

(The idea of „going to sleep“ was inspired by our friend Neil Cole.)

The parable of the sower is probably well known. If necessary, remind it first at Mark 4:1-20. I'll take it such a way that only one of the four grains that the sower sows will bear fruit. In our fields, the profitability is much better. But imagine a really bad spiritual soil, as it seems to be here in Czech. If the crop is yielded only by one of the four grains, it means that you sow 1 kilogram, and the crop yields only a quarter – that is, 250 grams; while 750 grams is wasted! Is it even worth sowing in such a soil?! After all, the harm is greater than the benefit...

But the Lord Jesus takes it from the opposite end! Yes, he openly admits 75 % of the grain will be irretrievably destroyed! Either the birds will eat it, or it will grow and then dry out and rotten. But one in four grains will bring at least thirty times more! Count with me. You sow 1 kg of good grain. Only 250 g brings fruit, but the harvest is at least 7.5 kg of new grain! (30 times 250 g = 7.500 g) From 1 kg we have 7.5 kg at the end! If we take the greatest yield that the Lord mentions, then from 1 kg sown we would have 25 kg of new grain at the end!

The Lord Jesus is watching what it brings! Not what would be lost. Is there hard soil here in the Czech Republic? Full of thorns, and birds fly everywhere systematically eating it? Yes, but the harvest from what we sow is much bigger and more powerful than what dies...!

As a teenager, I went to work for an agricultural company. The tractor driver takes the seed drill, for example 1,000 kg of grain, and gets to the field. He sees a lot of stones there in the field, there are those thistles growing and a flock of hungry birds hovering over it all. He turns the machine around and goes back: „Boss, it's not worth sowing anything there, it would be a loss! 75 % would be wasted..." I don't think such a tractor driver would be a driver for a long time. It is not his responsibility to decide where to sow and when to sow, and what the benefit should be! His task simply is to sow...

I don't know about you, by face I do not recognize who is interested in Jesus and who isn't. Sometimes someone seems to never be interested; and yet it turns out that he is the right person waiting for my News. I don't have the ability to distinguish the fertile soil of human hearts from the first look! All I have to do is – like the tractor driver – just sow wherever I'm

sent. I watch the birds fly in and eat it. Yes, I'm happy to see something at least germinate. But a week later it dries out because it had no depth. And other emerging seeds die in the thorns of various interests. But if the minority that has fallen into good soil brings what the Lord says, then it was worth it many times!

There is another part of the parable, which is not much talked about (Mark 4: 26-29): "The kingdom of God is like a man casting a seed on the ground; he sleeps at night and gets up during the day and the seed germinates and grows, he doesn't even know how. The earth bears fruit of its own, first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the harvest is ripe, a man shall send a sickle at once: for the harvest has come.

We sometimes sow and then we are nervous; we feverishly consider what George will think of me and of my message and how he will react. Jesus' sower sows good seed and – goes to sleep! It grows on its own without him understanding the process.

That frees me immensely! I try to be like a tractor driver, who obediently drove through all the rubble in the field, through all the thorns and under the raid of birds, sowed what his task was, then parked in the machine – and went to sleep. The earth itself bears the grain. God gives growth. Notice the peace! He fulfills his task and goes to sleep. Only when the harvest is ripe he goes out with harvester...

When you look at your conversations with unbelievers over the past year, where do you focus your eyes? Yes, some of us encounter direct attacks by the devil, ridicule, or even some form of persecution, or disinterest and bad priorities. But the little part that brings the harvest is always worth it!

*Lord Jesus, thank you that when we do the task you have entrusted to us, we can go to sleep according to your parable... You yourself give growth to the grain of your mighty Word...*