

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Matt. 13: 3 - 9; 13: 18 - 23

INTRODUCTION:

1. Jesus knew in sowing the seed of the Kingdom there would be many failures.
2. He knew we would need all the help and the encouragement possible when we see failures after we have sown the seed.
3. Jesus, in this parable, has presented plainly and clearly success and failure, and has explained the causes and the conditions that attend them.
4. The success of the Sowing depends in a great measure upon the soil into which the seed is sown.
 - (1) The soil must be prepared or the seed will fail -- Ezra 7:10; Jer. 1:10; Lk. 8:15; II Tim. 4:2

5. There are four (4) kinds of hearts or soil.

I. THE WAY-SIDE HEARER

1. In those days the planters sowed grain by hand; and necessarily some seeds fell into unbroken and unprepared soil.
2. The farmer, who understood the nature of the soil, was not disappointed, nor did he become discouraged when those seed on the WAY-SIDE were eaten by the birds.
3. Luke said this soil "*was trodden down*" -- Luke 8:5
4. The seed fell upon it, but not in it.
5. Ways by which the heart becomes TRODDEN DOWN:
 - (1) By the deceitfulness of sin -- Heb. 3:13
 - (2) By custom and habit.
 - (3) By prejudice -- Matt. 13: 14 - 15
 - (4) By a desire for popularity -- John 12: 42 - 43
 - (5) By procrastination -- rejecting the word over and over.
 - (6) Naturalism -- all explained naturally.
 - (7) Humanism
 - (8) Pleasure in unrighteousness -- II Thess. 2: 12
 - (9) Self-righteousness
 - (10) Preoccupied with other matters.
 - (11) Superficial people

6. These hear, but do not understand -- Matt. 13:19

7. Satan comes immediately and removes the Word -- Mark 4:15

- (1) "*Lest they should believe and be saved*" --Luke 8:12

- (2) The Devil, knowing the power of the Word, is not going to let it stay in the heart -- Mark 4:15

II. THE STONY-GROUND SOIL -- Matt. 13: 20 - 21; Mk. 4: 16 - 17; Lk. 8:13

1. The soil is on top of a rock foundation
2. A few inches of rich soil, and then a rock.
3. The seed springs into life almost immediately in this soil, but under the hot sun the plant soon dies.
4. This represents shallow people who hear the gospel and it reaches them and at once moves them -- Luke 8: 13
5. The response from the shallow heart is more from emotion than conviction.
6. These people have not counted the COST -- Luke 14: 28 - 33
7. These people are impulsive and ardent for a little while, but when trials and testings come through, putting their profession into practice, they give up and go back into the world -- Matt. 13: 20 - 21
8. They cannot stand persecution and trials; they quickly desert Christ and the church in the hour of temptation -- Lk. 8:13
9. Satan did not snatch the word from the shallow heart, but brought other influences to bear against the Word.
10. These shallow, emotional people, moved by sentiment, come into the church, remain for a time, and pass back into the world.

III. THE THORNY GROUND

1. These people are convicted that they are sinners -- they obey the gospel, but their heart is divided between the kingdom of Christ and the cherished things of the world.
2. They give the world and its affairs the greater part of their attention.
3. Necessarily, the problem of food, clothes and shelter must receive some attention, but should not absorb the human life -- Matt. 6: 24 - 34
4. Jesus lists four things that "choke the word" and render men unfruitful in His kingdom:
 - (1) "*the cares of this world*" -- Matt. 13:22
 - (2) "*The deceitfulness of riches*" -- Matt. 13:22; I Tim. 6: 9 - 10
 - (3) "*The lust of other things*"-- Mk. 4:19
 - (4) "*Pleasures of this life*" -- Luke 8:14; Heb. 11: 25 - 26
5. These four things hinder individual Christian growth and retard church growth.
6. This man is double-minded, his heart has mixed motives -- James 1: 8; 4:8

IV. THE GOOD GROUND

1. Matt. 13: 23 "*Understandeth it*"
2. Mark 4: 20 "*Receives it*"
3. Luke 8:15 "*Honest an good heart*" -- "*heard the word*" "*keep it*".
4. This man:
 - (1) Took his time and counted the cost, and laid his plans well.
 - (2) He gave the word and the kingdom FIRST PLACE in his life.

(3) At no time does he allow other interests to interfere with his growth, work and progress in the Kingdom.

5. The seed has no competition.

6. He brings forth fruit -- Luke 8: 15; John 15: 7 - 8

V. LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE:

1. There are drastic differences in the soils or hearts of men.

2. The Lord does not intend for the sower to shoulder the responsibility for the failure which belongs to another -- we must not blame ourselves when the failure is due to the bad soil.

3. There is great advantage in the preparation of the soil for the seed.

(1) Both John and Jesus did much preparatory work.

(2) Seed cannot grow just anywhere.

4. Hasty and premature action does not ultimately succeed.

(1) High-pressure methods may cause people to be baptized, but it will not cause them to be faithful.

(2) The slower progress is the better.

5. To make a success in living a righteous life, one must not allow himself to become entangled:

(1) In the cares of this world.

(2) The pleasures of this life.

(3) The deceitfulness of riches.

(4) The lust of other things.

(5) One must make his religion his primary interest -- Matt. 6: 33

CONCLUSION:

1. Are you here and have never obeyed the gospel?

2. Won't you do so now?

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