalm 65 thus depicts a world alive with the bounty and glory of God. While many scholars believe that its original use was for thanksgiving celebrations at harvest time, its possible applications today are many. With its wide-ranging portrayal of an undefiled, joyful creation, along with peoples delivered, at peace, and praising God, it provides a vision counter to what we tend to see in the world today.*

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=954](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=954) **Scott Shauf**  
Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, North Carolina

### **O God of Our Salvation**

*To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. A Song.*

*65 Praise is due to you,<sup>[a]</sup> O God, in Zion,  
and to you shall vows be performed.*

*<sup>2</sup> O you who hear prayer,  
to you shall all flesh come.*

*<sup>3</sup> When iniquities prevail against me,  
you atone for our transgressions.*

*<sup>4</sup> Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,  
to dwell in your courts!*

*We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,  
the holiness of your temple!*

*<sup>5</sup> By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,  
O God of our salvation,*

*the hope of all the ends of the earth  
and of the farthest seas;*  
<sup>6</sup> *the one who by his strength established the mountains,  
being girded with might;*  
<sup>7</sup> *who stills the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves,  
the tumult of the peoples,*  
<sup>8</sup> *so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.  
You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.*

<sup>9</sup> You visit the earth and water it;<sup>[b]</sup>  
you greatly enrich it;  
the river of God is full of water;  
you provide their grain,  
for so you have prepared it.  
<sup>10</sup> You water its furrows abundantly,  
settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers,  
and blessing its growth.  
<sup>11</sup> You crown the year with your bounty;  
your wagon tracks overflow with abundance.  
<sup>12</sup> The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,  
<sup>13</sup> the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.

- a. [Psalm 65:1](#) Or *Praise waits for you in silence*
- b. [Psalm 65:9](#) Or *and make it overflow*

“...Several themes emerge as possible directions for preaching. The motion of the psalm from quiet, expectant waiting to a summons for the creation itself to join the choir of praise suggests that the journey from expectation to exaltation is just that -- a journey. Many of us, perhaps most of us, find ourselves somewhere in the middle of the journey. We recognize that God in Christ has answered our prayers.

In our baptisms we have been claimed by God and brought into the richness of God’s presence. Indeed, we have been incorporated into the body of Christ. And yet, for many of us, perhaps most of us, chaotic powers still affect us. Whether the chaos is a still unstable economy, a newly unstable marriage, grief, illness, loneliness, or a sense that our lives are adrift in a formless chaotic sea, our God remains master of the tumult.

Or, better, we can confidently claim that this God has joined us in our tumult. If we find ourselves awash, we know that God in Christ has likewise suffered as we do. Christ experienced loss and being lost to the depth that we have and more, and yet he comes to us with the firm

intention to stay with us until we arrive at that valley where even we, the flock of his pasture, will to shout and sing with joy.”

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2078](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2078) [Walter C. Bouzard](#)  
Professor, Religion and Philosophy Department, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa

**Romans 8:12-17; RCL, Romans 8:1-11** (Romans 8:18-27; RCL, Romans 8:12-25)  
The reading from Romans will continue through September 17.

*“In the ancient Roman world, unwanted children were routinely abandoned or sold into slavery.*

*Sadly, such cruel realities persist today in many parts of the world, where families crushed by poverty abandon infants they cannot afford to raise, or sell children into the slavery of child labor or child prostitution. In much more positive cases -- both then and now -- parents might give their children up for adoption with the hope of offering them an opportunity for a better life and a more hopeful future.*

*Roman society placed a high value on producing offspring and heirs, and childless couples of means were often eager to adopt. Under Roman law, as with our own, adopted children had the same legal status and inheritance rights as biological children.*

*Paul writes to the church in Rome: "For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption" (Romans 8:15). Paul assures his readers that although we struggle in a world of sin and death, we have not been abandoned to lives of slavery and fear. In Christ, God has adopted us as God's very own children and heirs..."*

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=321](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=321) [Elisabeth Johnson](#)  
Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Meiganga, Cameroon

### *Life in the Spirit*

*8 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.<sup>[a]</sup>  
2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you<sup>[b]</sup> free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,<sup>[c]</sup> he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

*9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit*

*is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus<sup>[d]</sup> from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.*

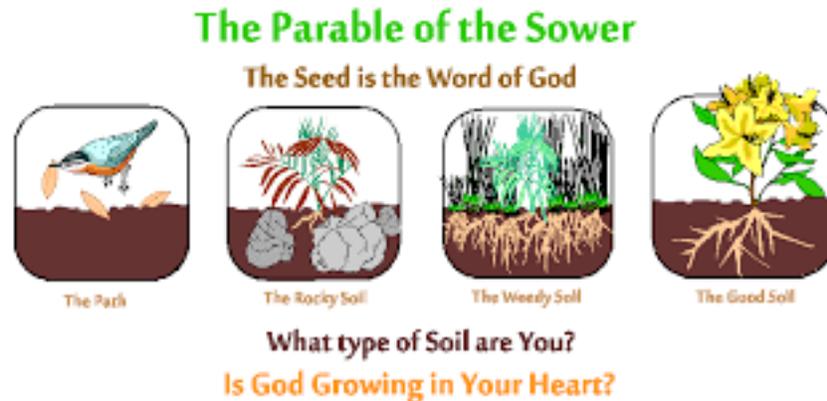
## Heirs with Christ

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers,<sup>[e]</sup> we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons<sup>[f]</sup> of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

- a. [Romans 8:1](#) Some manuscripts add *who walk not according to the flesh (but according to the Spirit)*
- b. [Romans 8:2](#) Some manuscripts *me*
- c. [Romans 8:3](#) Or *and as a sin offering*
- d. [Romans 8:11](#) Some manuscripts lack *Jesus*
- e. [Romans 8:12](#) Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse [29](#)
- f. [Romans 8:14](#) See discussion on “sons” in the Preface

“...The word “Abba” is an Aramaic term for father. It is less formal than “Ab,” which also means father. But Abba was usually the word used in the home, as children addressed their fathers. It is easier for a child to use a two-syllable word ending in a vowel than to use a single syllable word ending with a consonant. (So “Daddy” is easier to say than “Dad,” “Mommy” is easier than “Mom,” and so on.) But of interest here also is that “Abba” is the word used by Jesus in the crucifixion scene in the Gospel of Mark (14:36, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible ...”). The use of “Abba” must also have been characteristic of Jesus’ prayers, as in the use of “Father” in the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9; the Greek *pater* of the prayer is probably a translation of the Aramaic Abba). Apparently the term was familiar to the Christians at Rome as well as for Paul and for the Christians in Galatia. It is generally held that the term was used as a liturgical term to address God, first by Aramaic-speaking Christians and then, untranslated, by Greek-speaking Christians. That would have been in imitation of the prayer language of Jesus. To be sure, both Mark and Paul add “Father” after the term (so “Abba, Father”). It is possible that use of the Aramaic term was passing by the time that those writers wrote, and so it had to be translated for later and broader audiences. On the other hand, the addition of “Father” (*pater*) may have been primarily for emphasis...”

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2365](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2365) [Arland J. Hultgren](#)  
Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN



[http://www.truthinlove.com/Parables/Parable\\_Sower.htm](http://www.truthinlove.com/Parables/Parable_Sower.htm)

“...There are three parallel versions of this story in Matthew, Mark and Luke. The first three gospels are working in tandem as they report the parable of the sower. Many scholars think that Mark was the earliest gospel and that Matthew and Luke copied from Mark.

The three gospel parallels: Mark, Matthew and Luke

\*Mark is the earliest of the gospels.

\*Matthew reproduces 92% of Mark’s gospel (606 of Mark’s 661 verses).

\*Luke reproduces 48 % of Mark’s gospel (320 of Mark’s 661 verses.)

\*Matthew and Luke also follow Mark’s order of events in the life of Jesus.

\*Mark and Matthew are more alike in both order and content. Matthew carefully follows Mark’s ordering of the life of Christ.

\*A student can see the close parallelisms of Mark and Matthew in this parable.

\*Luke seems to have a somewhat different order and content in this parable.

The word, “parable,” means “riddle.” The very nature of a parable is that a person must figure out the meaning of the parable and then apply that meaning to one’s life. For example, the following is a parable: “I like coffee but I don’t like tea. I like Edward but I don’t like Markquart. I like Bill but I don’t like Gates. I like George but I don’t like Stein. I like Marvia but I don’t like Stratis. I like coffee that I don’t like tea.” That is the parable. Can you figure out the meaning of that parable? The explanation? I don’t like anything with the letter, T, in it e.g. tea, Markquart, Gates, Stein, Stratis. The point is: parables are like riddles and you have to figure them out.

Of Jesus’ 40 parables, only two of them are explained. You need to figure out the rest...”

[http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series\\_a\\_the\\_sower\\_and\\_the\\_seeds\\_GA.htm](http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series_a_the_sower_and_the_seeds_GA.htm) Pastor Edward F. Markquart, Grace Lutheran Church, Des Moines, Washington

## “The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 13th Chapter”

### “Glory to You, O Lord”

**Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23; RCL, the same reading (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43; RCL, the same reading)**

*“The main point of Matthew's version of the parable of the sower is to offer an explanation. In order to see this, one needs to review the narrative logic of the entire Gospel to this point...” (continued after the reading)*

#### **The Parable of the Sower**

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup> And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup> And he told them many things in parables, saying: *“”A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. <sup>5</sup> Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, <sup>6</sup> but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup> Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup> He who has ears,<sup>[a]</sup> let him hear.*

#### *The Purpose of the Parables*

<sup>10</sup> Then the disciples came and said to him, *“Why do you speak to them in parables?”* <sup>11</sup> And he answered them, *“To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. <sup>12</sup> For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>13</sup> This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. <sup>14</sup> Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:*

*““You will indeed hear but never understand,  
and you will indeed see but never perceive.”*

*<sup>15</sup> For this people's heart has grown dull,  
and with their ears they can barely hear,  
and their eyes they have closed,  
lest they should see with their eyes  
and hear with their ears  
and understand with their heart  
and turn, and I would heal them.’*

*<sup>16</sup> But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. <sup>17</sup> For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.*

### The Parable of the Sower Explained

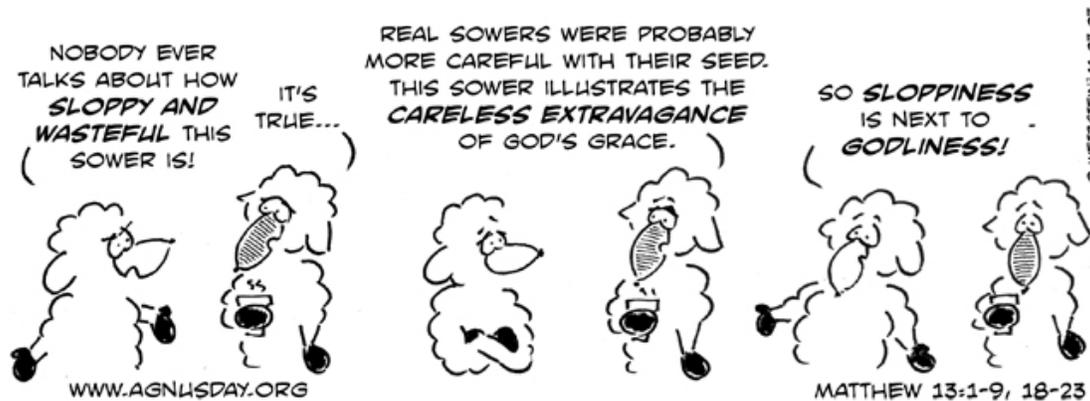
<sup>18</sup> “Hear then the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. <sup>20</sup> As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>22</sup> As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. <sup>23</sup> As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

- a. [Matthew 13:9](#) Some manuscripts add here and in verse [43](#) to hear
- b. [Matthew 13:21](#) Or *stumbles*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord”      “Praise to You, O Christ”

“...How is it that so many in Israel have rejected the Messiah? How did his own receive him not? Chapter 13, which opens with the parable of the sower, addresses the issue. It supplies a sort of mini theodicy--not a solution to the problem of evil in general but a solution to the rejection of Jesus in particular. The chapter teaches that there can be different responses to one and the same message (13:1-23), that the devil works in human hearts (13:24-30), and that all will be well in the end (13:31-33, 36-43, 47-50). Read in its larger context, the whole chapter grapples with the Messiah's unexpected reception, or rather lack thereof... “

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=106](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=106) [Dale Allison Errett](#)  
M. Grable Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Early Christianity, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA



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