

Sunday, August 11, 2024

Matthew 13: The Parable of the Soil

Matthew 13

1That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9Whoever has ears, let them hear." 10The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

11He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 13This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see;
though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

14In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

" 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

15For this people's heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts
and turn, and I would heal them.'

16But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.

17For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. 18"Listen then

to what the parable of the sower means: 19When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 22The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. 23But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

1. Background

Jesus methodically taught the Kingdom of Heaven and often used parables, or illustrations. There are over 60 Parables in the New Testament.

Parable, in the Greek, means to lay something aside something else. Parable means placing one thing alongside another for comparison. It is a way to make a comparison. Here we see ‘I’m giving you a spiritual truth, to help you understand that spiritual truth, I’ll give you something that compares to it.’

Might this Parable be one of the most important, if not THE MOST IMPORTANT, of all the Parables that Jesus taught? This is one of the few that is found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Right before Jesus explains this to His disciples (in Mark’s Gospel), he says this:

Mark 4: 13“Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?

This Parable is about Soil and has three main components: The Seed, The Sower, and The Soil.

2. The Seed

a. What is the seed? The Word of God

Matthew 13: 3Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed.

Mark 4:14The farmer sows the word.

Luke 8:11"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.

b. What about the Word of God is being Spread? The Kingdom of God or The Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 13: 19When anyone hears the message about the kingdom.

Matthew 4:17From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Mark 1:14After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

The SEED is THE GOSPEL of JESUS CHRIST.

c. What is the gospel? It is believing in The Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior AND Repenting of your Sin.

Romans 3:23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 10:9If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord AND believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.10For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. 13for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

If Jesus is Lord of your life, you are no longer Lord, He is. Jesus said:
Luke 6:46 'Why do you call me Lord, Lord and not do as I say?'

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and
teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Repentance is a combination of recognition of your sin, confessing your sin,
giving Lordship of your life to Him, and taking steps of obedience. Perfection
cannot be attained. It is about DIRECTION. What is the DIRECTION OF YOUR
LIFE?

3. The Sower

a. Who is the Sower? God, the Father

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws
them,

John 6:65 no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them."

b. How does the Father enable "them"? The Holy Spirit, The Spirit of God

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the
truth.

The Holy Spirit guides you, enlightens you, and makes known the things of The
Lord.

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order
that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his
glorious inheritance in his holy people,

c. Does Jesus sow as well? Yes!

Mark 1:14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Throughout His ministry He was constantly saying: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is like...': Hidden Treasure, Mustard Seed, Fine Pearls

God spreads seed, The Holy Spirit spreads seed and Jesus Himself spread seed AND

d. Anyone who shares the Gospel is a sower.

Matthew 12:48 He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

e. What is God's will?

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

One of the commands of God is to spread the seed as soon as you know the truth.

Mark 1:16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

Mark 1:18 At once they left their nets and followed him. 19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

f. How do we sow seed?

God has given each of us gifts and talents for the purpose of spreading seed. We need to use these gifts and talents to spread the seed. Starting by joining a ministry team here at MillCity is a good place to start.

QUESTIONS:

1. What teacher do you remember the most? Why do you think he or she was a good teacher? What attributes does a good teacher possess? What attributes have you seen in “bad” teachers?
2. How do you like to give back and serve in the church? Some people say, “I serve outside of church,” do you? Does that serving reflect God’s kingdom to others? What do you love about that type of serving? Is it important that we are engaged in serving others, why or why not?
3. Jesus often used stories as a teaching tool. Why do you think he did this? What do parables or stories accomplish that simple and direct instruction lacks? Do you think Jesus intends to make things clear or obscure by telling stories? What is your favorite parable Jesus shared?
4. When was the last time you had a conversation with a nonbelieving friend (or a believing friend!) about spiritual matters? What fears or struggles are keeping you from sharing your faith? Read these verses as a group: Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 4:18-20, Ephesians 6:18-20, Colossians 4:2-6, 1 John 1:1-3. What truths about God and our faith are seen in these verses, and how can they help us in sowing seed?