

Parable of the Sower Mt 13:3, Mk 4:2, Lk 8:4

In Matt, Mark and Luke, Jesus taught a parable that emphasizes the part that listeners play in the success of the gospel. In Luke 8:8, Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." In Mathew's account Jesus said, "Therefore, consider carefully how you listen." How we listen will determine the amount of growth and spiritual fruit we produce.

Let's begin by explaining the terms Jesus use 's in the parable.

The seed represents the word (Luke 8:11). The sower represents the presenter of the word and the soil represents our hearts.

I. Way Side Soil (Hard) "The Care-Less Hearers"

Matt 13:4, "As he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the birds came and devoured them." Luke 8 adds that, "some of the seeds fell by the road."

The seed could not penetrate this soil, so it laid flat on the surface. As a result, "it was trampled by people's feet and the birds ate it up (Lk 8:5).

In Luke 8:12, Jesus made this application. "Those by the roadside are the ones who hear; then the Devil comes and takes the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."

The wayside soil represents a hard heart. It describes the type of person hears the gospel message and it goes in one ear and out the other. They could care less about what they hear.

Paul described this type of person as "one who does not love the truth" (2 Thes 2:10).

1 Cor 2:14 says, "The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Hosea 10:12, says "Break up your UNPLOWED ground for it is time to seek the Lord until he comes."

II. Rocky Soil (Mt 13:5-6) "Thrill seeking hearers"

"Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth. And they sprang up immediately, because they had no deepness of earth. And the sun rising, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away."

Here the soil appears to be good, but the rocks prevented the seed from developing deep roots. When the sun came out the plant was scorched. Jesus said that this represents the person who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy (Mt 13:20).

Think of a person who receives the truth with joy and quickly obeys the gospel but quits after the excitement is gone. In Mt 13:21, Jesus said that this individual, "withers before tribulation."

How can we prevent our hearts from being like the Rocky soil? Do a self-evaluation. What would it take for me to quit the church?

1 Tim 3:9, “keep hold of the deep truths of the faith”

Eph 3:17 says, “Be rooted and established in love”.

In Mark 13:13 Jesus said, “endure to the end and you’ll be saved.”

Gal 5:7 says, “You were running a good race. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?”

Shallow Christianity cannot survive times of trouble.

III. Thorny Soil: “Distracted hearers.” (Matt 13:7)

“And some fell among thorns. And the thorns sprung up and choked them.” Here the seed was able to grow but was unable to develop because the thorns choked it out.

In Luke 8:14, Jesus made this application. “The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.”

Think of a person who has the potential to be a fruitful child of God, but their heart is full of worldly thorns. In the end they gain the whole world but lose their soul (Mk 8:36).

Do I have a thorny heart? Let’s take a look.

#1. Jesus talked about worries as one of the thorns.

#2. Jesus talked about riches:

#3. Jesus talked about pleasure being a thorn.

Paul wrote, “Set your minds on things above and not on the things of this earth” (Col 3:1)

4. Good Soil: It was opposite of the other soils.

The soil yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty (Mt 13:8). Jesus identified this soil with honest and good hearts (Lk 8:15).

This person hears the word of God and accepts it. They put forth the effort necessary to understand the scriptures and once it’s received, they never let it go.

Like the Psalmist: “They delight in the law of the Lord” (Ps 1:2). In such a heart the word can grow produce fruit. Jesus said, “this is the man who hears the word and understands it and bears fruit (Mt 13:23).

Close: Jesus closed his lesson by saying, “He who has ears, let him hear”.

James 1:22 says, “Receive the implanted word with meekness, which is able to save your soul, but be doers of the word and not hearers only.”