

Matthew 13:1-23

“The Kingdom and Fruitfulness”

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Jesus is our king and the calling realm:

When Jesus is king in the calling realm you serve God by serving others in a local church. On the “connect card” check “I want to serve” or use our app.

Intro. We are called to bear fruit for God [Matt. 7:17, Jn. 15:16] What is it? What difference does it make? How can I bear fruit?

Subject: The parable of the sower

Object: Bear abundant fruit

Theme A healthy response to the gospel is a fruitful life

I. The parable of the sower [1-9] On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. ² And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. ³ Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

A. Jesus attracts a great multitude of curious people [1-2] Great crowds followed Jesus at the Galilee. They gather at shore, Jesus enters a boat & speaks to amplify.

1. Not all who hear Jesus’ words will receive Him and bear fruit

B. Jesus told the parable of the sower: familiar agrarian image of casting seed

1. What is a parable? A familiar story that is shared alongside a principle

2. The soils represent different responses to Jesus’ words and the gospel

a. The wayside [4]: hard-packed pathway between fields.

b. Stony [5-6] Shallow warm soil above a rock shelf.

c. Thorny [7] Soil looks good but weeds spring up and choke the good seed.

d. Good [8-9] Soil is prepared and produces abundant fruit

3. The fruit reveals the seed and the response

a. When you think of “Spiritual fruit” what comes to mind?

b. Spiritual fruit: Christ-like character, holiness, good works, souls won for Christ, praising God, repentance, Spirit-prompted giving

c. Are you curious to know what kind of soil you are?

II. The purpose of parables [10-17]

A. Parables provide opportunity to receive and gain insight [10-12] And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”¹¹ He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

1. The person who rejects becomes harder towards God

B. Parables separate those who want to grow and those who don't [13-17]

1. Reveal those who refuse to see, hear, or understand [13-15]

Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; ¹⁵ For the hearts of this people have grown dull. *Their* ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn, So that I should heal them

a. Consequence is they are not healed [restored by God]

b. Is. 6:9-10 context of Israel's hardness and refusal to repent, and consequences of judgment [Assyrian conquest]

2. Reveal those who receive, see, hear, understand, and are blessed [16-17] But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; ¹⁷ for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

a. Those who respond to Jesus are restored and satisfied

i. Blessing to hear directly from Messiah was the desire of OT prophets and faithful

C. Parables provide a choice, and God will allow you to make the choice and reap the benefits or consequences of your choice.

III. The parable of the sower explained [18-23]: A chance to grow for those who want to know

A. Bad soil does not produce good fruit [18-22] 3 obstacles to bearing fruit

1. Rejection of the gospel: Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

a. The wayside is a hard heart that refuses God's word & will not produce fruit

i. A heart that is hard to God remains under the influence of the wicked one [19]

2. Fear of opposition [20-21] But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

a. The stony soil is a shallow rootless faith that stumbles at opposition.

i. E.g Person who receives Christ and soon after is ridiculed by family, friends, co-ees

3. Materialism: the cares of this world and deceitfulness of riches [22] Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

a. The thorny soil fails to produce abundant fruit because love for this world is greater than love for God

i. The dominant desire for possessions, prestige, promotions, physical, pleasure

ii. Discover weeds and remove them from the soil

B. Good soil bears abundant fruit [23] But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

1. The good soil is characterized by receiving and applying God’s word

a. Good soil is characterized by abundant fruit: 30,60,100-fold

i. Exponential increase - e.g. 100 times, not 100%

2. How to bear fruit: Humble yourself to God, learn the Word, prune obstacles, and abide in Christ.

3. What difference does it make?

a. Glorifies God [Jn. 15:8]

b. Assurance of salvation

c. Christ-like effect on those we influence

i. Anyone can count seeds in an apple, but only God can count the apples in a seed.

Addendum:

1. Christ-like character [Gal. 5:22-23], 2. Holiness [Rom. 6:22], 3. Good works [Col. 1:10], 4. Souls won for Jesus [Rom. 1:13], 5. Praising God [Heb. 13:5], 6. Repentance [Matt. 3:8], 7. Spirit-prompted giving [Rom. 15:25-28]