

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The Preaching of the Word of Christ Bears the Good Fruits of Faith and Love



Background: Rain sustains all earthly life. But what about all Spiritual life. That is sustained by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word. And much more happens then people simply understand that God paid the full price of our sins and made us one with him. For as Christ lives in us, the fruits of faith pour out. In the parable of the Sower, we first see a generous God spreading His seed across the land. The seed isn't limited to just cropland, but it falls on the walkway, patches of thorns, rocky soils. Thus we see God as wanting all people to be saved, but for some the faith simply sprouts and then dies away. But that seed which falls in the good soil produces a hundred fold. How lucky it is for the world that Christians exist. Their faith results in good works that

The Sower Vincent Van Gogh 1888.

supports health, help to people in need, and continued spreading of the "Good news" of the gospel to those who still do not know Christ as their Savior.

The Lessons: Isaiah 55:10–13, Romans 8:12–17, & Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23

As *"the rain and the snow come down from heaven"* and *"water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout"* (Is. 55:10), so the Word of God accomplishes the purpose for which He speaks it, granting joy and peace through the forgiveness of sins and producing the fruits of faith and love in those who are called by His name. Christ Jesus, the incarnate Word, has established the name of the Lord as *"an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off"* (Is. 55:13). He opens our ears to hear, our minds to understand and our hearts to believe His Word, lest the evil one come and snatch it away. He thus transforms our rocky hearts into good soil, which clings to the Gospel and *"indeed bears fruit"* (Matt. 13:23). He is Himself the firstfruits of all who *"have received the Spirit of adoption as sons"* (Rom. 8:15). Thus being *"led by the Spirit of God,"* we are not afraid, but we cry out in faith to our Father in heaven (Rom. 8:14–15). For as we suffer with Christ, the beloved Son, so shall we *"also be glorified with him"* (Rom. 8:17).