

The Sower, The Seed, And The Soil

Mark 4:3-20

Faith Portal Church

ADULT

Unit 3 Lesson 2

Supplemental Texts

Matt 13:1-23; Luke 8:4-15

Focus Verse

“And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.” – Mark 4:20

Introduction

By the sea of Galilee, Jesus taught a great multitude of people desiring to hear His doctrine. All His doctrines centered on the kingdom of God. He spoke all that the Father gave Him with authority like no other (Matt 7:28-29). His teaching in parables afforded His hearers insight into spiritual truths. Using everyday life situations in parables would certainly foster understanding of spiritual matters. Jesus drew the attention of His audience by starting with “Hearken; Behold.”

Deeper Look

As He Sowed – Mark 4:3-8

As the sower scattered the seed, some fell along the road, and without delay, the birds ate it. The seed was not given time to remain and grow, neither was the ground good for the seed as it had been hard trodden and not cultivated. Some fell on stony ground where there was a thin layer of topsoil causing the seed to prematurely sprout. This sort of ground is superficial; it does not allow the seed to sprout normally and take root. Therefore, the plant will scorch rather than benefit from the sun. The seed among the thorns landed on ground that shows favoritism to bad seed over good seed. Every seed grows, but the bad seed (thorns) grows more rapidly till there is no more room for the good seed to grow. After some time, the seed on good ground grew up, increased, and bear fruit. Of all the four grounds, the latter is the only commendable ground.

Know Ye Not This Parable? – Mark 4:9-20

When Jesus' disciples did not understand the parable, they inquired of Him the explanation after the multitude was dismissed. He told them that parables are used to reveal the truths about the kingdom of God. It can be understood that the sower is a preacher, the seed is the word of God, and the ground is the heart of the hearer. This parable laid out the schemes the devil uses against Christians. Jesus said in John 10:10 “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.” This is exactly the situation in the parable: the seed was taken away, the seed grew and died due to affliction, and the thorns destroyed the ability of the seed to grow and bear fruit.

Questions

1. What are the four types of grounds or soils described in the parable? Which of the soils would you prefer to sow seed if you were a sower? Why, or why not?
2. What do the seed and the soils symbolize in the parable? Who does the sower in the parable represent? What preparations should be made by the “sower” before sowing?
3. How does a person represent the “way side” soil? Give an example of a time when you felt like a “way side” soil. What did you notice in you?
4. Considering the seed that fell on a stony ground, what should we expect because of the word of God? How much fruit is produced by the seed on this ground? Would you support this ground? Why, or why not?
5. The seed among the thorns grew with the thorns, but the thorns were more favored. What could the thorns represent in our lives? In what ways are the “thorns” harmful to spiritual growth? Share of a time when these “thorns” crowded your heart.
6. Is it possible for a person to exhibit more than a type of soil, and what benefits are there? Explain. What part do you play to achieve the type of soil you desire to be?
7. What soil is commendable? Why? What warning did Jesus give in verse 9, and what does it mean?

Personal Meditation

Of all the four types of grounds indicated in the parable, only one resulted in the outcome desired by the sower. The other grounds gave the seed no opportunity to grow and bear fruit, one way or the other. Each ground responded differently to the seed based on their disposition.

In the first ground, the word of God is preached to a hardened heart on which the word has no impression. Because the heart is not receptive of the word, Satan comes swiftly and takes the word away. The second ground typifies a heart that happily, readily receives the word, but does not allow the word to be established and transform him in order to weather testing times. In the third ground, a heart that is incapable of filtering out the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is exemplified (1 John 2:16). This heart feels holy and unholy things can coexist.

Finally, the good ground represents all that we should be — hear and receive the word and bear fruit! It takes diligence to bear fruit, and to bear fruit the heart must be right. Take note, we may not all bear the same fold (Mark 4:20), but it is important that we bear fruit.

DAILY STUDY

Monday	Mark 4:3-6
Tuesday	Mark 4:7-9
Wednesday	Mark 4:10-12
Thursday	Mark 4:13-15
Friday	Mark 4:16-17
Saturday	Mark 4:18-20



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