

“No Two Kinds of Seed” by K Schilder

By **Jelte Numan** - May 20, 2013

Why you should send your child to the Christian school.[i]

“You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed” (Lev 19:19 ESV).

You may wonder at the choice of this text for a speech on Christian Education. Admittedly, the way it is stated it appears to have little to do with the education at our schools. But must that be seen as an objection, or perhaps as a sign of embarrassment at the lack of Scriptural texts which support Christian education?

People have suggested that. It has been remarked that in the Bible there are so few texts which recommend and praise Christian education, that promote the Christian school. And admittedly, one who still harbours the childish idea that the Bible is a list of texts, a collection of loose statements from which you can select a proof text for all sorts of subjects and issues, will not find much in this text to spur him and his children to the Christian school with a clearly defined command from God.

But one who is a little less shallow knows better. He has learnt to understand that God’s Word is not a ready-reference book which provides quick answers to questions, but that it gives basic principles – standards, guidelines, underlying rules for practical, day-to-day, physical life, as well as for spiritual life.

God’s Word is the expression of His will. And that will of God has stated what it is He wants for physical and spiritual life, for the world of reality and for one’s thoughts, for the visible world around us and for the invisible world within us. But it is one God, one and the same, who has given His laws both for the physical world and for the spiritual world, and consequently a harmony must exist between those two worlds: there must be a certain harmony between what we see as the will of God in physical life and what His will is in the area of spiritual life. For it is one will which regulates both.

And now we have arrived at the point in question. Our text says, “You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed.” Well, there you have an ordinance of God clearly applicable for physical life, a principle that has been given for farming. But surely you will understand that certain things which apply to our physical day to day life can be used to symbolise our spiritual life. If God the Lord stated that in daily life: “you shall not mix; away with all synthesis: no two kinds of seed in your field” then that same will also applies to spiritual life. That means, it also applies to your own soul, and no less to the soul of your child!

Do not be amazed, therefore, that I submit this rule-for-farming to you as a principle which applies also to the spiritual up-bringing of your child. After all, the idea of the seed sown into the field is often used in the Bible as an appropriate symbol for the cultivation of the human soul. I need only remind you of the impressionable and therefore well-remembered parable of the sower. Jesus said that God’s Word is like a seed which a sower sows into his field. The seed is the Word, the sower is God, and the field is the world – and in that world also man’s soul. There are a great number of such examples in the Bible in which sowing and planting are used to symbolise spiritual life. For example, in 1 Corinthians 3:9 the congregation is called “God’s field”. In Isaiah 5 and



Psalm 80 Israel is called God's vineyard which He has sown and cultivates. The kingdom of God is compared to a mustard seed. And many more examples could be referred to.

In the same way Leviticus 19:19 is not a text which merely applies to farming. The entire context shows that the theme is: no mixing of different substances. No two types of things in one place. No unacceptable dualism. No two kinds of seed in one field. Let your land bring forth either one thing, or the other, but not two kinds of things together.

We also find this underlying principle of 'no dualism' worked out and applied to other areas of life. For example, we read that what God has joined together may not be separated by man. But God also commands the converse: what God has separated, man may not join together. And it is this last command which is the underlying theme of Leviticus 19:19.

To be sure, that command not to mix what God wants to keep separate applies, in the first place, to farming. Verse 19 says, "You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind." Clearly, for the Jews any breeding which produces bastards is a sin. It is an unnatural mix. Then comes the command of our text: don't sow two kinds of seed in one field. It is an unnatural mix. Don't have both wool and linen in the one garment. Indeed, so strong does this thought of not mixing what God wants to keep apart live in the law that we read in Deuteronomy 22 that a man is forbidden to wear women's clothes, and a woman man's clothing (verse 5). Also in the vineyard, as well as in the field, it is forbidden to sow two kinds of seed. It is even forbidden to plough with an ox and an ass yoked together (Deuteronomy 22:9-10). You see that the underlying thought in our text – no mixture, but separation of all that must be kept apart – runs through the entire Mosaic law and applies to different areas of life.

Well now, that's why I see in the words of our text a Scriptural, guiding principle of utmost importance for the education of our children. In one field no two kinds of seed! In the soul of one child no two kinds of principles, no two kinds of word, no two kinds of thoughts, no two kinds of service, no two kinds of fear! That I transfer here the image of the field to the soul of the child is not to be wondered at. You cannot do better than to compare the soul of a child to a field. Just as the field 'contains', as it were, our hopes and expectations for the future, so too does the soul of the child.

To be sure, the field is not a perfect image of the child's soul. After all, a field as it lies there is, if I may so express it, neutral. While there is no seed placed in it nothing will appear. You can, in a certain way and to a certain extent, make what you will of that field. But that cannot be said of the soul of the child. You should not think that your child came into the world as a neutral field, as someone of whom you can make what you will, who at his birth is neither good nor bad. No, we don't go along with that Pelagian teaching which is still swallowed today. We believe that our children are born with a seed firmly entrenched in them. And that is the seed of sin. They are already polluted; the evil will come forth of its own accord, just as seed, once planted in a field, will shoot up by itself. Yes, in that sense we cannot call the soul of a child a field. It is no longer neutral. But as we have seen, there are good reasons for comparing a child's soul to a field.

In fact there is yet another reason why the soul of the young, growing person can be called a field. The field is the place of perpetual movement, of unceasing development, of ongoing production. The field never rests. It works in silence, even though you don't



notice it. It nurtures that seed that has been placed in it and day and night it develops that seed until it shoots and grows up, without anyone knowing how.

And see, that is how it is with the soul of your child. Place a seed in it, teach it a song, speak (sometimes carelessly) about something or another, and after many days you will see the fruits. The street song, once heard, will later be sung with gusto. That is sowing and reaping. The child's prayer, learned before the child could understand the prayer's meaning, later becomes the starting point for his quiet relationship with God. That is sowing and reaping.

Think about it – your child is a field. Just as the field always 'works', always seeks to give birth, never sits there idle, so it is with the child. The child is never really idle. He is always busy growing, becoming, changing and moving from one stage of development into the next. And as the farmer, when he has sown his seed into the field, wonders what the future holds, so the parent who really nurtures his child wonders, during his hours of meditation, "What will this child become?"

You will understand that this idea, when it is thought through and applied, must lead to a powerful plea for the Christian school. I speak to you, Christian parents. You once appeared before God's countenance and brought your children before Him. That occurred in the hour of their baptism. You then solemnly promised to sanctify them in the Lord. Isn't that why you submit them to the preaching of the Word? And you mothers, did you not early in their lives teach your little ones to say their prayers at your knees? Did you not teach them to trust in the well-known sound of God's Word? Is it not so that you want that seed of God's Word, that seed of religion, to shoot up powerfully in your children? You will, yourself, be praying for this, won't you?

But don't you understand that that prayer is a lie, that your desires for your children are foolishness, if you refuse to send them to the Christian school? No two kinds of seed in one field, there you have God's demand! And therefore you show a blatant contempt for that command, and publicly violate the promise given at baptism, if you send your child to the public school. Because there they sow into this field that other seed! Yes, there in that public school they are busy choking and killing the seed of the Word.

Or do you perhaps deny this? Do you think, perhaps, that the public school isn't so bad? Do you, too, still believe that fairy tale about the neutrality of the public school?

People, don't be fooled! Let us imagine for a moment that such a school was neutral, would that then make it right? Certainly not! Have you not understood that in religion all neutrality is really repulsive enmity? That Jesus would rather have blatant antagonism than that lukewarm neutrality which accepts everything as equally good? Don't you know that it is particularly the lukewarm people whom Christ spews out of His mouth and about whom He complains that He would rather that they were entirely cold? What's more, that public school is not neutral. Neutrality is nothing but a figment of the imagination; it simply doesn't exist. "Whoever is not for me," says Jesus – note well – "he is against me!" It couldn't be put more forcefully; Jesus leaves no room for neutrality.

And now we hear from the side of the state—from the side of the promoters of liberality, from the side of the religion haters, of those who seek to promote the so-called neutral school—that they want to promote tolerance. But such tolerance is nothing but ostrich policy. It ignores the fact that we are born into a world in which all sorts of views and



teachings stand diametrically opposed to one another. Must we, for the sake of tolerance, then tolerate the lie? For if you have two different views then only one of them can, at best, contain truth; the other must be a lie. And now they want to educate your child to be a virtuous member of the community. But is it a virtue to tolerate the lie? Is it a virtue to be silent about the truth? Is the community in need of straw dolls who take no notice of anything? Or do we need MEN, men for the kingdom of God?

Do not let yourself be blinded by the foolish lies of our time. It has been said that the public school does not fight against Christianity but only against Christian sects. Nicely put, but it is nonsense. For they like to label every positive expression of Christianity a sect. Surely you will understand that Christianity must reveal itself in a church, which manifests itself in its confession and walk of life. The world would dearly like to subscribe to the doctrine of the invisible church. Now that's what you really call a church, they say! Faith, they would have us believe, should well up from within you. It is okay for the inner room of your home, for the homes for the aged, or for the confessional cubicles in the church. But please don't apply your faith in the parliament, in politics; don't let's have a church which openly witnesses and draws clear boundaries. For that is a sect, the modern teacher will tell you. And he forgets that the visible church may be nothing but the manifestation of the invisible church.

Now we know what it means: the world brands our school a sectarian school, but we want to submit to God's command to refrain from generating dualism. No two kinds of seed in one field. Not a godly education on the one hand and an ungodly, an antichristian, education on the other. That sort of thing promotes confusion. The mantle of truth of is of one piece; and therefore – so continues our text – you shall not wear a garment of two kinds of material.

Guilty of transgressing this command is the man who gets his child to read the Bible and learn his psalm at home, and takes his child to the church services, but nevertheless sends him to the public school. Guilty of transgressing this command is also the parent who sends his child to the Christian school five hours each day and who in his own home lets Christian life decline to a bare minimum or – what is worse – denies his Christian confession by his ungodly walk of life.

Parents, the Christian school gives you much, very much, but not everything. No two kinds of seed! If at school your children hear about the Lord Jesus who admonishes the Pharisees, but your home is dominated by a superficial Christianity, by hypocrisy, by Phariseism, then that is two kinds of seed in one field! When your child learns at school that Jesus prayed on the mountain alone, in silence, and with sincerity and heartfelt passion and your child comes home where a brief prayer is rattled off, without silence, without sincerity, without heartfelt passion, then that is two kinds of seed in one field!

In short, God demands people of one piece. Let us not break down with the one hand what we are busy building up with the other. Whoever scorns the Christian school and neglects the obligation to send his child to it, should not say that he fears and serves God – for his works contradict this.

And, finally, perhaps you will say: "Yes, but I can never avoid those two kinds of seed. I can't ban sin from my child's vision. I can't remove it from my own life, or from that of my family." I understand that complaint. I'll even sharpen it. In fact, I'll even say that in a way two kinds of seed have already been sowed into the field of your child. The seed of sin is in it already at birth, but also that seed which Calvin called the "semen



religionis”, the seed of religion. That, too, is in your child. There is not a person come into the world for whom Article 14 of our Belgic Confession does not hold true, namely that there are still some small traces of God’s image in him which are sufficient to make man inexcusable. And one of those traces is the seed of religion! In that sense there are two kinds of seed in one field. That’s how it was already at birth!

That is our shame! But also our comfort!

Our shame, because we planted that seed of corruption through our deliberate transgression. It is the original inherited infection of which we, too, are guilty.

But, also our comfort, for now we know that the “semen religionis”, that seed of religion, holds the promise of religious blessings. It shows that under God’s blessing Christian education can bear fruit. And particularly for you, that promise is no idle sound. For by baptism your child has been grafted into the Christian church. The promise has been given. And now, whenever from our side we instruct our child (at home) and have it instructed (also at school) in the doctrine of God’s Word, then God has promised that He will cause that good seed to shoot up. And therefore: no two kinds of seed in one field.

And since that seed of corruption already lies there, let us fight against it with all our might. Hoe your field and remove the weeds. It’s a never-ending job, but don’t let that discourage you. Is the gardener’s job of weeding ever finished?

And then we know that when we sow and plant, when the field is cultivated and our plough makes deep furrows, it is all still useless if God does not give the growth. He is, ultimately, the one who, by His ongoing power of creation and preservation, provides the sower with seed and the eater with bread.

That sower is you, the Christian instructor. But that eater, that eater... that is God Himself. He wants to eat the fruit of your hands, to glorify Himself also through your children, to gather the fruits to His honour and for His eternal kingdom. The Christian school is, after all, the business of God Himself.

Our help is, therefore, in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth!

[i] K. Schilder, “Geen tweeërlei zaad” speech held in 1919, published in *Om woord en kerk: Preeken, lezingen, studiën en kerkbode-artikelen. Deel 1* (ed. C. Veenhof). Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, Goes 1948. Translation by Jelte Numan.

