

Sowing in Hard Soil

Today's Reading Luke 8:1-8

Many Christians are paralyzed when it comes to sowing because of fear. They fear rejection. They fear tough questions. They fear being labeled. They fear the unknown.

It seems that even Paul was not immune to fear. In Acts 18, after a particularly fierce attack by his enemies, the Lord appeared to him in a vision to reassure him. He said, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent." The implication here, as the NASB translation picks up, is "do not be afraid *any longer*."

Some soils are indeed tough. Jesus speaks of "rocky" and "thorny" soils in Luke 8:6-7. In sowing, we must learn to recognize the nature of the soil. We must learn from Jesus Himself. Jesus steered away from intellectual pursuits and technicalities and always turned to the matter of the conscience, where the knowledge of right and wrong resides. When the woman at the well tried to argue about where the right place to worship was, He talked to her

about eternal life (John 4:13-14). When she got distracted by the material gains of the Gospel, he brought her back to the reality of sin in her life (John 4:15-18).

Jesus reminded Paul that He was going to protect him no matter what. Then He gave Him the ultimate reason why we must keep on sowing. He said, "... I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:10). The reality that many people are dying and going to hell ought to sober us and motivate us to keep on sowing no matter how hard the soil might be.

In a different context, Solomon said, "Sow your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will." (Ecclesiastes 11:6). The same could be said about sowing into the hearts of people.

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