

DISPOSITION OF THE HEART

“You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.” —MATTHEW 13:14

Jesus quoted the above verse from the book of Isaiah just after He had told ‘the Parable of the Sower’. A farmer sowed his seed, and some fell along the path where birds came along and ate it. Some fell on rocky places and sprang up quickly, but the plants were scorched by the sun and withered, because the soil was shallow and the plants did not take root. Other seed landed among thorns and choked the plants, while still other seed fell on good soil, and produced crops a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Jesus then explained the parable. The seed is the word of God and the soil it falls on is the condition of our hearts. The seed that falls on the path falls on a heart that does not understand the word of God, and the evil one snatches it away. The seed that lands on rocky places and sprouts is the heart that receives the word of God with joy, but because it does not take root, quickly withers and dies in times of hardship and testing. The seed that falls among thorns is the heart that hears the word of God, but is choked by every day worries and pressures. The seed that falls on good soil is the heart receptive to the word of God, which then takes root and yields a plentiful crop.

Just before His ascension, Jesus said to His disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation” (Mark 16:15).

Preaching holds a prominent place in the New Testament, but in recent years has suffered substantial image problems. There was a time when it was customary for a person to stand up and preach, because books were not easily accessible. Today we are more sophisticated, pluralistic, educated and supposedly wiser, so the general consensus is that no one has the right to tell anyone what they should believe. Therefore, preaching of the word of God for many people is a relic of a bygone age and considered no longer relevant.

Of this disposition, Jesus again quotes Isaiah, “For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes” (Matthew 13:15). The effect of this parable sifts and divides those who have an appetite for God from those who do not. It deals with our response to the word of God, which grows and expands through the preaching of it. The life is in the seed, not in the soil. Hearing God is not about intellectual ability, but has everything to do with the disposition of the heart.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I pray my heart will always be open and receptive to your word, and that your Holy Spirit gives me understanding. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: What is the condition of my heart when it comes to God’s word?