

St. Andrew's Sermons
The Rev. John D. Rohrs
4 Pentecost A; July 10, 2011
Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Lousy Farmer, Loving God

A sower went out to sow. Some seeds fell on rocky ground. They sprang up quickly but when the sun rose they were scorched, since they had no root. Other seeds fell among thorns and the thorns choked them. Some seeds, though, fell on good soil, and they brought forth much grain. Hear ye the parable of the sower.

I want to share with you this morning one of my biggest temptations as a parent. I find it very difficult to not typecast my children. It's so easy to look at their personalities and imagine for them a life story. This is especially true of our boys, because as twins it's natural to compare them. From day one, Will has been the easy one. He's content to just sit there for hours banging blocks together. He smiles all the time; he loves to cuddle; he gives big sloppy kisses. It's like he's destined to be the dutiful, loving son.

Tom, on the other hand, is a squirrely rascal. He'd rather play than sleep, he can't sit still (ever), and he lets out these squeals of mischief all day long. The other day in the span of five minutes, he pulled a chair and a lamp on top of himself and then he stuck his finger in the electrical socket. So in my mind, I've already got him pegged as this endearing miscreant. On one hand, he has a certain joie de vivre that is wonderful, but on the other hand I have this ominous feeling like it's going to take every favor I'm owed just to keep him out of jail.

To say it a different way, in the context of our parable, I'm afraid that Tom is destined for the thorns. At the least, he's headed for rocky ground. Whereas Will, you can just tell he's going to stay on the good soil. Now, who knows? I could be totally wrong. And shame on me for labeling my boys when they're not even out of diapers. But let's be honest, what parent doesn't think about this? Who doesn't want to do all they can to steer their kids away from danger and toward a safe and fertile future?

Then, of course, we remember that it's out of our hands. My kids will shape their own paths. And as they do, they will find what we all find: the soil of life is unpredictable. It shifts and changes. One day you're on good soil, and the next day thorns pop up out of nowhere. Storms and droughts arrive and change the

conditions. It is impossible for any of to maintain fertile lives and faithful hearts every step of the way.

Thankfully, this parable isn't about us. It's not about the soil or even the seeds. It's about the Sower. It's about a God who sows indiscriminately and continuously, throwing seeds of love into all kinds of soil in every condition and season, over and over again. In this parable, God makes a lousy farmer. He doesn't save the seed for the good soil; he doesn't care what season it is; he doesn't consider the weather. God just goes on sowing – rain or shine, winter or spring, rocks or thorns. God just goes on sowing, hoping that the seed will somehow catch hold and begin to grow.

My kids' lives are not mapped out before them. None of our lives are. We all face constant choices and changes, and we all move from the good soil to the thorns and back again. But that's okay. Because the good news, the best news, is that the Sower never stops. Ever and always, God is walking our way once more, sowing the seeds of love from an endless and exhaustive supply. Amen.