



not our own possession. We are His who purchased us, and redeemed us, to Whom we owe our life. For as the holy Paul said: *To this end Christ died and rose again; that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living* (Rom. xiv. 9). What do the thorns mean by which the divine seed is choked? It is He that scatters the seed which beginning to put forth

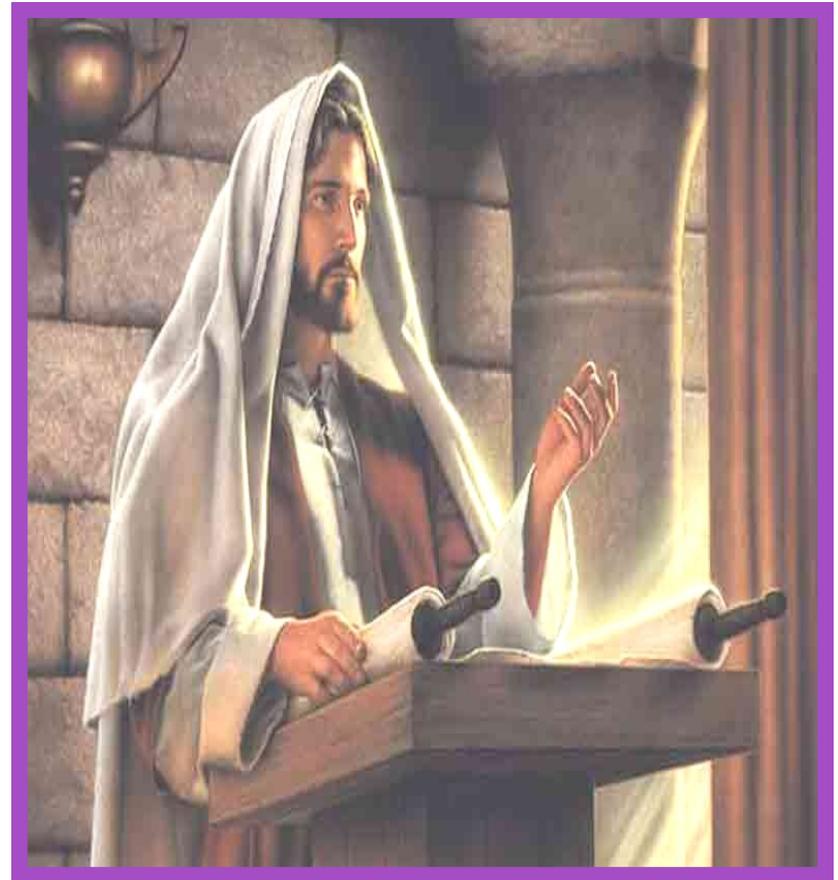
shoots, is choked by the cares of this world, as Jeremiah says in iv. 3. If the divine seed germinates in us, let us first drive forth from our minds all worldly cares.

They are rich and fruitful soil who yield fruit a hundredfold; and good and beautiful are the souls that take deeply into themselves the seeds of the Word, and keep them and tend them with care... For when the divine word falls upon a soul purified of the things that afflicted it, then it takes deep root, and comes forth as an ear of corn that yields fruit abundantly...



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**SERMON ON  
THE SOWER WHO SOWED HIS SEED  
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH  
# 140 - 1**



**JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!**

**SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY**

## Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

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Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 8: 4-15

by: Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop and Doctor

The blessed prophets have spoken in various ways concerning Christ; for they foretold He was the Light that was to come. Some proclaimed He was endowed with royal dignity and excellence. A certain one among them said: *Blessed is he that hath seed in Sion, and friends in Jerusalem. Behold a king shall reign, and princes have preceded him with judgment. And he shall be a man that hides his words, and he shall hide himself as from water rushing down* (Is. xxxi. 9; xxxii. 1, 2). That the words of the Savior were for the most part hidden is plain to us. It is also that the psalmist also brings Him speaking before us: *I will open my mouth in parables* (Ps. lxxvii. 2).

Now you may see that what was foretold has come to pass. For a great multitude stood about Him, gathered from all Judea, to whom He spoke, and in Parables; but since they were unworthy to understand the mysteries of heaven His words were obscure to them. Neither had they the will to believe in Christ: more, they blasphemously opposed His teaching. For this reason they also began to denounce those that followed Him, impiously declaring: *He hath a devil, and is mad: why hear you Him?*

Accordingly, it was not *given to them*, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to us who are ready to believe, it has been given. For He has given us *to understand a parable, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their mysterious sayings* (Prov. i. 6). We must also tell you that parables are as it were images, not of visible things, but rather of things of the mind and of the spirit. That which cannot be seen with the eyes of the body, a parable will reveal to the eyes of the mind, informing the subtlety of the intellect by means of things perceivable by the senses, and as it were tangible. Let us see what kind of enlightenment the word of the Lord prepares for us.

What is the scope of this parable, and its hidden profundity. Let

us learn from the One composing it. For even before our time the blessed Disciples did not grasp its meaning, and they came to the Savior, asking Him: *What this parable might be?* Let us consider the reason why the seed on the *way side* was seized. A way side is almost always hard and unbroken, because it is trodden on by the feet of all who pass, and the seed is never sown there. Into whoever therefore that have minds that are hard and unyielding, no divine or sacred word will enter, by whose aid the joyful fruits of virtue might grow. Men of this kind are a highway that is trodden by unclean spirits, and by Satan himself. They shall never be yielders of holy fruit, because their hearts are sterile and unfruitful.

Again there are others who carry the faith indifferently within them, a faith that is simply a matter of words. They have a religion that is without root; for entering a church they take a delight in seeing so many assembled there, and they readily take part in the sacred mysteries. They do so from no serious purpose and from a certain levity of will. When they go out of the churches such people straightaway consign to forgetfulness the holy teachings. As long as Christians are left in peace, they keep the faith; but should persecution arise, they will be of a mind to seek safety in flight. To such as these the prophet Jeremiah says: *Prepare ye the shield and buckler, and go forth to battle* (Jer. xlvi. 3). For the hand of the Lord our Defender cannot indeed be overcome; as the most learned Paul says: *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it* (I Cor. x. 15).

Yet if it should happen that we must endure suffering for the sake of the religion of Jesus Christ, then in every way and everywhere we are blessed. For the Savior has said to the holy Apostles: *Be not afraid of them who kill the body, and not able to kill the soul* (Mt. x. 28). This lesson he gave us, not by words alone, but by deeds. For He laid down His own life for us, and repurchased all men by His blood. We are therefore