

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, IL
Pastor Kent G. Wartick (ret.)
Trinity Lutheran Church, Hobart, IN

Pentecost 6
Saturday, July 15, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, July 16, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

“Water the Soil, Watch it Grow”

Isaiah 55:10-11

^{ESV} **Isaiah 55:10** "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it 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 (Isa. 55:10-11 ESV).

Grace, mercy, and peace be to all of you in our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Greetings in Christ our Lord from your brothers and sisters of Trinity Lutheran Church, Hobart, IN, where I am a member; the Gary Circuit, and the rest of us in Northwest Indiana! I want to thank you for this opportunity to be here today to share God’s Word with you. This came about by one of those God-timing events that put people together at the right place and the right time. Last Lent I was visiting my Mom, who lives in the Sunset Apartments here in town. I attended a noon Lenten service at St. James LC where your pastor was taking his turn at preaching the Lenten service. After the service, I found out not only that we had some interesting things in common, but that he

needed guest speaker for this particular weekend. I then had an excuse to come and visit my Mom, so it all worked out for everyone's good. We do indeed have a great God who is concerned about and cares about every little detail in our lives!

But now for this great chapter From Isaiah, part of which serves as the Old Testament reading for today. We'll take a closer look at the whole chapter in Bible class today. The focus is on the two verses I just read, vss. 10-11:

^{ESV} **Isaiah 55:10** "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it 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 (Isa. 55:10-11 ESV).

I. Water the seed

Through Isaiah our Lord uses a common illustration from daily life that is universal. He describes how the rain waters the soil and causes growth of the seeds, then we can watch it grow. We here in Adams County know the power and importance of moisture for the soil.

- a. it is important to get the right amount or there are problems. To little, and you have a drought, such as we had in South Texas one year-127 days without any precipitation. Too

much, and you've got a flood such as the destructive floods we experienced here in about 1973 and 1993.

- b. Right timing is important, too. Too early and seeds can be washed out and you have to replant a field; too late and the crop can be destroyed as it either doesn't produce or what it produced rots in the field because it could not be harvested.
- c. The moisture needs to be the right kind, too. Cool, pure, clean water from rain and snow are needed. In South Texas, crops are dependent on irrigation from the Rio Grande River. Yet this water, when it evaporates, can leave a salty residue on the soil. When they say "don't drink the water," DON'T drink the water! But the right kind-snow, which is the "poor man's fertilizer" as it was called in Nebraska; rain that is gentle, not too hard, and with no hail or too much wind-and that is worth its weight in gold.

II. Watch the Growth!

- a. Far more precious than gold is the Word of God that is like this water God sends from heaven to water the crops! God sends it out to the world, to all who will hear. Whether it is the witness of nature that tells us of the power of God; the witness of conscience that tells us there is a God who is judge, or the Bible, which speaks that Law and Gospel message to everyone who will just open it up and read it, or has the opportunity to hear it; or see it presented in film and plays, God's Word is powerful and active. Hebrews describes it as a "two-edged sword"-

the “two edged sword” of Law and Gospel Paul describes the Gospel as “dynamite” in Romans 1 to emphasize its power to bring salvation to both Jew and Gentile.

And God’s word will accomplish exactly what God’s purpose is for it. He brings judgment so that people might turn from their sin and seek Him; he brings the gospel in order that people might be saved from the just consequences of their sin. Both are good; both are necessary; and both are from God to cause His Word to grow in all the earth in these latter days.

Water the soil! Watch the growth! Watch God as He works in your life and the lives of all who are touched by His Word to grow into spiritual maturity and bear a great harvest for God. Let God’s Word cleanse you of the weeds of sin in your life. Let His clear, cool, pure waters arise in you to cause you to grow strong in the Lord as you study, read, memorize, and share God’s Word with others. When you invite someone to church, you are telling him or her you are welcome here. If you offer to bring them, you are saying “we want you here!” Spread the Word to everyone, because God’s ultimate purpose is for all to receive Him and ^{ESV} **Joel 2:32** And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. (Joel 2:32 ESV)

Remember that we only can plant or water, but it is “God who gives the growth”(1 Cor. 3:6,7). To God be the glory for His watering and His causing His Word to grow in us, among us, and through us!

Amen!