

Matthew 13:1-23

The Seed and the Sower

(The King and His Kingdom)

On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. 2 And **great multitudes** were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. 8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Zachary, age 4, came screaming out of the bathroom to tell his mom he'd dropped his toothbrush in the toilet.

Well his mom fished it out and threw it in the garbage.

Zachary stood there thinking for a moment, then ran to his mom's bathroom and came out with **her toothbrush**. He held it up and said with a charming little smile,

"We better throw this one out too then, 'cause it fell in the toilet a few days ago."

Kids are full of surprises – the way they process things – Amusing.

Kids Questions for God!

Dear God, **Did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident?** -Norma

Dear God: How come you only have 10 rules and our school has millions? Joy

Dear God, Who draws the lines around the countries? -Nan

Dear God: **Why did you make people talk foreign languages? It would be easier if everybody could talk English like you and me.** Alice

Dear God, I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that okay? -Neil

People have always had questions for God and in the day of Jesus one of things on people's minds was –

A)What is the Messiah's Kingdom going to be like?

B)And what would be the purpose of His Kingdom

1)Here in Matthew 13 Jesus is going to begin to describe some aspects of His Kingdom-

C)Kingdom is mentioned 12 times in the Chapter MAJOR THEME

1)THE phrase: The Kingdom of Heaven is like is repeated 6 times –

Jesus is going to use this moment to give some insight into the Kingdom – by teaching in Parables

A)Seven parables in this chapter. – Parables of the Kingdom.

THE WORD "PARABLE"... Greek "parabole" (para-bow-LAY)

A)Means "to place beside, to cast alongside"

As defined by Vine's Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words, it **"signifies a placing of one thing beside another with a view to comparison"**

B)Wiersbe's description of a parable... As "a story that places one thing beside another for the purpose of teaching"

C)"It puts the known next to the unknown so that we may learn"

D)What Jesus was doing in these Parables is:

He was taking something that was very familiar in the Physical realm (FARMING) and throwing it alongside of something that was unfamiliar in the Spiritual realm

The parable of the Sower:

3 Key Components to the Parable – The Sower / the Seed / The Soils

A)V.3 A SOWER went out to sow..... Familiar – farming area – they saw this regularly.

B)So he uses this familiar picture of farming to illustrate an important spiritual truth!

C) Farming was different in those days – today – heavy machinery – people own 1,000s of acres

1) In those days – everything done by hand – animals

D) Farms were smaller – 5-10 acres

1) So the sower goes out – a sack or pouch with seed. Fling – the seed.

E) Four kinds of soil the seed will fall on

In V.4 Jesus describes the first kind of soil as the wayside soil – MARK'S Gospel = pathway.

A) Those days the farms were long strips of land – pathway in between for walking

B) The pathway is impenetrable – Because it is so hard – the seed can't sink down into the soil –

1) and the birds snatch the seed and carry it away

2nd Soil – V.5 Stony ground

A) Israel is a rocky terrain – stones everywhere.

B) Story that at Creation God assigned two angels the Job of spreading rocks equally around the world

1) First Angel went off and did just that – the 2nd Angel – lazy – dumped all of his in Israel

C) Some places the rock is below the surface – the depth of soil is shallow.

The seed gets planted in that soil but the roots are unable to penetrate deep.

A) The shallow soil above the rock base is warm and – seed germinates quickly and springs up fast

B) Because there is no depth when the sun comes out – the plant withers – quickly dies.

C) People listening are shaking their heads – Yes we have seen that.

3rd soil Thorns { What grows quicker than anything and without any water – Weeds

A) That is what Jesus has in mind here – weeds and thorns – overtake the seed – choke it out

B) Again the people listening are nodding their heads – Yep we have experienced that –

1) Thorns and weeds are a pain.

C) Aaron was a young boy – Full of questions – 1) 7 yrs old – out in the back yard – Helping me pull weeds – Why weeds? Fall – Adam – Aaron said, “Stupid Adam”

4th soil is soft – ready – yields a bountiful harvest

Jesus ended the Parable with these words – V.9 To him who has ears to hear – let him hear!

A) Weird sermon? Right? – Plant lesson – ok lets go home – JESUS WAS OFF TODAY! – Better luck

KEY OBSERVATION: As we follow Jesus through this chapter we are going to find Him using the word *hear* some SEVEN times.

A) In the Bible *hearing* means much more than simply listening to words.

B) “*Hearing*” means listening with spiritual understanding and receptivity.

C) He is talking about HEARING with the ears of the heart!

1) This is a Key to spiritual growth.

(Rom. 10:17) “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

Why Parables: V.10 The Disciples ask that very question ! Why Parables?

10 And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

11 He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

12 For whoever has, (talking insight) to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: (The reason they were lacking)

Jesus quotes here from Isaiah Chapter 6

‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;

15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,

So that I should heal them.’ (Key point: If their hearts were open they would be able to receive.)

**So Jesus reveals a twofold reason for the parables
To reveal and to conceal**

A) For those who were eager to learn – for those who were following Jesus for the right reasons

B) The parables were about Revelation:

1) The parables were meant **to arouse** in them a **Hunger or a curiosity** concerning the things of God

C) The Parables were to create in them a desire to dig deeper/ **to ask questions** { to press in & to draw near

1) Which is exactly what the disciples do – Please explain – they were intrigued – stirred up – stimulated by the parables

D) Their Hunger was rewarded ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; ¹⁷ for assuredly, 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.

E) V.17 - Jesus tells them that They will discover things that the OT saints longed to see & understand,

1) but were not able because those things were only fulfilled in Christ.

F) So the Parables are meant to Reveal – to those truly seeking!

But for those who really weren’t interested in knowing God the Parables were meant to conceal!

A) See there were many people following Jesus – **side show-**

B) **Next miracle** – next **demonized person released** – next **confrontation** with the religious leaders

C) And you had the religious leaders who although for the most part were polite listeners –

1) they were always looking to trip up Jesus
Always looking for a reason to accuse Him!

D) In other words: There were a lot of people who were not really seeking God.

1) Their response to the parable would be – So What!

E) The Parables were meant to create a fog.

My kids were younger - Aaron is sharp - sometimes tried to give / Amy advice /

A) Amy would stick her fingers in her ears and say- I am not listening.

B) People tune the Lord out in the same way: Not fingers in the ears – turn up the radio –

1) Busy their lives with activities

C) We have to be so careful today as believers that our hearts don’t grow dull.

1) See we live in the age of sound bites –

We are a fast food culture and that also applies to information and learning.

A) This is the result: We know a little about a lot of things – (**Makes us feel Knowledgeable**)

B) But we don’t know a lot about much of anything

C) We have to be careful that doesn’t become our approach to God’s word

1) **Application for us – God rewards – Hunger Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him!**

“What a precious treasure is the Word of God! It is like a deep mine filled with gold, silver, and precious gems, and we must take time to ‘dig’ for these treasures. A mere surface reading of Scripture will not put spiritual treasure in our hearts. Mining treasure is hard work, but it is joyful work when we ‘mine’ the Bible, as the Spirit guides us into truth.” – **Warren W. Wiersbe**

The Parable Explained:

¹⁸ “Therefore hear the parable of the sower:

¹⁹ When anyone hears **the word of the kingdom**, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on

the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

V.19 Jesus identifies the seed as the word of God

QUESTION: Why compare God’s Word to seed?

#1 A Seed bears the BLUEPRINT for life within it.

A)Seed blueprint for a plant. – Everything about that plant that flower – that fruit tree – is in that seed.

B)God’s word has the blueprint for life in it

1)Blue print for abundant life – spiritual life is found in the pages of this book.

1 Peter 1:23 “having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.”

#2A seed is small – the Good News is small, yet Powerful:

Word is “*living and powerful*” (Heb. 4:12).

“Living and active.’ The words of the Bible have life! Nouns with pulse rates. Muscular adjectives. Verbs darting back and forth across the page. God works through these words. The Bible is to God what a surgical glove is to the surgeon. He reaches through them to touch deep within you.”- Max Lucado

POINT: NEVER underestimate the POWER of the Word of God!

A)Transforming Power: - The Book Standing in the fire

B)People who grew up Muslims – hated Christians Transformed by simply reading the Bible

C)Paul the Apostle – **I am not ashamed of the gospel because IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION.** (Romans 1:16)

#3 The Word, like a Seed, must be Planted to do any good.

A)Take a seed – hold it in my pocket – no use It must be Cultivated, Nurtured etc.

B)Same thing is true of the word of God –

C)Own a Bible? Need to read it – study it

Now in the explanation of the Parable- we learn that the 4 soils – represent – 4 heart conditions

A)Four responses to the word of God

B)This Parable illustrates that the PROBLEM is not with the SEED but with the SOIL.

1)The problem is with the heart condition

C)#1 Wayside: Pathway = The hard heart

So the Pathway soil represents the heart that is just hardened against the gospel –

A)In context to what Jesus said in V.10-17 they don’t understand because they don’t want to understand.

B)It is the person who has a preconceived idea about God / Jesus and the Bible.

1)Hardened against the truth of God’s word

C)See it when I am preaching especially at a funeral – Jesus is the only way:

1)They are sitting there arms folded – Scowl

D)Two reactions – the Believer – encouraged and reminded – the Hope we have in Christ.

1)Then there are the people who just avoid you afterwards - don’t look in the eye –

E)Satan snatches the seed! - Satan knows the Power of God’s word to transform any life that allows it to have its way – **He seeks to thwart that**

Seed among the stones:

Spiritually speaking {SHALLOW HEART!}

A)This describes the person who only allows the word of God to have a shallow place in their lives

B)Springs up quickly – v.16 Jesus describes the person who receives the word in the stony place is the one who receives it with Joy –

C)Emotional response: Their heart is stirred by the message of the gospel – or the word being taught

1)They are like – Yes – I know that is true

D)Immediate reaction that looks like there is going to be fruit

But as soon as difficulty comes – as Soon as the heat gets turned up – the trial

A) Their excitement withers and dies – nothing is the result of that

B) They stick with the Lord as long as everything is going good in their lives

1) But as soon as difficulty comes { GONE!

C) LIKE FICKLE FANS - You are awesome – YOU Bum NEED TO BE traded

D) Some people do that with Jesus – Jesus is so Awesome

Jesus – what have you done for me lately!

3rd soil Thorns -

Spiritually speaking: CROWDED HEART

A) The word gets choked out by the thorns

B) Defined as – the Deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this life

1) BOTH dangerous to the intake of God's word

C) Note “**Deceitfulness of Riches**” – **RICHES LIE** –

1) They tell us that Meaning, Satisfaction and Purpose is found in more!

D) How many millionaires are miserable? –

1) Recent guy who won the lottery – “**worst thing that ever happened to me**”

E) How many millions does it take to make a many happy? Just a little more

Riches lie to us

But the other problem are probably more of one that most of us deal with

A) **Cares of this life – responsibilities of this life** – bills to pay/ things to do – Easily distracted

B) How many times has God spoken to your heart – called you to draw near – intent was right –

1) Never happened – because you got pulled away by something – NO FOLLOW THROUGH

C) ANOTHER REASON WHY I JOURNAL – it forces me to go back and revisit

D) God spoke to me on that day – but that hasn't become a reality in my life – why?

1) Where did I get sidetracked or distracted or just plain lazy or resistant

Now when you have weeds that are choking out the flowers in your garden – what do you need to do?

A) Pull them? –

B) Same is true spiritually – We need to keep the main thing the main thing: JESUS

C) God wants to begin to UPROOT those things that have been “CHOKING OFF” the Word of God in your life.

D) If you are open: Heart feels dull – just ask him – David: **Search my heart Lord see if anything**

wrong

Wicked -

E) God will show you what needs to go in order to put your Priorities back in order

Final soil – Open heart – soft and Pliable – Word goes in and is able to root deeply – unhindered – not distracted BEARS FRUIT

A) Fruit = A life that is well pleasing to God –

B) A life that resembles Jesus – a life marked by what the Bible calls the Fruit of the spirit

C) Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control.

D) Wouldn't it be awesome if that is what you were Known For!

SECONDARY APPLICATION – SAVED – 4 soils – one heart

HEART HAS FOUR CHAMBERS

A) All have things from the word – we respond well to

B) Um Um – Preach it Pastor Rob – “**Hope my husband is listening**” –

1) Need to get so and so that message.

C) Other things – We don't want to hear- hard

1) Calling me in the nursery – no longer kids there

D) Mad – can't believe he is talking about this!

There are Things that we respond to emotionally –

A) So good – I need to do that –

B) Put into practice for a week – until hard

1) Like a Gym membership

C) Other areas – Thorns – we hear – we have every intent of putting into practice

1) Cares of this life – other pursuits choke out

D) There is never any growth that takes place

What makes for good soil?

1. Saturation: Soft heart = surrendered heart
2. Concentration: Absence of distractions – Prune
3. Meditation: Depth = meditate {cow chews / Journal
4. Application: Doers of the word – Take root

Your heart today?

A) **Hard?** – Jesus loves you – let Him heal – stop resisting His love

GIVE YOUR HEART TO CHRIST TODAY

B) **Shallow?** – Real commitment – be done with the ups and downs – instead of an emotional response

C) **Distracted?** – What is more important than a relationship with Jesus?

LET HIM BE THE CENTER OF ALL THOSE THINGS

RECOMMITMENT