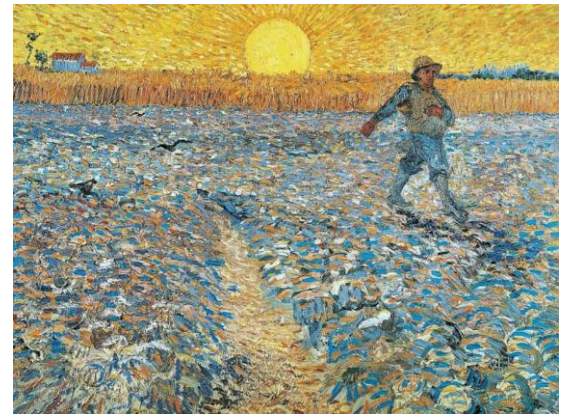


Sermon 12th July 2026
Trinity 6
Isa 55:10-13, Rom 8:1-11, Matt 13:1-9, 18-23



If you stand on the tarmac at an airport and look at a Boeing 747, it makes no sense that it can fly. It weighs nearly half a million pounds—the equivalent of thirty double-decker buses—and that's before passengers, cargo, and fuel. It's a massive block of metal.

The laws of nature say planes belong on the ground because of gravity. Gravity is an invisible, relentless downward pull. It doesn't sleep or take a day off. It doesn't care how badly that airplane wants to be in the sky. If a plane is grounded, gravity wins.

Our spiritual lives operate in the same way. We want to soar, experiencing joy, peace, and deep spiritual fruitfulness. But the moment we try, we feel a heavy downward pull. We default right back to old behaviours, anxieties, cyclic habits, and feelings of guilt.

Paul names this spiritual gravity: "the law of sin and death." It is the natural, broken, downward pull that keeps our souls grounded. But Paul doesn't leave us stranded on the tarmac. He presents us with a second, greater force: "Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death."

Through Jesus, God introduced a spiritual Law of Aerodynamics to overcome the gravity caused by our brokenness.

When we view the Parable of the Sower through this lens, we see a life entirely ruled by spiritual gravity. Jesus describes seeds falling on different soils, and in the first three cases, gravity and the harsh environment crush the potential life:

- **The path** represents a heart stepped on, beaten down, and compacted by life. It is so compressed by gravity that the seed cannot break the surface; it just sits exposed on the tarmac.
- **The rocky ground** represents a shallow heart. It has surface emotional energy but no root system. When the heat of trial hits, the plant lacks the structure to stand tall, and gravity pulls it right back into the dirt.
- **The thorny ground** represents a crowded heart, weighed down by worldly worry and the false promises of wealth. These weeds act as anchors, dragging the soul down before it can ever take flight.

These soils are completely grounded. When we try to live by our own willpower—what Paul calls "the flesh"—it's like trying to fight gravity by flapping our arms. We think, "If I just try harder, if I force myself to be good, I can finally fly." But human effort cannot break the laws of physics.

The OT Law of God laid out the rules of flight perfectly, but human weakness weighed us down. Left to ourselves, our soil defaults to thorns. Gravity always wins.

How does a half-million-pound plane get off the ground? It doesn't ignore gravity; it overcomes it by introducing a higher physical law. A plane needs two things to fly: thrust and lift. When the engines roar, they generate massive forward thrust. As the plane accelerates down the runway, air rushes over the wings, creating lift. When lift becomes greater than the weight, gravity is defeated, and the plane climbs effortlessly into the clouds.

In our spiritual lives, God's Word is the engine providing thrust, and the Holy Spirit is the lift. The Seed of God's Word isn't just a list of cold instructions; it is a bundle of aerodynamic potential, providing forward momentum. When you couple that Word with the Holy Spirit—the wind, the breath of God—a supernatural lift is generated inside our soul.

This is the very same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, and He is fully available to all of us. This is why the fourth soil is different. The good soil is like an open runway. It receives the seed, allows the engine of the Word to spin up, and gives the Spirit room to generate lift.

We don't have to manufacture the power to fly. When we accept Christ, the power source is already within us.

What happens to a life that stops fighting spiritual gravity with human effort and surrenders to the lift of the Spirit? - The entire landscape changes. God promises that: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle." Grounded by spiritual gravity, we naturally develop the sharp, painful thorns of anxiety and self-preservation. But when the runway of our heart is open to the Word, and the Law of the Spirit lifts us up, God replaces those thorns. The fruit we bear—love, joy, patience, and kindness—is not the result of us striving. It is simply the natural result of flying in the Spirit.

So, we need to stop flapping our arms. Stop waking up every morning trying to fight the gravity of our flaws by willpower. It's a guaranteed recipe for burnout. Instead, we should step into the cockpit of grace.

What does this look like? It means shifting from striving in our own strength to yielding to the Holy Spirit. Instead of waking up and praying, "God, help me try harder not to be anxious today"—which is just flapping our arms - we step into the cockpit and pray: "Holy Spirit, I cannot lift myself today. I open the runway of my heart to your Word. I surrender to your wind. Carry my thoughts and guide my actions."

We should trust the Sower who planted His Word in us. Lean into the thrust of Scripture, rely on the lift of the Holy Spirit, and live by the Law of the Spirit so that the downward pull of this world no longer defines us.

Rev Kerry