

July 12, 2020  
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost  
**A House Divided**  
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The story begins,

*"Listen! A sower went out to sow..."*

*And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up...*  
There was the time I did not get very far. I had just started on the path, just begun to follow Christ, when I got scared and stalled out. I was eaten up by worry and doubt.

*Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away...*  
There was a time when I believed if only I studied or thought enough, I would be able to understand Christ's way. I did not know that Christ's way had to be grounded in my heart as well as my head. My faith withered away.

*Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.*  
Another time, I tried to turn toward Christ, but became distracted. It wasn't too long before I was choking on the expectation of our consumerist culture and my own grasping heart.

*Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*  
And yet again, I arrived in a community, a congregation like this one. Sometimes there were weeds and rocks. But like rich soil, that community nurtured me, helped me to grow strong in my faith.

*Let anyone with ears listen!*  
We aren't, any of us, only one thing. Most of us have had all of these experiences at one time or another. Let this be our prayer: "Whether we get carried away or wither, suffocate or grow strong, help us to remember that you are with us always, Holy God. Amen."