

Thorny Soil

The soil in the parable of the Soils represents the hearts of people. Four different descriptions of soil are mentioned. All soils are basically the same. Dirt is dirt. What Jesus focuses on here is that which has influenced the soil, i.e., the condition it is in. How a person responds to the gospel depends on the condition of a their heart. In Matthew 13.22, Jesus speaks of thorny soil. This soil looks good. It's deep, rich, turned over & tilled, and cultivated. It looks clean. It looks ready. But, below the surface, hidden out of sight, are the roots of weeds and thorns, that when they grow tend to choke the life out everything else.

I. Matthew 13:22 - Thorny Soil

- A. Matthew 13.22: *Now the one sown among the **thorns**—this is one who hears the word, but the worries of this age and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.*
- B. The **worries** of this age...
 - 1. This is the condition of living here on earth with its various problems and opportunities.
 - 2. Temporary interests: career; home; car & possessions; clothes; prestige; how you look; etc.
- C. The **deceitfulness of wealth**, i.e., the essence of worldliness.
 - 1. This is the living for things of this world and all the cares that it brings.
 - 2. The love and pursuit of money has ruined many a Christian.
- D. 'The love of the world neutralizes the gospel.'
 - 1. James 4:4: *You adulterous people! Don't you know that friendship with the world is **hostility** toward God? So whoever wants to be the friend of the world becomes the enemy of God.*
 - 2. See also Matthew 6.24; 19.21-23; 26.14-16.
- E. It can render you ineffective
 - 1. Gets us so distracted that we become barely committed.
 - 2. God wants more than a profession of faith.
 - a) Matthew 3:8, 10: *Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. ...every tree that doesn't produce good **fruit** will be cut down and thrown into the fire.*

II. How to Get Rid of the Thorns

- A. **Make a decision** - Galatians 5:24: *Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have **crucified** the flesh with its passions and desires.*
 - 1. This verse is describing the absolute, irreversible, renunciation of our past life.
 - 2. Consistent, obedient, and vigilant renunciation of this world and our flesh
- B. **Follow through** - Proverbs 4:23: *...**guard** your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*
 - 1. What are you allowing to influence your thoughts and attitudes
 - 2. 2 Corinthians 10:5: *we take **every** thought captive to obey Christ.*
 - 3. 'How strong is your prayer life? ...*in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
- C. **Trust in God's Provision** - Matthew 6.33: *Seek **first** the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.*
 - 1. Proverbs 3.6: *in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths **straight**.*
 - 2. Sseek His direction in all aspects of life - big and small.

III. As We Close...

- A. Prioritizing your spiritual life is not a passive endeavor. God wants to see fruit in your life.
- B. What kind of fruit are you producing?
- C. Have you cleaned out the soil of your heart?