

Christian Growth Hour August 4, 2024

What is our hope?

In this section we see parables about sowing, planting reaping, and harvesting. The interesting thing is that they all involve the concept of growth, death, harvest, and reward.

1. What do you think of when you think of sowing?
2. What about the harvest?
3. Do we always see the results of the “sowing” in our lives

Parable of the Sower

Mat 13:1-23 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. (2) And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. (3) And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. (4) And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. (5) Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, (6) but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. (7) Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. (8) Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (9) He who has ears, let him hear.”

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the significance of verses 1 and 2, or is it significant?
2. In this parable, what is the significance of
 - a. the “sower”
 - b. the “path”
 - c. the “rocky ground”
 - d. “thorns”
 - e. “good soil”
3. What is the significance of verse 9?

(10) Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” (11) And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. (12) For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. (13) This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. (14) Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: “You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.” (15) For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear

with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’ (16) But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. (17) For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Discussion Questions

1. What is a “parable?”
2. Why does Jesus use parables to teach? Why not just “teach” straightforwardly?
3. What is the significance of the following verses; what is Jesus saying?

(11) And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. (12) For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

4. Do we have eyes and yet not see?
5. Can this explanation of hearing and understanding parables apply to our lives today?
6. Do we “not hear” or “not see” Jesus in our lives? What is the result of this failure?

(18) “Hear then the parable of the sower: (19) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. (20) As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, (21) yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. (22) As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. (23) As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Discussion Questions:

1. How do we “sow?” What are some examples?
2. Does our sowing always bear fruit?
3. Do we always see the “fruits of our labors?”
4. How have you seen the results of sowing in your own life?
5. How have you seen what Jesus can do with the sown seeds in your own life?