

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Int.

1. Aim: To show the importance of proper application of the Word.
2. Lk. 8:4-15 [Mt. 13:3-23 Mark 4:2-20]
 - a. May be the first parable - comparison, illustration - sets forth a truth
 - b. It is the first one explained
 - c. Sitting in a boat - people stood on shore of Sea of Galilee
3. Key Point == **"Watch out how you hear"**
 - a. "He who hath ears to hear, let him hear" Mt. 13:9
 - b. "Hearken" Mk. 4:3 == listen, give attention
 - c. The man who hears has a responsibility for the message
4. Three things required for a crop: Seed - Sower - Soil

Discussion

I. SEED

- A. "The seed is the word of God" Lk. 8:11
 1. Seed - means of reproduction, source of development or growth
 2. Message or truth that comes from God
 - a. 1 Pet. 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - b. Jas. 1:18 "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
 - c. Rm. 10:17
3. "The sower soweth the word" - Mk. 4:14

B. Seed produces after its own kind

1. Gen. 1:11 "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."
2. No exceptions - Gal. 6:7 "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
3. Bible only produces Christians only
4. Human doctrines produce denominations or manmade religions

C. The seed is good - because it is the word of God

II. SOWER

A. Who is the sower?

1. Jesus came down from heaven to sow the spiritual seed in this world
2. He named this parable "the Parable of the Sower" Mt. 13:18
 - a. Not parable of the soils
 - b. Not parable of rocky ground, or thorny ground
 - c. Not parable of the hearers

B. Christians are to be sowers of the seed

1. We are to be like Christ - spreading the seed - Mk.16:15
2. Sower - scatters the seed far and wide - Matt. 28:19-20
3. 1 Cor. 3:6 "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."
 - a. Paul describes his work as being a planter
 - b. Plant = instill doctrine
4. We are to plant the seed - response depends upon the soil / hearers

III. SOIL

A. Represents the hearers

1. This is the main part of the parable
2. Four types represent four groups of hearers
Wayside - Thorny - Rocky - Good
3. The seed is good, so whether it bears fruit depends on the type of soil into which the seed falls.

B. **WAYSIDE** - Lk. 8:12

1. Ground
 - a. Hard - seed cannot enter - Lk.8:5
 - b. Paths or roads at edges of field
 - c. Trodden under feet of men or eaten by the birds
2. Hearers
 - a. Represents hard hearted
 - b. They hear the word but go away and continue as before
 - c. Unresponsive listeners - refuses to change his life
3. Birds
 - a. The birds represent the devil and how he takes the word out of their heart.
 - b. He knows word of God will produce faith so he removes it as quick as possible.
 - c. 1 Pet. 5:8
4. Many hearers are like this today - they hear but they let the devil take away the word from their hearts and they do not obey.

C. **ROCKY** Lk. 8:13

1. Ground

- a. Soil was very thin - rock underneath
- b. Seed sprung up quickly
- c. But when the sun was hot it began to wither for there was no moisture - the roots could not go through the rocks

2. Hearers

- a. Shallow hearted - ready to jump and obey - and there is nothing wrong with a quick decision
- b. But the problem was a shallow faith - Mk. 4:17
- c. Some accept the gospel quickly and lay it aside quickly
- d. These are "rootless" Christians so they soon dry up or die! -
- e. Col. 2:6-7 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7. Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

- 3. Some hearers today are like this - they obey but soon fall away when any persecution or trouble comes their way.

D. **THORNY** - Lk. 8:14

1. Ground - Lk. 8:7

- a. Good ground or soil - not too hard nor too shallow
- b. But there were roots of thorns in the soil
- c. The good seed grew but was soon choked by the thorns
- d. Brought no fruit to perfection - dwarfed or stunted

2. Hearers

- a. Person obeys the truth and begins very well
- b. But he lets the cares, riches, pleasures of this world choke out his fruit
- c. Thorns:
 - (1) Cares of world-more interested in earthly home - Mk. 4:19
 - (2) Riches - money, possession
 - (3) Pleasures: sensual, fame
- d. What is a thorn? -- anything that crowds Jesus out of our lives
- e. We cannot serve two masters - Mt.6:24

3. These thorny Christians never bring any fruit to perfection. They are dwarfed or stunted. Christians in Name Only !!!

E. **GOOD** - Lk. 8:15

1. Ground

- a. Rich, deep soil, free from rocks, thorns and hard places
- b. Seed sprang up and brought forth:
 - (1) 100, 60, 30 fold
 - (2) Increase - different grades of production

2. Hearers

- a. Human heart is prepared by casting out all evil motives and receives the word honestly and sincerely
- b. This person submits to the word and is not hindered by the cares of this world
- c. This person is determined to learn the truth and wants to obey it. They have a tender conscience.

- d. Bears fruit with patience
 - (1) Spiritual growth
 - (2) Harvest
 - e. 100 fold, 60, 30 fold
 - (1) Not all are capable of producing same amount
 - (2) Not equal in our abilities
 - (3) But God holds us responsible for what we do with the ability and talents
that He has given us!!
 - f. These people are confronted with the same temptations, trials and hardships as the others -- but they resist evil and stand firm.
3. Good hearers receive truth in an honest heart and it produces fruit!!

Conclusion

1. Battle ground is for the Human heart
 - a. Heart is the spiritual soil in which the sower sows the seed
 - b. God and the Devil meet for the hearts of mankind.
 - c. Persuades men through the heart
2. Hearers divided into 4 classes:
 - a. Wayside = hears but does not receive the word
 - b. Rocky = shallow hearted, obeys but heart is still hard
 - c. Thorny = heart is right but is conquered by outward trials
 - d. Good = fruitful receiver of God's word

3. Three were unfruitful? Why????
 - a. Not bad seed
 - b. Not because of unskilled sower
 - c. Three reasons:
 - (1) Indifference
 - (2) Shallowness
 - (3) Double-mindedness
4. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." Lk. 8:8
5. Conditions of the heart are not permanent - you can change
6. Good and Honest heart brings forth fruit - obedience !
7. We must be faithful in sowing the seed
8. The harvest depends not only on the sower or the quality of the seed, but the nature of the soil!
9. Heart condition is your responsibility !
10. Prov. 4:23

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