



Title: Gospel of Mark: Parable of The Sower

Scripture: Mark 4:1-20

Date: 07092023

Bible Version: NKJV

BOTTOM LINE: We will never grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus if our hearts are not prepared to receive the seed of the Word.

The Parable of The Sower (vv. 1-12)

V. 1

And again He began to teach by the sea...a great multitude was gathered to Him- Like before, we see Jesus teach by the sea again. As He taught by the sea a great multitude gathered.

He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on land facing the sea- There were so many people there that Jesus got into a boat and used it as a focal point for teaching. This 'pulpit' would allow him to address the crowd and provide for better acoustics.

V. 2

Then He taught them many things by parables- Here in verse 2, we are introduced to the word parable. The word parable comes from two Greek words, 'para', which means to cast alongside and 'ballo' which means to throw or cast. Jesus used parables to reveal the truth.

Parables were not lectures on theology but rather intricate paintings that required people to think.

A parable begins innocently as a picture that arrests our attention and arouses our interest. But as we study the picture, it becomes a mirror in which we suddenly see ourselves. If we continue to look by faith, the mirror becomes a window through which we see God and His truth. - Warren Wiersbe

V. 3

Behold, a sower went out to sow- Since they were in an agrarian society, people would most certainly understand the idea of a farmer

The Different Soils (vv. 4-8):

1. Hardened Pathway (v. 4)

Some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it- As the sower tossed seed out to plant, birds from the air came in immediately to devour it. The seeds were not able to find loose soil and therefore were consumed.

2. Stony Ground (vv. 5-6)

Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up- The seed that was not devoured fell onto ground which did not have much soil.

But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away- Since the seed was in shallow soil, its roots were not deep and it was not able to handle the intense heat. It simply withered away.

3. Thorny Ground (v. 7)

Some seed fell among thorns and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop- Other seed fell among the thorns and were choked out. Weeds can grow in almost any condition. They are hardy and competitive. As a result, seeds have great difficulty getting established.

4. Good Ground (v. 8)

Other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced- Some of the seed fell on good ground and produced an increase. This would be the desirable outcome. We can note that not all of the seed produced the same, but all of the seed that fell onto the good ground did produce.

V. 9

He who has ears to hear, let him hear- To the one who was capable of hearing this spiritual truth, should listen

V. 10

When He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable- The disciples did not immediately know the meaning behind this parable, so they asked Him.

V. 11

To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God- Jesus states that they had been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. Biblically speaking, a mystery is not something you can figure out. It is something that only God can reveal.

But to those who are outside, all things come in parables- Parables are not sermon illustrations. They can be understood, but you have to have the key.

V. 12

They should turn, and their sins be forgiven them- Jesus now quotes from Isaiah 6:9.

The Parable of The Sower Explained (vv. 13-20)

V. 13

Jesus didn't use parables to blind people, but because they were blind. - David Guzik

V. 14

The sower sows the word - Jesus explains that the word of God is like a seed that gets planted in our hearts.

The Soil Represents Four Conditions Of Our Hearts:

1. The Hard Heart (vv. 4, 15)

Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts- Jesus said in verse 4 that the birds came to devour the seed that was thrown by the wayside. If you are open to the influence of this world, then you are open to having a hard heart.

Just as seed can't grow on a hard path, a hard heart will not receive the Word of God.

Hard hearts must be plowed up before they can receive the seed, and this can be a painful experience. - Warren Wiersbe

2. The Shallow Heart (vv. 5-6,16-17)

They hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness. “And they have no root in themselves”- Jesus describes this heart as a thin layer of soil over a hard rock. There’s enough soil to get the seed started, but deep roots never get established.

When tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble- The person with this heart will not handle adversity well. They simply are not rooted in Christ. They may have had an ‘emotional’ experience at one point in their life, but the deep roots necessary to persevere were never developed.

The Stony ground hearer isn’t attacked directly by Satan, but by tribulation or persecution. Jesus knew that they may have an immediate favorable reaction to the word of God, but they give it up quickly when it becomes difficult to follow Jesus.- David Guzik

3. The Crowded Heart (vv. 7,18-19)

Sown among thorns....the desires for other things entering in choke the word- Jesus paints the picture of a person who receives the Word but who does not truly repent. This person has too many things growing in their heart so the Word never takes hold and is eventually choked out.

The things of this world prevent the seed from growing.

We cannot walk the narrow way (in Christ) and the broad way (of the world) at the same time.

4. The Fruitful Heart (vv. 8,20)

Sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit- This is a picture of a true believer. The first three hearts did not produce fruit. This one does.

Not all true believers are equally as productive, but from every genuine Christian's life, there will be some evidence of spiritual fruit. - Warren Wiersbe

There are three enemies that we face as believers:

- 1. The ways of the world.**
- 2. The desires of our flesh.**
- 3. The Devil**

3D Guide

DO. **BOTTOM LINE: We will never grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus if our hearts are not prepared to receive**



DIG DEEPER

1. What does this study reveal to you about God?
2. What does this study reveal to you about yourself?
3. Based on this, what changes do you need to make?
4. What is your prayer for today?



DISCUSS.

1. What is a parable and why do you think Jesus used them to teach people?
2. When you read about the parable of the sower, what does it make you think of?
3. What are some ways we can apply this scripture to your lives?

DO.



Anytime you read God's word you have to put things into perspective. You also have to realize that the terms, not words, have meanings. As a group re-read the scriptures that was studied. Try a the Amplified Version and compare that to the NJKV, NIV, ESV, or NASB. Pick a few words and have a group member look that word up on blueletterbible.com or with their app.