

You focus on one seed ... knowing that life is stirring within it ... energy is building up ready for it to break out of the seed casing.
As you watch, a root tip begins to grow down into the depths of the ground ... to find an anchor ... nourishment and water ... many more roots follow.

Then you notice a shoot beginning its journey up through the soil to find light ... it breaks through the surface and emerges, young and tender. Up it grows sprouting leaves ... turning to the sun, the source of all light and warmth. The time of growth and fruitfulness is here ...

The blessing of growth is yours, freely given, with its own rhythm. It will happen many times ... there are many seeds given.
Is it today, now, that a seed of new growth will begin its cycle within you? Is it now?

Relating to Love - the Secret Sower

This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.

All by itself the soil produces corn - first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.

Mark 4:26-29



Last month we focused on the Lord as *the ground of our being*, this time we are relating to the Lord providing seeds of potential spiritual growth, *secretly*.

This parable from Mark's gospel is one of the series of parables concerning the kingdom of God; each parable gives a different perspective or description. Have you ever wondered why this is so? Perhaps each parable highlights what the experience of the presence of the Lord's love alive within us feels like. We need these reminders in our times of inner conflict and struggle.

This particular parable highlights our receptive role in the development of heaven within us. We are just the ground, the soil in which this spiritual growth takes place. The man is the Lord, who as the unseen Sower, continually gives us heavenly seeds, the potential to grow into truly spiritual people. And we know nothing about it, or how it is developed hidden deep within us.



This seed is love that he plants within us. This seed is received by all people throughout the world who dwell in his Divine Love, no matter what belief structures they have. This power of love only comes from our Lord, who plants it deeply in our actual life and there it remains forever. Without this seed of love no knowledge or understanding of truth will be rooted in us and grow.

Our part is to be open to receive what he gives, to choose to turn away from our own needs to control and to have ownership of our life.

On the surface it seems as if the impetus to love and do kind things comes from us, but this is just the appearance. We are asleep, unaware of this process going on within us. Everything comes from the Lord, the stirrings in our heart to be loving and wise perception to see how to go about this. Yet we are given the delights of the harvest as *if* they belonged to us. We get the joy of giving to others, of being of service, the warmth of loving connection and the insights of wisdom.

From this seed of love comes a harvest as it becomes an abundance which produces the seeds of more cycles of spiritual growth.

This is what was promised in Genesis, at the end of Noah's flood:



**As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night
will never cease. Genesis 8: 22**

The following are ideas of different ways you can explore and experience the Lord as the *Secret Sower*

Bible focus

This parable shows the reality of our dependence on the Lord. It is he who provides the seeds and the opportunities for these seeds of true spiritual growth to grow. This is how he works deep within us, unseen.

This is a cycle of growth; read this parable again and then read the passage from Genesis 8:22, which is another cycle. What do these two Bible passages show you about the patterns of spiritual growth in your life?

Teaching focus

The seed that was sown means love and comes only from the Lord. And everyone, no matter what their beliefs, if they have love from the Lord alive within them, then they are part of heaven. They are being created anew from within, by the Lord. From this grows a living faith, that makes us truly human.

based on Arcana Caelestia 1025

The stalk, ear and full grain mentioned is heaven within the person and its progression through different stages of growth. The stalk symbolises knowledge of true ideas such as the Lord as my loving Father provides for me. This is a factual statement that has been a part of my upbringing. It is a concept that I have but it only is an idea that has been given to me at this point.

When I look back through my life and realise that all of my life he has been providing for my inner growth even though at the time I couldn't see it. This is the ear - this spiritual principle is beginning to be true for me personally, I can see it working in my life, at least retrospectively.

But the full grain symbolises when this becomes part of our inner fabric. The true idea lives in us when it guides our perspective and how we interact with others - it begins to infuse our life. Do I need to worry if I know in my heart that the Lord provides for me and all people?

based on Arcana Caelestia 5212:4 & 10124:3

Experiential/Personal Reflection

Plant two seeds, one in a pot the other in a transparent container (runner bean seeds work well). You might like to do this with your young children or grandchildren. Water and watch them grow: one seed you will be able to see what is going on below the surface of the soil and the other you won't.

As you observe these two seeds growing, reflect on times when life has been difficult, perhaps nothing seems to be moving forward. Life appears dormant. But is it? When you look below the surface perhaps new life is stirring unknown and unseen by you under the Lord's providential care.

Meditation

Imagine you have a bare patch of ground before you. It has been prepared, weeded and made ready to be seeded. This ground is you - imagine yourself as the ground ... ready and waiting.

On the surface it looks as if nothing is happening ... no growth ... just barrenness. But you can now see with spiritual eyes and you see beneath the surface of the soil ... now you can see many seeds, waiting for the right time and season to grow ...