

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Matthew 13:10-17
Lesson #2
Soil Tests
10/06/2019

"How shall we picture the kingdom of God,
or by what parable shall we present it?"

Mark 4:30

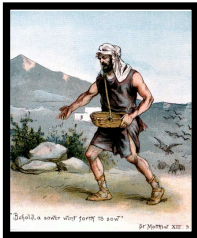


How are we to understand
a mixed response to the Gospel?

Is it the **message**?

Is it the **messenger**?

It is the **hearer**!



The sower sowed seed in different soils.

- ✓ **Alongside the road** (it is trampled out)
- ✓ **On the rocky places** (it is starved out)
- ✓ **Among the thorns** (it is crowded out)
- ✓ **On the good soil** (it is fruitful)

Matt.13, Mk.4, Lk.8

2

The Parable of the Sower

(Matt.13:1-23)

THE PARABLE EXPRESSED

vs.3-9

"10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 And He answered and said to them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 12 For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." 14 And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, "You will keep on hearing, but will not perceive; 15 for the heart of this people has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and return, and I should heal them." 16 But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. 17 For truly I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it; and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

THE PRINCIPLE EXPOSED

vs.10-17

THE PARABLE EXPLAINED

vs.18-23

3

The principle exposed

Matthew 13

"10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 And He answered and said to them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 12 For **whoever has, to him shall more be given**, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, **even what he has shall be taken away from him**. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

In the case of bad soil, **the little that it has will be taken away** and there will be no fruit.

But the disciples are good soil
that **persevere** and bear fruit.

4

Jesus links this explanation with a prophetic text.

"14 And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, "You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; and you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; 15 for the heart of this people has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and return, and I should heal them." 16 But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear."

The context of this parable was **the unexpected rejection of Jesus as Israel's Messiah**.

The **heart of Israel in Jesus' day**
was the same as in Isaiah's day.

5

There were times when God turned against Israel in their rebellion.

Isaiah 63

“8 For He said, “Surely, they are My people, sons who will not deal falsely.” So He became their Savior. 9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, and He lifted them and carried them all the days of old. 10 **But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.**”

6

The point of the Parable of the soils

Matthew 13:12

“For **whoever has, to him shall more be given**, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, **even what he has shall be taken away from him.**”

Carpe Diem

**Those who seize the day
receive more and those
who don't may lose all.**

7

Carpe Diem

2 Corinthians 5,6

“20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; **we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.** 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 1 And working together with Him, we also urge you **not to receive the grace of God in vain** — 2 for He says, “*At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you; behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation.*”

8

Jesus notes this principle in Jn.15.

John 15

“1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 **Abide in Me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you **abide in Me**. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who **abides in Me**, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing 6 If anyone does not **abide in Me**, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you **abide in Me**, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”

9

Jesus prepped the disciples to abide.

John 16

“1 These things I have spoken to you, **that you may be kept from stumbling.** 2 They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. 3 And these things they will do, because they have not known the Father, or Me. 4 But these things I have spoken to you, that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.”

- The disciples would inherit a blessing **but have to bear a cross to get there.**
- “Faith is trusting God **in the dark.**”



Howard Hendricks

10

Paul teaches this principle.

Romans 2

“18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, . . . 21 **For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. . . .** 24 **Therefore God gave them over** in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”

- **God responds to human choices**, not vice versa.
- God turn us over to the **consequences of our choices - good or evil.**

111

Paul's ministry is sensitive to it.

Ephesians 2

"17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may **give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation** in the knowledge of him. 18 **I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,** 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe."

Ephesians 4

"1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

12

Matthew 13:12

"For **whoever has, to him shall more be given**, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, **even what he has shall be taken away from him.**"

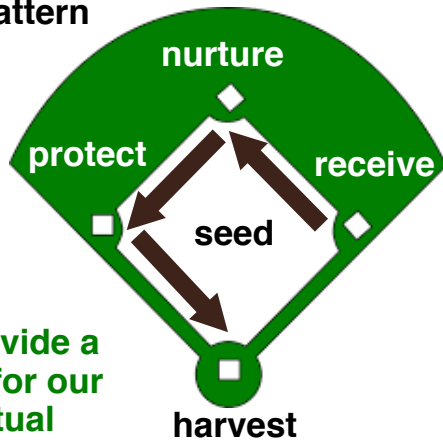
How are the blessings of God "taken away" from people?

Lessons from bad soils

- ✓ **"Alongside the road"** - by dismissing the Word before it has a chance to be heard.
- ✓ **"On rocky soil"** - by starting well but failing to develop roots so as to withstand hard times.
- ✓ **"Among thorns"** - by starting well but trying to serve two masters (deceitfulness of wealth) and turning away.

13

Is there a progressive pattern suggested in the soils?



Could this provide a helpful guide for our personal spiritual development?

14

Some general observations

- ✓ There are **many ways** to suffer spiritual shipwreck.
- ✓ Bad soils can have **intimate contact** with the seed and still not be good.
- ✓ The issue is - **persevering** through hard times in order to bear fruit.
- ✓ Good soil bears **different measures** of fruit.
- ✓ God is instrumental in **"taking away"** assets that are not properly used.

15

What is the "fruit" in this parable?

Matthew 13:23

"And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed **bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.**"

- **Salvation**
 - **Saving souls**
 - **Character**
 - **Peace**
 - **Social reform**
- "How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it?"

Mark 4:30

16

What are we to learn from this?

- **Difficulties** must be expected. We "bear a cross to a banquet".
- **Delayed** responses to God are risky. When the Spirit moves your mind / heart, respond.
- **Discipleship** must be nurtured. Spirituality develops over time.
- **Deceitfulness** of wealth, power, & pleasure can be distracting. Faith, Hope, and Love are not virtues if directed to the wrong things.

NOTE - Read Rom.9-11 with this Parable in mind.

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