

Discipleship

Notes:

The Seed Is The Word
Cultivation of the Inner Life by Andrew Murray

I think that in all nature there is no other illustration of the Word of God as true and full of meaning as that of the seed. To have full spiritual insight into it is a wonderful means of grace.

The points of resemblance are obvious. There is the apparent insignificance of the 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, calling for the long patience of the husbandman. And there is the fruit, in which the seed reproduces and multiplies itself. In all these respects, the seed teaches us precious lessons about our use of God's Word.

First there is the lesson FAITH. Faith does not look at appearances. By human judgment it looks most 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 it does. Once we have learned to believe that the Word can effect the very truth which it expresses, we have found one of the chief secrets of the Bible study. We can then receive each Word as the pledge and the power of God's working in us.

Then there is the lesson of LABOR. The seed needs to be gathered, kept, and put into prepared soil. So also the mind has to gather from Scripture, understand and pass on to the heart – the only soil in 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 hide the word in our heart, waiting for the sunshine that comes from above.

The seed also teaches the lesson of PATIENCE. The Words's effect on the heart is, in most cases, not immediate. It needs time to develop roots and grow up – Christ's words must abide in us. We must not only increase our store of Bible knowledge daily – gather the grain in a barn – but watch over those commands or promises that we have claimed, 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 faint not.

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Last comes the lesson of FRUITFULNESS. However insignificant that little seed of a Word of God appears, however feeble its life may seem, however deep its meaning may be hidden, and however slow its growth may be, be sure that fruit will come. The very truth, life, and power of God, of which the Word contained the thought, will grow and ripen within you. Just as a seed produces fruit, containing the same seed for new reproduction, so the Word will not only bring you the fruit it promised, but that fruit will become seed which you carry to others to give life and blessing.

Not only the Word, but “the kingdom of heaven is like a seed.” And all the the grace of it comes as a seed hidden in the heart of the regenerate. 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 this power” that works in us is a seed. The life is hidden there in the heart, but not instantly or incessantly felt in its power. The divine glory is there, but often without form of comeliness, to be known only by faith, to be counted and acted on even when not felt, to be waited for in its springing forth and its growth.

When this central truth is firmly held as the law of all the heavenly life on earth, the study of God’s Words becomes an act of faith, surrender, and dependence upon the living God. I believe humbly in the divine seed that is in the Word. I believe in the power of God’s Spirit to make the Word true in my 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 with power beyond what I can ask or think.

Note: The principle you just read was taken from Altha’s teaching “By His Stripes, Planting the Seed.” The complete teaching is available on the Glimpses page.