**“Told Many Things”**

Psalm 65

Isaiah 55:10-13

Romans 8:12-17

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

 Pentecost 6

God’s said: “My Word that goes out from My mouth shall not return to Me empty, but it shall **accomplish** **that which I purpose**, and shall **succeed in the thing for which I sent it**”. A whole crowd stood on the beach, and **Jesus** “**told them many** **things** in parables, saying: ‘A **Sower went out to sow**.’”

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

You will **hear many things today**. Between 20- and 30,000 words (I’ve read) will pass through your ears this day. **This message** will contribute about 2,000 of those, but **this** sermon isn’t the **only one** you will have **heard** by tonight’s bedtime. About 70-80% of your day is engaged in the talking and **hearing** of communication. And while you can speak 125-175 words per minute, you can **hear** **around 450**. You will, though, **absorb** only 17-25% of that, which may be **appropriate** because only **that percentage of what any of us say** is probably **worth absorbing**. And **women** use all of their brain when hearing and listening … **they** use **both** brain lobes for it. **Men?** Well **we**, apparently, only use one brain lobe (or half our brains as an article that I read says). But the writer of the article was a **woman** **named** “**Rebecca**” … so “**go figure**”.

I’ve always said that if you come to the Divine Services that we gather for to hear **what just I have to say**,then you might as well stay home because what **just I** have to say is only worth, maybe, being 17-25% absorbed. It’s why my words are supposed to get minimized for what’s the **Divine Service** … they’re meant to be minimized. **Another’s** Words are programmed-in, and **designed to be**; **that’s** liturgy and long readings, then poured-over hymns carefully **crafted for faithfulness**, prayers, and **very-manuscripted** sermons. So, of **THAT**, **hearing, listening, and** **absorption rates** should be **appropriate** for the **Mouth which actually is doing the talking**. And that’s because (for one thing) there’s **promises** **made** about the **hearing** and **listening** to **those Words not ever made** about any **other’s** words.

**Text**

**God** **talks**. “**Jesus** **told many things**” we are heard. And (as Isaiah 55 says directly): “**Words** **go out from** **God’s** **mouth**”. Did you **hear and absorb that?** “**WORDS GO OUT FROM THE MOUTH OF** **GOD**”. And God **has been speaking from the very beginning**: “Did **He really say**” was the temptation Satan suggested to Eve, and yet she knew that “God had indeed said what He said” … and quite-clearly. God, then, also **talked** to **fallen** Adam and Eve and, even, Satan upon the evil they jointly inflicted. He **talked** to Noah in order to **keep** **the promise that He’d made**. He **talked** to Abram about preserving that promise through His lineage, and through that lineage He’d **say so much more to and through**. He **talked** (God did) audibly from a mountain and, then, through Moses: “Let My people go!” He said to an Egyptian Pharaoh. God **said** and Moses write what He said, and after another 4 Books beyond the straight dictation He’d **talk** through other writers / prophets and ambassadors (or approved **spokesmen**) like Isaiah. “**In many and various ways God** **spoke** **to His people** **through those prophets, but (then in these last days) He has spoken through His Son**”. See, “in the beginning was **God’s** **Word** (**IT** was nothing short of that Divine Being in Word that proceeding from the Father’s mouth). And (as He says of It in Himself) **the Word** was with God and the **Word was God**. Through Him (that **Word**) all things got made that were made. And that **Word** **became flesh and dwelt among us**: God with us as, **literally**, Immanuel”. And (as Matthew records it), **He (Himself) told** great crowds that had gathered **many things**” … and He **expected** (and we know this because it’s how He’d regularly conclude **His** **telling people many things**) that “he who **has ears**, let him **HEAR**”.

This time, what He’d said was **how** **IMPORTANT the Word of God is**. And no more clearly had He ever spoken of that than through Isaiah, yet (in our Gospel account), Jesus said **there’s several options for how humanity receives (or deals with) God’s Words**. See, they **ARE** **EFFECTIVE** and **BENEFICIAL** every time they hit the ground (that’s the fact statement He promised through Isaiah about His Words in and of themselves), but the **ground** (the **human ground**) **takes differing postures when supposed to receive them** … even, just, cold callousness toward them, or an-only shallow appreciation (“bumper sticker”-like use of them or “tattoo”-use or as “t-shirt” blurbs that loosely reference them … but, maybe, never really letting them plant themselves deeper than the skin or clothing.

For instance, I wonder about the obviously-fractured world that we live in. What’s going on (and where God’s will) in Black Lives Matters concerns and in pandemic issues. What if He just “bellowed-out” continuously from the clouds continuously enough to gain everybody’s attention? Would we listen to **His voice**, **IT clear**, **no mistaking** of what He approves of or doesn’t, or of how we should think about everything and ourselves (even scientists admitting that this is God speaking, having had time to eliminate every other possibility to explain the booming voice from above)? Would rioters and police officers (together and maybe even with “white supremacists”) stop to **hear** **Him and listen and obey?** Would doctors and nurses and patients (together) **pay-attention and act appropriately from His voice and Words and** **according to His plan and desire no matter what that be?** …..

God **does talk … and He does, really, quite clearly** **…** and **we all could listen**. **Some will**, but maybe only **17-25% of the time**. But **some will, and all of it WILL BE effective and beneficial**.

Jesus “told the people gathered many things in parables”, and parables are (by human definition) **earthly analogies about heavenly realities**, yet **the Holy Spirit doesn’t use the analogy to** **get people to the reality. He uses the analogy of the parable to enlighten the reality that hearers who can receive them are already on the good side of and KNOW**. See, the Holy Spirit’s already given the reality to the redeemed directly and clearly (as in, we **get it in our souls**), but parables “**color**” those realities and “**texture**” them and “**flavor**” them and “**scent**” all the facts that the Holy Spirit’s already instilled in us. They (parables) **open-up reality** so **we (the believers) can taste it and feel it and smell it deep into our lungs**. Parables are “Color Commentary” to the “Play-by-Play” of the facts.

So those who “**understand**” **reality** don’t, ever, get to it through the parables, but they certainly **illustrate** our “understanding” … and we get that “understanding” directly from God’s Spirit … and **enjoy it all as HIS WORD**. Parables **enhance** a believer’s “understanding” down and up to **depth and experience and sensation** so that we’re **blessed BEYOND the black and white truth in, just, the pages of typed Word**s but given, **ALSO**, **IT / Truth in the vivid spectra-color blinding-almost in brightness and clarity, and painful in one sense since it even hurts our senses by exposure to it, yet gets grown-into and makes it all (everything) more FULFILLING (ultimately) THAN PAINFUL … more use to its constant changing-of-us and our growth in it and greater sight and perception**.

Yet even we **respond** in **different ways** to it. Some of it outright never penetrates our ears as, either, we’ve got them plugged or stay purposefully or negligently away from where it can be heard … and the devil and his demons gladly brush aside (or gobble it themselves) **IT** out of our access before it penetrates. He (Satan) **convinces even us** that we’ve got better ideas “and we’ll stick with the feelings of our gut”. “This”, Jesus said, “is **what’s sown along the path**”.

Then there’s the “**rocky ground**”, where God’s Word is allowed considered only a “Good Luck Charm”, **FELT** deeply in the **EXPERIENCE of the moment** but not really **stuck-with** **really**. **IT’S** allowed to be, only, of good luck encouragement but not as a **content of understanding**; Words from God are minimized down to a “**good enough**” quantity and level. But true martyrs couldn’t survive with just this level of the Word of God’s, and false teachers make up different concepts of so-called Christian reality which make it stomachable atop “**rocky ground**”. Singers, Simon and Garfunkel, sung accurately about the epidemic that “a man hears just what he **wants to hear** and **disregards the rest**”. And Paul (the apostle) wrote to the Galatians: “I’m astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a **different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the Gospel of Christ**”. **There are** **factions of “hearers” among you**, Paul says, and “there **must be factions among you**” (speaking of the differences in “hearing” and “listening” and “letting God’s Word sink into Good Soil”) “**in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized**”.

Another reception option of God’s Words is **apathy and complacency** of **standing among** “**thorns**”. **Wishing** that God’s Word sank-in, many though (in **negligence**) **LET** “**cares of the world**” “**choke**” **God’s Word quiet or let them be un-explained**. Thorns let-to-be-thorny such as possessions and family (on the pedestal of your worship), recreation and work as an inappropriate priority, or even doubts about God in this world can get allowed **access to one’s neck** … and that for whole populations of people. Lives, then, remain “**unfruitful**” Jesus says, and that means **useless really**.

Yet “**Good soil**” is what Jesus calls **listeners**. And more than half of that is a **given** (as in a **Gift from God**). Through the Holy Spirit in use known by the promises of Baptism and a continued faith (“he that believes and is baptized **shall be saved**”), **FAULTY SOILS ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO “BE” AND “ACT” GOOD. The Holy Spirit is the “soil” where He’s promised to be**. But as **true as that is)**, so also is the truth of the **obstacles** that even made-“Good-soiled”-believers **corrupt** ourselves with by **neglect**. See, **Good soil can become “rocky” and “thorny” and, even, as hard as a “path”. Even “Good soil” can degrade without CARE**.

But **Jesus** is, both, the “**Sower**” and the “**Seed**”. And He does sow **Himself** liberally upon all surfaces where the Word is spread forth. It’s a **blessing promised just as surely** as it’s **God (and we can see it) pouring sunlight and rain upon every inch of this planet**.

**Application**

My wife showed me her **cosmos flower growing, now, in our “rocky” driveway**. After having tried to pick “good soil” to purposefully (and by human intelligence) flower this plant, it turns out that the seed **she spilled** in the crack between cement and gravel took flowered where it didn’t where it was intended. What she **expected** (in chosen soil) hadn’t panned-out, yet **THIS** is a wonder to behold.

The “**flowers**” of God’s “**Seed**” (**Jesus** **and His death upon a cross for our need**) may surprise. **Maybe it shouldn’t!** **We**, though, **thank God** for His **promise upon IT: success**. May we pledge, continually, to **open our ears** and **hearts, minds and souls**. May **we** “**hear** **and** **read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest**”, then **further spread** and “**sow**” **His Words**. That happens with our mouths obviously (since it’s Words) but also with our legs and hands and pocketbooks since some of it can be the funding of missionaries and the distribution of the Gospel in Bible translations and texts. But may God **always find** **in us** **“Good soil” into which to speak**. May we always be **useful, further sowing** what we know as **Jesus**.

In +His name. Amen.