

THE SEED PRINCIPLE

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The opening words of the Bible state the unalterable principle that every seed reproduces after its kind. In Genesis 1:11-12 Moses wrote, “And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.”

According to this principle, the inherent nature of a seed allows it to reproduce “after its kind” even though it may be removed by both distance and time from the original plant which produced the fruit in which it came. When the climate and soil conditions are adequate to allow the seed to germinate, because of its design, it is capable of growing and producing a plant after the same kind as the original. Marshall Keeble used to illustrate this principle by discussing that if a person wanted to grow Georgia watermelons in Africa, he would not need to grow a vine stretching across the Atlantic Ocean from Georgia to Africa. All he would need to do is get the seed from Georgia and take it to Africa and plant it. Further, Keeble would emphasize that it is not what God could do, but what he does do that should concern people living today. He said, “God *could* make watermelons grow on a peanut vine if he wanted to, but we are not discussing what God *could* do; we are discussing what God does do.”

Jesus applied the principle of every seed reproducing after its kind to the spiritual realm in the parable of the sower in Luke 8:4-15. He said, “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God” (v. 11). In the parable he likened human hearts to various types of soils that received the seed.

The Way Side Soil

In verse 12 he said, “Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.” Think of the very great sadness of seeing this development after taking the time and expense of sacrificing to fulfill the Great Commission only to have the word of God rejected outright because the Devil took it out of the heart of the hearer so he could not believe and be saved. How many people living today have not even had the blessed privilege of hearing the word of God? All need to hear it

in order to be saved (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6). Therefore, the problem is not with the seed. If men will sow it, the problem is with the recipients having hard hearts like the way side soil.

The Rocky Soil

In verse 13 Jesus said, “They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.” The joy points ahead in Luke’s gospel to the rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over a sinner who comes to repentance (Luke 15:7, 10). The affirmation is that the word of God is able to save the soul of man (cf. also Jas. 1:21). However, the problem is the heart of those represented by the rocky soil, like shallow earth, lacking the depth necessary to endure temptation, and they “fall away.”

Interestingly, Jesus said they fell away after they believed “a while.” The Baptist position that those who “fall away” were never saved solidly is exposed as erroneous by this one verse. Their position would make the Lord say those who fell away were never saved, but what he actually said was that they believed “a while.”

Again, the problem here is not with the seed. As indicated, it performed just as it was supposed to perform. The problem rests with the shallow hearts of men who are all too easily distracted from the will of God.

The Thorny Soil

In verse 14 the Lord said, “And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.” Likewise in this case the seed produced as it was designed, but as has been observed to be true with so many people down through the years, the allure of the world with its cares, riches, and pleasures retard that which the seed, the word, produced. Demas particularly is mentioned by Paul as having been adversely affected in this regard (II Tim. 4:10).

The Good Ground

At last, in verse 15 the Lord pointed to the positive potential of the seed being wonderfully reproduced when planted in conditions that favor its growth. He said, “But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” God has so designed his word that within it resides the power to accomplish his will among men. The

writer of Hebrews would comment, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). The Holy Spirit is the power working through the Bible to keep it relevant and effective throughout all the many centuries since it was first written 2000 years ago. Paul said, “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17).

Conclusion

The idea of some even within the Lord’s church and in institutions of higher learning affiliated with the church who are responsible for enforcing academic regulations required to grant degrees to their students with the full backing of their patrons is that the seed, the word of God, has become corrupted due to the time separating people today from the original audiences addressed by the Bible. Such a position should be so reprehensible to Christians that dramatic action should be taken to change the course of spiritual disaster and ruin these people have charted for themselves and the precious body of Christ. Quite possibly, what it may take to move honest men loyal to God’s truth and will into action is a greater confidence in the Bible being incorruptible.

Significantly, the apostle Peter presented such statements affirming the incorruptibility of the Bible, and his inspired voice will be heard ringing throughout all the earth calling the faithful to arms! He wrote, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (I Pet. 1:22-25).

Crucial to the apostle Paul receiving the crown of righteousness for his life’s labors was the action he took while he lived, concerning which he said, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (II Tim. 4:7). Had his heart been like the way side, the rocky, or the thorny soil, he likely would have just left the fight and the faith for others to engage. However, he wanted the reward of heaven. How much like him each Christian should be today. By extension the solemn charge he gave to Timothy is handed down today where he said, “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust” (I Tim. 6:20).

