

XXXI. L.E.A.D in Biblical Perspective
Lifestyle of Evangelism and Discipleship
“Everyone Evangelizing Everybody Everywhere Everyday”
Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23
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November 10, 2019 • Morning Sermon

This is God’s Word, inspired, inerrant and infallible. Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23 says [1] *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.”*

[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.”*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God’s Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

This is our study to be a great curriculum church where we develop a curriculum for discipleship which is our mission and our message is to teach the whole counsel of God but we have to begin at the foundation. So I am doing a study on each of the five elements of the foundation. The first element is Christianity 101 – what is basic doctrine? It is the Apostles Creed Christianity framed in the Gospel truth. Then we covered spiritual disciplines – prayer and the Word through preaching, prayer, sacraments, fellowship etc. – the means of grace. Then we went to lifestyle stewardship and how all of life is stewardship. In this study we’ll cover the fourth element which is personal evangelism which is the title of this study – everyone evangelizing everybody everywhere everyday. The fifth element we’ll cover in the next study is authentic worship from Hebrews 2.

Why is this important? It’s important to me because I am praying for a Gospel awakening in our nation because I see this tsunami wave of secular humanism and moral relativism is sweeping across our nation. I know this will be destructive for I can already see the destruction in families. There is a rising suicide rate and despair. You can’t embrace the anarchy of sin and call it good without it having a devastating effects. This tsunami wave will ebb someday. You cannot destroy the sanctity of life, marriage, gender, sexuality and relationships without it producing devastation. What will be left in that day the wave will ebb?

I know Jesus' church will be there and what church is that? It will be the ones who have a foundation and who have stayed in the midst of all of it, on mission, on message and in ministry. Jesus' church has a narrow mission and it doesn't change from generation to generation. It has been given by Jesus and that is to go and make disciples as we go, baptize and teach. This is the mission. The message is to teach all that Jesus has commanded which is the whole counsel of God with the spear point as the Gospel as the foundation, the formation and the motivation of the Christian life.

Then the Great Commission outlines our four ministries. There is the ministry of upreach toward God which is worship. There is the ministry of outreach which is evangelizing the world with the Gospel. There is the ministry of inreach which is loving one another deeply, profoundly, relentlessly. Then the fourth one is the ministry of downreach which is to be disciplined and then to disciple others. This is a Gospel healthy church for it is what I call a W.E.L.L (worship, evangelism, loving one another, learning) church that is on mission, not drifting toward what is happening in the culture but to stay focused, narrow on what God has called us to do. Through this WELL church we produce Christians that have a broad mission that have a comprehensive mission that is all done to the glory of God. These are great commandment Christians who know how to love God with all their heart, soul and mind and they know how to love their neighbor as God's grace has taught them to love themselves in Christ and for Christ and die to themselves unto Christ.

Interestingly, there have been many moments since the ascension of Jesus where God has swept nations with revival and awakenings. He always uses His church. These churches will always be identified with four things and you see this in the Bible and in church history. Nothing is more important to them than worship, the praise of God. They are engaged in discipleship because they want to grow in the Lord. Thirdly, they are committed to consistent, protracted, revival prayer and fourthly they are committed to evangelism. It is everyone evangelizing everybody everywhere everyday. They are all engaged and the Lord is adding to their number day by day as people are being saved. When that church is on mission and on message it produces Christians that become the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

So in this study we are looking at Matthew 13. This is one of three texts that I think communicates as clear as any other texts of everyone evangelizing everybody everywhere everyday. This is the parable of the Sower and I believe it is the most important parable in the Bible. There are 30 plus parables that Jesus taught in the Bible. The first half of His ministry was basic teaching in synagogues and various gatherings. The last half of His public ministry He used parables continually and this is the beginning of the last half of His ministry. Matthew 13 gives you seven of those parables that are all designed to teach us about the Kingdom.

I think the parable of the Sower is the most important of all for a few reasons. One is because it's the first one recorded that He taught. Secondly, is because Christ interpreted this parable Himself. Out of the 30 plus parables there are only a couple that He interpreted. Thirdly, this parable and its interpretation is the only parable that is repeated in all three of the synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark and Luke. Fourthly, when Jesus gave this parable He told His Disciples that if they could not understand this parable they would not be able to understand any of the parable (Mark 4:13).

If it is this important then let's look at the ingredients of the parable of the Sower. Now when I teach I like to illiterate things and the reason I do this is because Jesus does this and you can see it in this parable. Jesus says the first (ingredient) to this parable is the sower. It is not 'a' sower but it is 'the' sower. The second ingredient of the parable is the seed. Again, notice it is

not 'a' or 'some' seed but 'the' seed. So we have the sower who goes out with the seed. The third ingredient is the sowing, which is the casting of the seed. Where does the sower sow the seed? The fourth ingredient are the soils – hard ground, rocky ground, thorny ground and good ground. So there is a singular sower, a singular seed, singular sowing but there are plural soils.

Now here is Jesus' interpretation of the parable of the sower. The Sower is Christ. Christ sowed personally the seed into the hearts of men in 33 years in His incarnate body and now Christ is doing it in His indwelt body which is the church. We are the body of Christ and that is why He said to us 'As the Father sent Me (sowing the seed, to seek and save the lost) so send I you.' So Christ is now sowing through His people through His church.

Secondly is the seed which is the unadulterated Word of God. It is not the word of God that has been adulterated by theological liberalism or has been diminished through the editing of preachers who don't want to say something that is distasteful. It is what Paul said in Acts 20:26–27, [26] *Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all,* [27] *for I did not shrink from declaring to you the **whole counsel of God.*** Jesus tells us to go and teach **all** that He has commanded so the seed is the Word of God.

Thirdly is the sowing which is the proclamation of the Word of God. It is the spreading of the Word of God – evangelism. One of my jobs in college was in building and grounds where I would cut, sod and sow grass. I did not know how to sow seed until Mr. Sims taught me how to do this. You get a rhythm almost like a waltz – 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3... I was to get good seed and put it in a bag. Then while I was walking it was 1 I dip, 2 I pull out a handful of seed, 3 I throw out and repeat in a rhythm like pattern. This is like the picture here. We're not talking about a little machine we're walking around with. It is like you are reaching into God's Word and lavishly throwing it everywhere you go. It is the sowing of the seed of the Word of God intentionally and lavishly everywhere you are going.

Fourthly are the soils which Jesus tells are the hearts of men. There is a believing heart and an unbelieving heart. The unbelieving heart can show up in multiple models and Jesus gives us three of them. There is the unbelieving heart that is hard, rocky and thorny. When the seed falls on the hard path it goes nowhere because there is nothing soft to receive it therefore it lays on the top where the birds end up swooping down to pick it up. Jesus says this is exactly what Satan does for he comes to snatch it away as it lays on the hard heart. For some this is happening right now and the Word will be picked away before you even get to the car. There is no interest, no inclination, no attraction, and no affection for it's just there soon to be gone.

Then there is the rocky ground where there is a small layer of soil and underneath is rock therefore there is not much depth of soil. So as the seed falls on this soil and the sun begins to rise it's like a hothouse therefore it germinates quickly and the root hits the rock. Now all the energy that should drive the root deeper ends up going up for the lack of depth in the soil and so a shoot comes up prematurely but that same sun that ought to be causing growth now becomes the occasion for it to wither away. Jesus says these are those who when they hear the Word (salvation gift, heaven free) they immediately receive it with joy but what they didn't hear was 'repent and follow Me.' They heard the benefits of the cross but the cost of Christ begins to be felt and they realize the persecution that is coming against them because of Jesus. They no longer want the Word yet they immediately receive it with joy but when the persecution comes they immediately fall away. It doesn't mean they were saved and then lost, it just means they never had the root in themselves, therefore the shoot had no root and it withered away, never producing any fruit. Before long you see it in their lives. These are those who want the benefits of the Gospel but not the Benefactor and give themselves up to Him.

A third kind of unbelieving heart is the thorny ground heart. This is the ground that has the weeds. Weeds always win over grass and flowers unless you pull them up by the roots. These are the people who hear the Gospel and try to add Jesus into everything else they worship. Before long Jesus doesn't fit it and the deceitfulness of their idolatry with all the cares of the age begins to choke it out. Then they have to make choices – Lord's Day choices, Bible choices, lifestyle choices and soon you see wrong choices again because the root is choked out due to the weeds that were never pulled out in repentance.

Then there is the good heart, the believing heart, the good soil. They hear the Word and they understand it – the benefits and the commands, the call and the cost, the free gift that cost everything and they know their works don't save them but there are works that saved people do. These people can't wait to get at them. When the persecution comes it just causes more growth. It doesn't call them to wither away. Repentance keeps pulling the weeds – idolatry, cares of this age – out by the roots so that they can grow and be nourished. When they grow they bear fruit and that's the difference from the unbelieving heart. The good soil has fruit that remains, some 30, some 60 and some 100 fold. John 15:8 is where Jesus says *[8] By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.* This is a lifestyle that intentionally gives glory to God, tells the world that Jesus is yours and you are His. We manifest salvation with a lifestyle that gives glory to God and confesses Jesus before this world even under persecution and even in opposition to the idols that want to raise up and claim your life.

Now let's look at the implications of the parable of the sower. There are four of them. The first one is the fate of the seed (the Word) is determined by the condition of the soil (the heart) and the condition of the soil (the heart) is revealed by the fate of the seed (the Word). There is no bad seed here. The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart and the solution to the problem is a new heart. The fate of the seed is determined by the sower or the sowing but by the condition of the heart. And the fate of the seed reveals what kind of heart it is.

The second implication is the good soil/heart is revealed by the bearing of fruit that remains. How do you know if you're saved? You have a root that goes deep. You have a shoot that comes up. You have fruit that remains and not everyone has the same amount of fruit but it remains. Your life does not save you but are there any indicators in your life where a root is bearing fruit in Jesus? If there are, praise God. If there isn't come to your God. There are people at our church right now that would like to pray with you so that you can know the glories of salvation in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

The third implication is the soil/heart must be cultivated to become good soil/heart and receive the seed/Word to bear fruit. In other words, before you can have a good heart somebody has to monkey with the soil, somebody has to work on the heart. I say this reverently because there is only one heart Surgeon and that's Jesus by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has to go to your heart. The heart Surgeon came to give me a new heart in 1970 and I have had the privilege to have seasons in my life of 30, 60 and a hundred fold but the fruit came from the shoot that was in the Root and the Root took hold because He gave the heart for Him. I long for you to have this heart as well. That's why I'm continually praying for this. I know that I can plant, water and cultivate but I can't give the increase for only God can give them a heart to receive it.

The fourth implication is neither the fate of the seed/Word nor the condition of the soil/heart can be revealed unless the Sower sows the seed intentionally and indiscriminately. Bring good seed. Put it in the bag. Take it to the field. You have to be intentional to sow the seed with no discrimination or partiality – bring it to the rich, poor, old, young, black, white – for it

doesn't matter. Just throw out the seed to all everywhere. Sometimes the seed becomes the plow in the hands of the Spirit to work on the heart. Reach in and get a big handful and cast it everywhere. Share it everywhere you possibly can all over the place. This brings me now to some very practical takeaways.

The first takeaway is get a testimony. A testimony is bearing witness of what Jesus did in your life. Your testimony is not the Gospel. The Gospel is a particular message you give to people and your testimony is telling people what the Gospel has done in your life which opens the door and builds a bridge for you to share the Gospel with people. One of the things I like about EE (Evangelism Explosion) is that they teach you how to do a short testimony and a long testimony. I'll take this a step further.

Get three testimonies. Take your testimony and develop it into what I call the elevator testimony. You ought to have a testimony that builds a bridge in three minutes to somebody. This is your short testimony. Secondly, get what I call a lunch testimony where you have about 15 to 20 minutes to give your testimony. Thirdly, this is your long testimony, what I call is your polished testimony where you spend one third of the time talking about your life before Christ and two thirds of your life with Christ and what His grace has and is doing in your life. This is where in an evening you can share your testimony with someone. I have my lost part down to one sentence and unless people ask me about it that's all I give and spend the rest of the time on my life with Christ. People know you're a sinner so you don't need to revel in it and go through the juicy details of it unless they ask questions about it.

The second takeaway is to get equipped. Learn the one verse evangelism of Romans 6:23 which says the 'wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Here's where you are but here is where you can be. Praise God for the 'but' for He has intervened so you can have eternal life. Here is wages, sin, and death but here is gift, God and life. Here's the bridge – Jesus Christ. Our church has ministries to train you in all this. Get into one of them. Nobody goes sowing without getting the bag, the seed and learning how to do it. Be intentional and get equipped in how to share the Gospel.

The third takeaway is develop a prayer plan. Your prayer plan has two parts to it. One is pray for the people God is going to bring you to. Currently I have about five people that I am asking God to give me an opportunity to talk to them about Him. Pray for God to give you Divine appointments. Pray for those God is laying on your heart to open the doors to them. The second part is they can't respond without a new heart so they need to be able to hear. They need eyes to see and ears to hear and you can't give them that so you're praying for the Holy Spirit to go before you to prepare their heart for the seed you are going to sow. You are praying for God to do a work of grace in their life.

The fourth takeaway is to be practical. My friend Randy Pope share this next thing with me that I'm going to share with you. He asked me if I had heard of the FBI and then said you need to hear about the GBI – Greet, befriend, invite. Greet people. You might be an introvert but get over that. Treat people as if they are existing in front of you. Acknowledge them. Hi there, how are you, preferably with a smile. Befriend them by asking questions of them that get at their life like 'where are you from, what do you do, how did you meet.' Be interested in them. Find out about them. Don't greet them and start telling them about yourself. You want to tell them about Jesus. I have four questions I use a lot. If I think someone doesn't know Jesus and don't have a religious background there are two questions I like to ask them. Then I have two questions for someone who doesn't know Jesus but has a religious background. These questions help me to get to the 'I' of GBI which is inviting them to an outreach ministry event. We have

so many outreach events at our church to invite people to. Invite them to worship, Sunday school, a small group Bible study, outreach events etc. We're coming up on the Christmas season.

Another way to be practical is share a book with them. My favorite book to share with people is Ultimate Questions by John Blanchard. There are many books out there that are evangelistically framed about the issues of life that people are dealing with, not an answer of cosmetics and techniques but an answer to the heart and that's Jesus. Then set up a time to talk with them about it after you both have read it.

Another way to be practical is hospitality. Open your door, open your heart, invite people into your home, invite people to events and be hospitable. The culture is turning homes into show pieces and castles. Go home, fill up the moat and put out the bridge for we have hospitals. We have B & B's. We open our homes and invite people in.

Lastly, invite people to your small groups and make sure your small groups have a season of evangelism. You can do two weeks of stump the chump and invite me as the chump for them to ask whatever questions they want. I'll be glad to be there. Do a small group discovery club to invite people to Christ. There are all kinds of things you can do.

I was at Freewill Baptist Church and right before I left to go to Covenant College, the pastor and I were good friends. Ten women came to us whose husbands didn't know the Lord and they asked us to help them. We said we'd meet and pray for their husbands. We had a prayer plan. Then we started a little Bible study and began to invite the husbands. We found some men to befriend them to connect with them and tell them about Jesus. We brought them to evangelistic events and before I left eight of those men came to Christ. We intentionally and indiscriminately shared the Gospel. It was wonderful.

Start with your family. I thank God my parents made me go to church even though in the moment I didn't thank God for it because in the moment I was in rebellion, going the other direction. I got to the bottom of the barrel. Then I met Cindy and I had to go to church to date Cindy. I was going to take her back to the church I had been going to because that would blow my cover and she would never date me again. I wasn't going to go to her church for various reasons so I went and found a church for us to go to. It was just like the one my mom and dad took me to growing up. Start with your own kids, your family, your neighbors. Sow the seed everywhere. Jesus saves. Let's pray.

Prayer:

God thank You for the privilege to be in Your Word. Lord, if there is anyone reading this today that has never yet made that commitment, would You give them the desire to come and pray with someone about committing their life to Jesus and Father work in our hearts so that we will tell others that Jesus saves. Let it waft upon the rolling waves, let it echo from the ocean caves, let it go from nation to nation, let it go through every area of every part of our life and those whom we know that Jesus saves, Jesus saves. I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Power Point

THE IMPORTANCE – THE SOWER

I. First Parable

II. Interpreted by Christ Himself

III. All three Synoptic Gospels

IV. Key to All of the Parables

THE INGREDIENTS – THE SOWER

- I. The Sower
- II. The Seed
- III. The Sowing
- IV. The Soils

THE INTERPRETATION – THE SOWER

- I. The Sower – Christ
- II. The Seed – The Word of God
- III. The Sowing – The Proclamation
- IV. The Soils – The Hearts of the Hearers {note}

THE IMPLICATIONS – THE SOWER

I. The Fate of the Seed/Word is determined by the condition of the Soil/Heart and the condition of the Soil/Heart is revealed by the Fate of the Seed.

II. The Good Soil/Heart is revealed by the bearing of Fruit that remains.

III. The Soil/Heart must be cultivated to become good Soil/Heart and receive the Seed/Word to bear fruit.

IV. Neither the Fate of the Seed/Word nor the condition of the Soil/Heart can be revealed unless the Sower Sows the Seed intentionally and indiscriminately. {note}

LIFE TAKEAWAY - Getting Started

Everyone Evangelizing Everybody Everywhere Everyday

I. Testimony

II. Equipped

III. Prayer Plan

IV. Practical

- *G.B.I.*
- *Share a book*
- *Hospitality*
- *Small Group*